

# THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

KATHERINE TINGLEY, EDITOR

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*We describe Karma as that Law of readjustment which ever tends to restore disturbed equilibrium in the physical, and broken harmony in the moral world. We say that Karma does not act in this or that particular way always, but that it always does act so as to restore Harmony and preserve the balance of equilibrium, in virtue of which the Universe exists.— H. P. BLAVATSKY*

*The writings of H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge contain so much that is applicable to present-day problems that I feel sure the members of the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society and other readers of THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH will be glad of the opportunity of benefiting by their wise teachings. I trust soon to meet my readers through these pages again.*

KATHERINE TINGLEY, *Editor*

## THEOSOPHICAL KEYNOTES

THE SECRET DOCTRINE BY H. P. BLAVATSKY\*



THESE truths are in no sense put forward as a *revelation*; nor does the author claim the position of a revealer of mystic lore, now made public for the first time in the world's history. For what is contained in this work is to be found scattered throughout thousands of volumes embodying the scriptures of the great Asiatic and early European religions, hidden under glyph and symbol, and hitherto left unnoticed because of this veil. What is now attempted is to gather the oldest tenets together and to make of them one harmonious and unbroken whole. The sole advantage which the writer has over her predecessors, is that she need not resort to personal speculations and theories. For this work is a partial statement of what she herself has been taught by more advanced students, supplemented, in a few details only, by the results of her own study and observation. The publication of many of the facts herein stated has been rendered necessary by the

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\*Extracts from the Preface and Introductory of Mme. Blavatsky's great work, *The Secret Doctrine*.

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wild and fanciful speculations in which many Theosophists and students of mysticism have indulged, during the last few years, in their endeavor to, as they imagined, work out a complete system of thought from the few facts previously communicated to them.†

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But it is perhaps desirable to state unequivocally that the teachings, however fragmentary and incomplete, contained in these volumes, belong neither to the Hindû, the Zoroastrian, the Chaldaean, nor the Egyptian religion, neither to Buddhism, Islâm, Judaism nor Christianity exclusively. The Secret Doctrine is the essence of all these. Sprung from it in their origins, the various religious schemes are now made to merge back into their original element, out of which every mystery and dogma has grown, developed, and become materialized.

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The aim of this work may be thus stated: to show that Nature is not “a fortuitous concurrence of atoms,” and to assign to man his rightful place in the scheme of the Universe; to rescue from degradation the archaic truths which are the basis of all religions; and to uncover, to some extent, the fundamental unity from which they all spring; finally, to show that the occult side of Nature has never been approached by the Science of modern civilization.— Preface, pp. vii-viii

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. . . For the Esoteric philosophy is alone calculated to withstand, in this age of crass and illogical materialism, the repeated attacks on all and everything man holds most dear and sacred, in his inner spiritual life. The true philosopher, the student of the Esoteric Wisdom, entirely loses sight of personalities, dogmatic beliefs and special religions. Moreover, Esoteric philosophy reconciles all religions, strips every one of its outward, human garments, and shows the root of each to be identical with that of every other great religion. It proves the necessity of an absolute Divine Principle in nature. It denies Deity no more than it does the Sun. Esoteric philosophy has never rejected God in Nature, nor Deity as the absolute and abstract *Ens*. It only refuses to accept any of the gods

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[†Wild and fanciful speculations are still indulged in by would-be expounders of the Theosophical teaching,— not members of the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society — and the many books on pseudo-Theosophy offered to the more or less uninformed public show that the same need exists today, as when Mme. Blavatsky wrote her great work, of holding to and accentuating the pure teachings of the Wisdom-Religion.— EDITOR]

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of the so-called monotheistic religions, gods created by man in his own image and likeness, a blasphemous and sorry caricature of the Ever Unknowable.— Introductory, p. xx

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Toward the end of the first quarter of this century, a distinct class of literature appeared in the world, which became with every year more defined in its tendency. Being based, *soi-disant*, on the scholarly researches of Sanskritists and Orientalists in general, it was held scientific. Hindû, Egyptian, and other ancient religions, myths, and emblems were made to yield anything the symbologist wanted them to yield, thus often giving out the rude *outward* form in place of the *inner* meaning. . . .

This is the true reason, perhaps, why the outline of a few fundamental truths from the Secret Doctrine of the Archaic ages is now permitted to see the light, after long millenniums of the most profound silence and secrecy. I say "a few truths," advisedly, because that which must remain unsaid could not be contained in a hundred such volumes, nor could it be imparted to the present generation of Sadducees. But, even the little that is now given is better than complete silence upon those vital truths. The world of today, in its mad career towards the unknown — which it is too ready to confound with the unknowable, whenever the problem eludes the grasp of the physicist — is rapidly progressing on the reverse, material plane of spirituality. It has now become a vast arena — a true valley of discord and of eternal strife — a necropolis, wherein lie buried the highest and the most holy aspirations of our Spirit-Soul. That soul becomes with every new generation more paralysed and atrophied. The "amiable infidels and accomplished profligates" of Society, spoken of by Greeley, care little for the revival of the *dead* sciences of the past; but there is a fair minority of earnest students who are entitled to learn the few truths that may be given to them now; and *now* much more than ten years ago, when "*Isis Unveiled*," or even the later attempts to explain the mysteries of esoteric science, were published.— *Ibid.*, pp. xxii-xxiii

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More than one great scholar has stated that there never was a religious founder, whether Aryan, Semitic, or Turanian, who had *invented* a new religion, or revealed a new truth. These founders were all *transmitters*, not original teachers. They were the authors of new forms and interpretations, while the truths upon which the latter were based were as old as mankind. Selecting one or more of those grand verities — actualities visible only to the eye of the real Sage and Seer — out of the many orally

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revealed to man in the beginning, preserved and perpetuated in the *adyta* of the temples through initiation, during the MYSTERIES and by personal transmission — they revealed these truths to the masses. Thus every nation received in its turn some of the said truths, under the veil of its own local and special symbolism; which, as time went on, developed into a more or less philosophical cultus, a Pantheon in mythical disguise. Therefore is Confucius, a very ancient legislator in historical chronology, though a very modern Sage in the World's History, shown by Dr. Legge — who calls him “emphatically a *transmitter*, not a maker” — as saying: “I only hand on: I cannot create new things. I believe in the ancients and therefore I love them.” (Quoted in *Science of Religion* by Max Müller.)

The writer loves them too, and therefore believes in the ancients, and the modern heirs to their Wisdom. And believing in both, she now transmits that which she has received and learned herself, to all those who will accept it. As to those who may reject her testimony,— *i. e.*, the great majority — she will bear them no malice, for they will be as right in their way in denying, as she is right in hers in affirming, since they look at TRUTH from two entirely different standpoints. Agreeably with the rules of critical scholarship, the Orientalist has to reject *a priori* whatever evidence he cannot fully verify for himself. And how can a Western scholar accept on hearsay that which he knows nothing about? Indeed, that which is given in these volumes is selected from *oral*, as much as from written teachings. This first instalment of the esoteric doctrines is based upon Stanzas, which are the records of a people unknown to ethnology; it is claimed that they are written in a tongue absent from the nomenclature of languages and dialects with which philology is acquainted; they are said to emanate from a source (Occultism) repudiated by science; and, finally, they are offered through an agency, incessantly discredited before the world by all those who hate unwelcome truths, or have some special hobby of their own to defend. Therefore, the rejection of these teachings may be expected, and must be accepted beforehand. No one styling himself a “scholar,” in whatever department of exact science, will be permitted to regard these teachings seriously. They will be derided and rejected *a priori* in this century; but only in this one. For in the twentieth century of our era scholars will begin to recognise that the *Secret Doctrine* has neither been invented nor exaggerated, but, on the contrary, simply outlined; and finally, that its teachings antedate the Vedas. . . .

. . . Speaking of the keys to the Zodiacal mysteries as being almost lost to the world, it was remarked by the writer in “*Isis Unveiled*” some ten years ago that:

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The said key must be turned *seven* times before the whole system is divulged. We will give it but *one* turn, and thereby allow the profane one glimpse into the mystery. Happy he, who understands the whole!

The same may be said of the whole Esoteric system. One turn of the key, and no more, was given in "ISIS." Much more is explained in these volumes. In those days the writer hardly knew the language in which the work was written, and the disclosure of many things, freely spoken about now, was forbidden. In Century the Twentieth some disciple more informed, and far better fitted, may be sent by the Masters of Wisdom to give final and irrefutable proofs that there exists a Science called *Gupta-Vidyâ*; and that like the once-mysterious sources of the Nile, the source of all religions and philosophies now known to the world has been for many ages forgotten and lost to men, but is at last found.

— *Ibid.*, pp. xxxvii-xxxix

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. . . But to the public in general and the readers of the "*Secret Doctrine*" I may repeat what I have stated all along, and which I now clothe in the words of Montaigne: Gentlemen, "I HAVE HERE MADE ONLY A NOSEGAY OF CULLED FLOWERS, AND HAVE BROUGHT NOTHING OF MY OWN BUT THE STRING THAT TIES THEM."

Pull the "string" to pieces and cut it up in shreds, if you will. As for the nosegay of FACTS — you will never be able to make away with these. You can only ignore them, and no more.

We may close with a parting word concerning this Volume I. In an INTRODUCTION prefacing a Part dealing chiefly with Cosmogony, certain subjects brought forward might be deemed out of place, but one more consideration added to those already given has led me to touch upon them. Every reader will inevitably judge the statements made from the standpoint of his own knowledge, experience, and consciousness, based on what he has already learned. This fact the writer is constantly obliged to bear in mind: hence, also the frequent references in this first Book to matters which, properly speaking, belong to a later part of the work, but which could not be passed by in silence, lest the reader should look down on this work as a fairy tale indeed — a fiction of some modern brain.

Thus, the *Past* shall help to realize the PRESENT, and the latter to better appreciate the PAST. The errors of the day must be explained and swept away, yet it is more than probable — and in the present case it amounts to certitude — that once more the testimony of long ages and of history will fail to impress anyone but the very intuitional — which is equal to saying the very few.— *Ibid.*, pp. xlvi-xlvi

## PSYCHOLOGY: TRUE AND FALSE

H. T. EDGE, M. A.



WRITER, in speaking of the speck of protoplasmic jelly as the origin from which the human embryo takes its start, says:

"We might expect (did we not know the wonderful process it is destined to undergo) any sort of development or none at all; yet within that apparently formless, microscopic compass lie potentialities which will ultimately result in the production of the complex and wonderfully co-ordinated human body, with its array of specialized organs. Such a history may well illustrate the impossibility of passing a judgment on any form of life from contemplating its origin alone." (Miss E. M. Caillard in *Hibbert Journal*, July)

How many theories does this invalidate? Yet there seems something philosophically wrong about the last statement; and perhaps we may get over the difficulty by slightly altering the statement and saying that it is impossible to judge of a form of life from contemplating its *alleged* origin alone. Perhaps again the difficulty lies in the word 'contemplating,' and we should say that it is impossible to forecast the future from a cursory and superficial glimpse of the alleged origin. Thus the stigma is removed from philosophy and cast upon the shoulders of our own inefficiency.

For first, *is* the said speck the origin of the human organism? And next, is it nothing but a speck of protoplasmic jelly? If that speck contains the whole potentiality of what it will become, that potentiality ought to be perceivable; if the origin could be adequately studied, the result ought to be predictable. And if that speck does not contain the entire potentiality, then it cannot rightly be called *the* origin, but only *an* origin, one factor out of several.

It is important also to notice that, before the biologist can predict the outcome, he must have known it already. He has traced the path backwards from the human form to the speck, but he could never have gone forwards. And how often do we find, on examining such schemes of evolution, that the whole of that which is to be derived must first be presupposed! We attempt to pass from the atom to the God, and find ourselves obliged to begin by endowing the atom with all the powers of the God. In the attempt to reduce the complex to the simple, we have to endow each component of our analysis with greater and more wonderful powers, until the rudiment becomes more marvelous than its product. Utter failure has attended the endeavor to construct a universe and to people it by starting with a grain of dust endowed with nothing but the power of attraction. Actual experiment has revealed something very

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different — the electron, which seems to be the very Soul and God of the material world. We need an application of mathematics here. Is the One the smallest and humblest of numbers, as in the mathematics of the cash-register; or is it, as in the symbolic card-deck, the greatest of all the numbers; is the One the Whole?

Everything proceeds from the One, and the One is the Whole. If we reduce the complex human organism to its simplest form, if we resolve it into a unit, we thereby at the same time elevate it to its most godlike and potent form. What human being can accomplish what that protoplasmic speck achieves?

The whole man that is to be exists beforehand, enthroned so high that our bodily senses perceive him not, and our microscopes reveal but the tip of his little finger, which we call a protoplasmic speck. What we call the evolution of the speck is the gradual descent of the man, bit by bit, into the plane of visibility. And who shall say but his death is a reascent into the sublime, leaving behind once more nothing visible but — the protoplasmic speck?

What we have been calling evolution seems to be the history of things as they come into visibility, the drama of their gradual descent upon the physical plane. A friend with a remarkable memory once told us that he recalled seeing, when he was a baby, his mother gradually growing larger and larger; she was only drawing nearer and nearer, but his infantile mind had not yet learnt the formula which relates distance to apparent size. In the same way, what we call evolution is the coming of things nearer to us. If there are latent within us finer senses that can see beyond the veil of physical objectivity, we might be able to discern the product in the germ, to see the future. Applied to the evolution of events, this would be tantamount to prophecy.

The hindbefore method in evolutionary theory has tempted people to represent thought as a chemical process, instead of regarding chemical action as a species of thought. In biology people are trying to represent man's highest and noblest aspirations as merely forms of the "primitive instincts" which they seem to descry in the lowlier organisms. Perhaps this also is a hindbefore method. Perhaps those primitive instincts are the product of the high aspirations, instead of the other way round. The vileness of the ape, is it the parent of our own social amenities; or is it a degenerative product of the same? We ask, because nowadays there are eminent people who say that the ape has descended from the man, not the man risen from the ape.

That morbid school of biology associated with the name of Freud tries to find in man's cogitations and aspirations the mere varnished and modified representatives of vulgar propensities. But consider an idiot;

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is a sensible man a perfected form of idiot? Or is an idiot a degenerate form of man? Is my refined yearning for the realization of harmony and happiness nothing but an elaboration of the idiot's degenerate habits? Or are his degenerate habits the distortion of those high aspirations which he is unable to realize?

If, in the abandonment of uneasy slumbers and an overloaded digestive tract, there float before my eyes visions of gruesome experiences, are these the stones out of which the lordly edifice of my soul is built? Nay, they are but the funguses and weeds that grow in an untilled soil. To try and fathom human nature by studying its most morbid manifestations may yield results of a kind; and in the same way we might learn something of the yerba-santa by studying the fungus that grows, in pitiful mockery of its host, from the roots of that plant. Yet to say that the plant is an evolutionary product of the parasite!

While philosophers and scientists of various schools are dimly groping their way towards a lucid and workable analysis of human nature, the sages of the far past would seem to have achieved it long ago, and to have reached their wisdom by the most refined methods of self-study and contemplation. We have only to refer to the philosophies of ancient India in illustration of this remark. This is not the place to enter into a description of the numerous grades of consciousness and mental action recognised in such systems; but roughly we may regard the intellect as that field of consciousness wherein are displayed the overlapping activities of spiritual vision on the one hand and animal instinct on the other. It is thus that we shall discover in our mental process many elements both of mere instinct and of divine intuition, of selfish propensity and of lofty aspiration to duty. And, if we try to represent the man himself as merely the sum-total of his component parts, we shall reduce him to a committee, with an elective and representative chairman in perpetual conflict with his unruly constituents. Says Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*:

“It is even a portion of myself which, having assumed life in this world of conditioned existence, draweth together the five senses and the mind in order that it may obtain a body and may leave it again.”

Thus man is the One and the Many; and the Many do not constitute the man, but only the house wherein he dwells and the instrument he uses. Yet this is scarcely true of the imperfect man we know; for in him there are numerous rebellious subjects disputing the government with the rightful sovereign.

An animal cannot study its own instincts; but a man can study his instincts, because he has a mind which can stand aloof from them. How

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then shall a man study his own mind? To view a scene in which we are included, we must rise above and out of it to a higher level; and this is the method of ancient wisdom, which prescribes self-mastery as the necessary preliminary to knowledge. To achieve vision, the mind must be steady; and as we find it pulled hither and thither by many vain impulses, it will be more profitable to practise ourselves in the mastery of these impulses than to perplex ourselves with inquiries into their origin. The latter knowledge will come in proportion as we succeed in the practical work. It is one of our failings that we let study and speculation outstrip actual work too far; and the consequence is that the study and speculation become vague and unpractical, and we are apt to lead a double life in which our conduct is far below the level of our professions. Hence practical work is as important in self-study as it is in the study of physics or chemistry.

The Higher Man can control the lower man, and the lower man can control the body. Modern biology is concerned too much with the relation between the lower man and his body, and does not attend sufficiently to the relation between the Higher Man and the lower man. The mind is, as it were, a throne; and we may permit our lower instincts to sit on that throne, so that man becomes an intelligent animal, following his own desires, though these desires may seem very refined and grandiose. But that throne can also be occupied by the spirit of wisdom and conscience, thus making man a worthy son of his divine parentage. And when the wisdom and conscience take control of the mind, the mind reacts healthily on the bodily instrument, and the animal instincts are relegated to their proper sphere and dimensions.

The kind of psychology referred to seems to bear the same relation to real psychology as pathology does to physiology, or morbid anatomy to a study of the structure of the body in health: it is a study of diseased conditions; and, as such, it has of course its proper sphere, or can be over-emphasized so as to overstep that sphere. What is needed is a study of character, based on the cardinal truth that man's psychic nature is dual, and his mind the battle-ground between animal and divine incentives. Then, instead of performing experiments upon invalids or children, we shall endeavor to summon to their aid the power of their higher nature and to check the manifestations of intrusive lower impulses.

## NOEL!

KENNETH MORRIS

GOD said, *Let there be light,*  
And Chaos and Darkness heard,  
And their old desolation stirred,  
And a thrill ran out through the night,  
And shagged world rose against world,  
With shock and terror and flight,  
The Deep and the Deep at strife;  
Thunder on thunder hurled;  
And winged things born of the slime,  
Dripping and venomous, whirled  
Out into space and time;  
And Death was at travail, and Life  
Was the birth, and the horror of night  
Stirred and maddened and quickened, and lo, in the midst of it, Light!

Ye Nations, have ye not heard  
What new more wonderful word  
Is spoken of Fate to ye now?  
Were the riot and ruin in vain?  
Have they perished for naught, that were slain?  
Will ye turn from your old division  
And the lies ye believed disavow?  
Is there none of ye gifted with vision  
For this splendor on Sinai now?  
Have ye none of ye ears to hear  
What is cried from the clouds on the brow  
Of the Mount of the Law, that your ages to be may be reft of fear?

Have ye none of ye ears to hear?  
Was there naught to be won from the pain  
Ye have suffered these years? Think well  
If yet in your bonds ye shall dwell  
Content to dally with hell,  
Nation the rival of nation, and the devil War unslain?

For he, though ye forge him a chain,  
Though ye gird him about with words,  
Save he be utterly slain  
Shall arise and destroy ye again:  
Can ye bind the wild lion with gossamer? feed him with syrup and curds?

## NOEL

Ah, break and forget ye the sword!  
For either the God in Man shall be Master and Lord  
Of the years to come and the sunlit lands and seas,  
Or else must the Earth your home go down and down  
In plague and famine and madness and dire disease,  
Waste and ruin where once were field and town.

It is Life or Death that is offered ye: choose ye of these!

“I have no favorite son,”  
Saith the Law; “no Chosen Race;  
None I exalt in grace,  
Nor abase into slavery none.  
But mine is every one  
His course in time to run:  
To be crowned and blest with the meed  
Of his righteous thought and deed,  
Or to mourn and suffer and bleed  
For what ill things he hath done.”

— “I have no favorite, I,”  
Saith the Spirit, “but mine are ye all,  
Ye that are born and die!  
Yellow and White, ye are mine,  
Saxon and Latin and Gaul,—  
Wherever the white stars shine,  
Wherever the sea-waves fall,  
Under the blue of the sky  
I have no favorite, I,”  
Saith the Spirit, “but mine are ye all!”

There is one sole Monarchy, Man!  
Ye are not many, but one.  
What hath been since this age began  
Hath affronted the light of the Sun.  
Nor is any victory won  
Till ye fashion and perfect a plan  
For the one sole Monarchy, Man;  
For ye are not many, but One!

Monarchy? — Yea, and the King,  
This is the Spirit of Man!  
Let the wild carillons ring,  
Bell sing loud unto bell:  
*Noel, Noel, Noel,*

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*Unto you is born a King  
Which hath been since the world began,  
Unto you is born a King,—  
The God in Man!*

“Let there be Light!” said the Law;  
And lo, o’er the gloom of Time  
Riseth the Star sublime  
That Gaspar and Melchior saw!—  
That Balthazzar and Gaspar and Melchior, Kings of the Orient, saw!—  
Unto you is born a King!  
Gold and frankincense bring!  
Tribute of myrrh and gold!  
Ye that were many of old,  
That were separate, disparate, far,—  
That were sunk in a lying creed, in the idol-worship of War!  
Ye that henceforth shall be one!  
Seeing what your idol hath done,  
What havoc division hath wrought for ye,— rise ye and follow the Star!  
Let the dead past lie with the dead! Let the beautiful new time bring  
This new most beautiful thing,  
The Kingdom of God, the Republic of Man,—and the God in Man to be King!

## IS RELIGION A FAILURE?

R. MACHELL



WE hear rather frequently such questions as this: “Has religion failed?” or “Has this particular religion proved a failure?” Particularly is this asked in connexion with the great war and with the disturbed condition of society throughout the world. The questioners generally seem to have an idea, vague perhaps and unexpressed, but persistent, that religion may be expected to accomplish that which its adherents make no effort to achieve.

Most religionists profess a love of peace, and I suppose that there are few really religious persons who wish for war at any time. And it is certain that many such have expressed deep regret that the war-fever was not perceptibly checked by the numerous religions in the world. They treat the religion as if it were a person endowed with power of independent action, and carrying responsibility for controlling the conduct of its adherents. They deliberately and energetically adopt a course of action, as for instance war, and then complain that their religion

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has not maintained peace. This is not a fair treatment of religion.

Yet it is apparently on just such grounds of disappointment that, in the past, the nations have forsaken their adopted gods and taken others. The innumerable Western sects today, however, claim the same god, and seem to distinguish between their religion and the Supreme Deity in the matter of control, for none of them ask if God has failed. To do so would put them outside the pale of any church.

This seems to suggest the thought that their religion may be something that stands between them and the Deity; the efficacy of which may reasonably and reverently be called in question. I do not propose to question this attitude of mind. But I do think it would be well for all to accept responsibility for their own acts and words and even for their own thoughts.

It may be too much to ask that all people assume responsibility for their own thoughts, because so very many have scarcely yet learned to think one single thought by themselves; and the vast majority of human beings follow the flow of the tide of local opinion (if such a word can be applied to it). The word opinion distinctly implies thought, consideration, judgment, discrimination, and decision, all of which are almost unknown to the mass of humanity, who drift with the tide, or are guided by personal desire, social prejudice, national passion, or some other collective impulse. Such as these can not be said to form opinions, even if they go so far as to accept them ready-made. Indeed one might say that what passes for public opinion would be better named popular prejudice. Opinion is the result of individual or collective thinking. Prejudice is a ready-made substitute for opinion, which frequently passes for the genuine article.

True religion is aspiration towards the Divine: and, while a number of individual aspirants may accept certain ready-made opinions as to the nature of Divinity and its relation to man, as well as to man's duty to others, and to his accepted ideal of the Divine, yet these opinions are external to, and not an essential part of, that religious aspiration, which may appear to inspire them. The essential part of a religion is the individual aspiration towards the Divine.

If this be so, then one must admit that there is probably a vast deal of true religion outside the pale of the innumerable sects; and it may seem at first sight that religious organizations have generally contented themselves with a substitute, in which individual aspiration plays a very small part.

But even so these organizations have power, though it may be entirely unrelated to that spiritual power which in some cases is claimed. The power of such a church is social and political, and just as moral as

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its members choose to make it. They may make it very powerful in those fields in which they themselves are active and interested; and it will accomplish just what its members most ardently desire. For them to complain of its failure is to condemn themselves.

There are probably large numbers of people who are members of such religious bodies, who individually have certain spiritual aspirations, which they try to adapt to the ready-made formulas of their church. The result is disastrous; for the simple reason that a spiritual impulse will find its own mental form, and will work itself out into expression in actual life in its own way; or it will remain an aspiration, vague, formless, and ineffective.

When a group of people come together with a common aspiration, and can individually renounce all personal desires, they may evoke a spiritual force, that will be potent on its own plane, and that may find expression on the plane of human life, by vitalizing the intelligence and emotions of the individuals, as well as of the group collectively. But in such cases it is probably true that the individuals do not come together fortuitously, nor by reason of personal attraction, nor of intellectual equality, nor of community of interests. They come together in answer to a call from the soul, which is One. The Divine is calling eternally from the center of the Universe to the utmost limits of differentiated matter: and its call is heard by souls, that are involved in material bodies; and each in his way responds, some actively perhaps. These feel within their hearts an urge that seems to be an answer to their own longing, making them for the moment different from their fellows. Then they look round into the eyes of all they meet to find some recognition or some sign of sympathy, and, finding it, they know that such a one has also heard the call. Then comes the fatal tendency to self-congratulation, the fond delusion that the call establishes some sort of a superiority; then the group begins to look upon itself as chosen, set apart, elect. An attitude of separateness arises, and the door, that had been opened towards the Universal, closes; for the Divine is Universal, and the one Brotherhood is Universal. Its church is the entire Universe, perhaps; or it may be that in the Universal Brotherhood there would be no need for any church.

The crude idea of the unimaginative and dogmatic materialist seems to be that people come together and formulate a religion, having agreed upon the kind of God they think fitting to preside over their functions and to minister to their needs. Many learned writers on the subject evidently regard religion in some such light, and of course it is such as they that ask if religion is a failure, when things go wrong in the world. Yet they of all others should be the first to realize that such a religious

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organization could not possess power and initiative beyond that supplied by the members of the club, for such it is. The fact is that such associations do not really deserve to be considered under the head of religious bodies. There can be no religion without spiritual aspiration, and the existence of such an aspiration can only come as answer to a spiritual call from the Divine Soul of the Universe.

It is often claimed that the word religion implies a power to bind; and this is further explained as being the attraction that binds the souls of men to the soul of a God.

It must be supposed that the Deity precedes the man, unless it be granted that man is himself Divine and capable of creating his own God. And the power that binds man to God must presumably emanate from the God. This would be the call of religion. Man's response would be an aspiration to the Divine. This would be true religion: the forms in which the expression of this aspiration may be clothed are ulterior and generally irrelevant.

But formalities have come to be so generally accepted as essentials, that now we can hardly disentangle the original idea of religion from the mere outward ceremony and the formal organization of groups of people for the promotion of their particular interests. It has been called socialized superstition but I think that materialism has killed even the superstition that in past ages formed such an important part of all religion. In place of superstition we find respectability and philanthropy coupled with formulas which have lost almost all their original significance.

Yet a faint aroma of true devotion still lingers in the old rituals, and makes them seem beautiful to those in whom the call of the Divine is not entirely drowned by the loud call of the world, with its coarse joys, and deadening toil, and griefs and disappointments. And many, who have lost faith in God and man, and have no hope here or hereafter, still cling to the old forms despairingly; for there is in every heart the need of a religion. This may seem questionable in view of the general decay of faith, but I think it is evidenced by the fact that the death of religion coincides with an accentuation of pessimism; and it is certainly the explanation of the zeal that people display in defense of their particular religion, in which they themselves scarcely pretend to have faith. I mean to suggest that there is in every living human being a link with the Divine; which link is the higher self of the individual; and that this link is itself what I have alluded to as the call of the Divine. It is the insistence of this call in the heart of man that defies the efforts of the brain-mind to silence it, and which stirs and stimulates some expression of religious aspiration, whether formulated or not. This it is that maintains the life in dying forms of faith, and which also impels men to the

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search for more fitting modes of expression. It is the same urge that creates the iconoclast, the religious fanatic, and the conservative defender of a dead faith. All these modes of mind are the response made by various natures to the call of the Divine. It is this inner urge that gives each one who feels it the assurance of the sincerity of his convictions, and which intensifies faith in one and fanaticism in another.

When we look more closely into the real nature of religion, true or false, we may come to the conclusion that, while emancipation from the tyranny of religious forms, creeds, and sectarianism may be a sign of spiritual development, yet the total destruction of the religious spirit means disaster to human civilization; for it is the outcome of the reflexion in the lower mind of some ray of light from the Spiritual Self, separation from which means soul-death.

The soulless man may be able to dispense with the light of the soul, for a while, because physical dissolution does not necessarily follow directly upon soul-death; but such men are little more than living dead men, and all their activities must be futile, lacking the breath of life in the soul of the doer.

There are many who declare that religion today is dead, and there are many who think that it was never more alive: and it seems to me probable that there is ground for both statements; for all men are not soulless, assuredly, though there may be more than we care to believe: and it would be safe to say that the number of those who are spiritually alive, in the true sense, is small.

If men must ask the question "Is religion a failure?" it surely is not necessary to answer it until we have come to some better understanding of what the question really means. I think a better question would be: "Has true religion had a fair trial?" The answer will be "No."

What then can be done to give it a chance? Surely the first thing to do is to find in one's own heart the source of true religion, that which I have spoken of as the call of the Divine. Then it were well to look around and see the signs in others of the same call, and, leaving aside the strange deceptive guise in which it may appear, to recognise the same spiritual essence in all living souls, and to discriminate between the living and the dead; condemning none, but shunning the contagion of the spiritually dead, and seeking to vitalize one's whole nature with the inner life, that alone can make life worth living. If this were done men would not feel themselves confined within the bounds of any sect, or creed, or church, but would live in the inner spiritual light, which is the vivifying principle in all religions. and know themselves members of a great Universal Brotherhood. If this were achieved there would be no need to fear the failure of religion.

## THE CREST-WAVE OF EVOLUTION

*A Course of Lectures in History, Given to the Graduates' Class  
in the Râja-Yoga College, Point Loma, in the College Year 1918-1919.*

### XXI — CHINA AND ROME: THE SEE-SAW (CONTINUED)

KENNETH MORRIS

URING the time of Chinese weakness Central Asia had relapsed from the control the great Han Wuti had imposed on it, and that Han Suenti had maintained by his name for justice; and the Huns had recovered their power. One wonders what these people were; of whom we first catch sight in the reign of the Yellow Emperor, nearly 3000 B. C.; and who do not disappear from history until after the death of Attila. During all those three millenniums odd they were predatory nomads, never civilized: a curse to their betters, and nothing more. And their betters were, you may say, every race they contacted.

It seems as if, as in the human blood, so among the races of mankind, there were builders and destroyers. I speculate as to the beginnings of the latter: they cannot be . . . races apart, of some special creation; — made by demons, where it was the Gods made men. . . . “To the Huns,” says Gibbon, “a fabulous origin was assigned worthy of their form and manners,— that the witches of Scythia, who for their foul and deadly practices had been driven from society, had united in the desert with infernal spirits, and that the Huns were the offspring of this execrable conjunction.” But it seems to me that it is in times of intensive civilization, and in the slums of great cities, that Nature — or anti-Nature — originates noxious human species. I wonder if their forefathers were, once on a time, the hooligans and yeggmen of some very ancient Babylon Bowery or the East End of some pre-Nimrodic Nineveh? Babylon was a great city,— or there were great cities in the neighborhood of Babylon,— before the Yellow Emperor was born. One of these may have had, God knows when, its glorious freedom-establishing revolution, its up-fountaining of sansculottes,— patriots whose predatory proclivities had erstwhile been checked of their free brilliance by busy-body tyrannical police; — and then this revolution may have been put down, and the men of the underworld who made it,— turned out now from their city haunts, driven into the wilderness and the mountains,— may have taken, — would certainly have taken, one would say,— not to any industry, (they knew none but such as are wrought by night unlawfully in other men’s houses); not to agriculture, which has ever had, for your free spirit,

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something of degradation in it; -- but to pure patriotism, freedom and liberty, as their nature was: first to cracking such desultory cribs as offered,— knocking down defenseless wayfarers and the like; then to bolder raidings and excursions; -- until presently, lo, they are a great people; they have ridden over all Asia like a scirocco; they have thundered rudely at the doors of proud princes,— troubling even the peace of the Yellow Emperor on his throne.

Well,— but isn't the stature stunted, physical, as well as mental and moral, when life is forced to reproduce itself, generation after generation, among the unnatural conditions of slums and industrialism? . . . Can you nourish men upon poisons century by century, and expect them to retain the semblance of men?

They had bothered Han Kwang-wuti; who could do little more than hold his own against them, and leave them to his successor to deal with as Karma might decree. Karma, having as you might say one watchful eye on Rome and Europe, and what need of chastisement should arise after awhile at that western end of the world, provided Han Mingti with this Pan Chow; who, being a soldier of promise, was sent upon the Hun war-path forthwith. Then the miracles began to happen. Pan Chow strolled through Central Asia as if upon his morning's constitutional: no fuss; no hurry; little fighting,— but what there was, remarkably effective, one gathers. Presently he found himself on the Caspian shore; and if he had left any Huns behind him, they were hardly enough to do more than pick an occasional pocket. He started out when the Roman provinces were rising to make an end of Nero; in the last year of Domitian, from his Caspian headquarters he determined to discover Rome; and to that end sent an emissary down through Parthia to take ship at the port of Babylon for the unknown West. The Parthians (who were all against the two great empires becoming acquainted, because they were making a good thing of it as middle-men in the Roman-Chinese caravan trade), knew better, probably, than to oppose Pan Chow's designs openly; but their agents haunted the quays at Babylon, tampered with west-going skippers, and persuaded the Chinese envoy to go no farther. But I wonder whether some impulse achieved flowing across the world from east to west at that time, even though its physical link or channel was thus left incomplete? It was in that very year that Nerva re-established constitutionalism and good government in Rome.

Pan Chow worked as if by magic: seemed to make no effort, yet accomplished all things. For nearly forty years he kept that vast territory in order, despite the huge frontier northward, and the breeding-place of nomad nations beyond. All north of Tibet is a region of marvels. Where you were careful to leave only the village blacksmith under his spreading

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chestnut-tree, or the innkeeper and his wife, for the sake of future travelers, — let a century or two pass, and their descendants would be as the sea-sands for multitude; they would have founded a power, and be thundering down on an empire-smashing raid in Persia or China or India: Whether Huns, Sienpi, Jiujen, Turks, Tatars, Tunguses, Mongols, Manchus: God knows what all, but all destroyers. But as far as the old original Huns were concerned, Pan Chow settled their hash for them. Bag and baggage he dealt with them; and practically speaking, the land of their fathers knew them no more. Dry the starting tear! here your pity is misplaced. Think of no vine-covered cottages ruined; no homesteads burned; no fields laid waste. They lived mainly in the saddle; they were as much at home fleeing before the Chinese army as at another time. A shunt here; a good kick off there: so he dealt with them. It is in European veins their blood flows now; — and prides itself on its pure undiluted Aryanism and Nordicism, no doubt. I suppose scarcely a people in continental Europe is without some mixture of it; for they enlisted at last in all foraying armies, and served under any banner and chief.

Pan Chow felt that they belonged to the (presumably) barbarous regions west of the Caspian. Ta Ts'in in future might deal with them; by God's grace, Han never should. He gently pushed them over the brink; removed them; cut the cancer out of Asia. Next time they appeared in history, it was not on the Hoangho, but on the Danube. Meanwhile, they established themselves in Russia; moved across Central Europe, impelling Quadi and Marcomans against Marcus Aurelius, and then Teutons of all sorts against the whole frontier of Rome. In the sixties, for Han Mingti, Pan Chow set that great wave in motion in the far east of the world. Three times thirteen decades passed, and it broke and wasted in foam in the far west: in what we may call the Very First Battle of the Marne, when Aetius defeated Attila in 451. I can but think of one thing better he might have done: shipped them eastward to the remote Pacific Islands; but it is too late to suggest that now. — But I wonder what would have happened if Pan Chow had succeeded in reaching his arm across, and grasping hands with Trajan? He had not died; the might of China had not begun to recede from its westward limits, before the might of Rome under that great Spaniard had begun to flow towards its limits in the east.

Through the bulk of the second century China remained static, or weakening. Her forward urge seems to have ended with the death of Pan Chow, or at the end of the half-cycle Han Kwang-wuti began in 35. We might tabulate the two concurrent Han cycles, for the sake of clearness, and note their points of intersection, thus:

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WESTERN HAN CYCLE, 130 years      EASTERN HAN HALF-CYCLE, 65 yrs  
35 A. D.      Opened by Han  
Kwang-wuti.

A static and consolidating time until  
67 A. D., thirteen decades from the  
death of Han Chaoti. Introduction  
of Buddhism in 65.

The period of Pan Chao's victories;  
the Golden Age of the Eastern  
Hans, lasting until (about)

100 A. D. the end of the Eastern  
Han 'Day'; death of Pan Chow.

Continuance of Day under this,      and supervention of Night under  
this Cycle, produce

A static, but weakening period until

165, the year in which a new  
Eastern Han Day should begin.  
A weak recrudescence should  
be seen.

197: the year in which the main  
or original Han Cycle should end.  
We should expect the beginnings  
of a downfall. By or before

230, the end of the second,  
feeble, Eastern Han Day, the  
downfall would have been completed.

Now to see how this works out.

The first date we have to notice is 165. Well; in the very scant notices of Chinese history I have been able to come on, two events mark this date; or rather, one marks 165, and the other 166. To take the latter first: we saw that at a momentous point in Roman history,-- in the year of Nerva's accession, 96,— China tried to discover Rome. In 166 Rome actually succeeded in discovering China. This year too, as we shall see, was momentous in Roman history. You may call it a half cycle after the other; for probably the ambassadors of King An-Tun of Ta Ts'in, who arrived at the court of Han Hwanti at Loyang in 166, had been a few years on their journey. You know King An-tun better by his Latin name of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

The event for 165 is the foundation of the Taoist Church, under the

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half-legendary figure of its first Pope, Chang Taoling; whose lineal descendants and successors have reigned Popes of Taoism from their Vatican on the Dragon-Tiger Mountain in Kiangsi ever since. They have not advertised their virtues in their names, however: we find no Innocents and Piuses here: they are all plain Changs; his reigning Holiness being Chang the Sixty-somethingth. It was from Buddhism that the Taoists took the idea of making a church of themselves. Taoism and Buddhism from the outset were fiercely at odds; and yet the main splendor of China was to come from their inner coalescence. Chu Hsi, the greatest of the Sung philosophers of the brilliant twelfth century A. D., says that "Buddhism stole the best features of Taoism; Taoism stole the worst features of Buddhism: as if the one took a jewel from the other, and the other recouped the loss with a stone."\* This is exact: the jewel stolen by Buddhism was Laotse's Blue Pearl,—Wonder and Natural Magic; the stone that Taoism took instead was the priestly hierarchy and church organization, imitated from the Buddhists, that grew up under the successors of Chang Taoling.

If Laotse founded any school or order at all, it remained quite secret. I imagine his mission was like Plato's, not Buddha's: to start ideas, not a brotherhood. By Ts'in Shi Hwangti's time, any notions that were wild, extravagant, and gorgeous were Taoism; which would hardly have been, perhaps, had there been a Taoist organization behind them; — although it is not safe to dogmatize. It was, at any rate, mostly an inspiration to the heights for the best minds, and for the masses (including Ts'in Shi Hwangti) a rumor of tremendous things. After Han Wuti's next successor, the best minds took to thinking Confucianly: which was decidedly a good thing for China during the troublous times before and after the fall of the Western Hans. Then when Buddhism came in, Taoism came to the fore again, spurred up to emulation by this new rival. I take it that Chang Taoling's activities round about this year 165 represent an impulse of the national soul to awakenment under the influence of the recurrence of the Eastern Han Day half-cycle. What kind of reality Chang Taoling represents, one cannot say: whether a true teacher in his degree, sent by the Lodge, around whom legends have gathered; or a mere dabbler in alchemy and magic. Here is the story told of him: you will note an incident or two in it that suggest the former possibility.

He retired to the mountains of the west to study magic, cultivate purity of life, and engage in meditation; stedfastly declining the offers of emperors who desired him to take office. Laotse appeared to him in a vision, and gave him a treatise in which were directions for making the

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\**Chinese Literature*: H. A. Giles.

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'Elixir of the Dragon and the Tiger.' While he was brewing this, a spirit came to him and said: "On the Pe-sung Mountain is a house of stone; buried beneath it are the Books of the Three Emperors (Yao, Shun, and Yu). Get these, practise the discipline they enjoin, and you will attain the power of ascending to heaven." He found the Pe-sung Mountain; and the stone house; and dug, and discovered the books; which taught him how to fly, to leave his body at will, and to hear all sounds the most distant. During a thousand days he disciplined himself; a goddess came to him, and taught him to walk among the stars; then he learned to cleave the seas and the mountains, and command the thunder and the winds. He fought the king of the demons, whose hosts fled before him "leaving no trace of their departing footsteps." So great slaughter he wrought in that battle that, we are told, "various divinities came with eager haste to acknowledge their faults." In nine years he gained the power of ascending to heaven. His last days were spent on the Dragon-Tiger Mountain; where, at the age of a hundred and twenty-three, he drank the elixir, and soared skyward in broad daylight; — followed (I think it was he) by all the poultry in his barnyard, immortalized by the drops that fell from the cup as he drank. He left his books of magic, and his magical sword and seal, to his descendants; but I think the Dragon-Tiger Mountain did not come into their possession until some centuries later.

I judge that the tales of the Taoist *Sennin* or Adepts, if told by some Chinese-enamored Lafcadio, would be about the best collection of fairy-stories in the world; they reveal a universe so deliciously nooked and crannied with bewildering possibilities: — as indeed this our universe is; only not all its byways are profitable traveling. It is all very well to cry out against superstition; but we are only half-men in the West: we have lost the faculty of wonder and the companionship of extrahuman things. We walk our narrow path to nowhere safely trussed up in our personal selves: or we not so much walk at all, as lie still, chrysalised in them: — it may be just as well, since for lack of the quality of balance, we are about as capable of walking at ease and dignity as is a jellyfish of doing Blondin on the tight-rope. China, in her pralaya and dearth of souls, may have fallen into the perils of her larger freedom, and some superstition rightly to be called degrading: in our Middle Ages, when we were in pralaya, we were superstitious enough; and being unbalanced, fell into other evils too such as China never knew: black tyrannies of dogmatism, burnings of heretics wholesale. But when the Crest-Wave Egos were in China, that larger freedom of hers enabled her, among other things, to achieve the highest heights in art: the Yellow Crane was at her disposal, and she failed not to mount the heavens; she had the

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glimpses Wordsworth pined for; she was not left forlorn. This merely for another blow at that worst superstition of all: Unbrotherliness, and our doctrine of Superior Racehood. — Many of the tales are mere thau-matolatry: as of the man who took out his bones and washed them once every thousand years; or of the man who would fill his mouth with rice-grains, let them forth as a swarm of bees to gather honey in the valley; then readmit them into his mouth as to a hive, where they became rice again,—presumably “sweetened to taste.” But in others there seems to be a core of symbolism and recognition of the fundamental things. There was a man once,—the tale is in Giles’s Dictionary of Chinese Biography, but I forget his name— who sought out the Sennin Ho Kwang (his name might have been Ho Kwang); and found him at last in a gourd-flask, whither he was used to retire for the night. In this retreat Ho Kwang invited our man to join him; and he was enabled to do so; and found it, once he had got in, a fair and spacious palace enough. Three days he remained there learning; while fifteen years were passing in China without. Then Ho Kwang gave him a rod, and a spell to say over it; and bade him go his ways. He would lay the rod on the ground, stand astride of it, and speak the spell; and straight it became a dragon for him to mount and ride the heavens where he would. Thenceforth for many years he was a kind of Guardian Spirit over China: appearing suddenly wherever there was distress or need of help: at dawn in mountain Chungnan by Changan town in the north; at noon, maybe, by the southern sea; at dusk he might be seen a-dragon-back above the sea-mists rolling in over Yangtse; — and all in the same day. But at last, they say, he forgot the spell, and found himself riding the clouds on a mere willow wand; — and the wand behaving as though Newton had already watched that aggravating apple; — and himself, in due course dashed to pieces on the earth below. — There is some fine symbolism here; the makings of a good story.

And now we come to 197, “the year in which (to quote our tabulation above) the main or original Han Cycle should end,” and in which “we should expect the beginnings of a downfall.” The Empire, as empires go, is very old now: four hundred and forty odd years since Ts’in Shi Hwangti founded it; as old as Rome was (from Julius Caesar’s time) when the East and West split under Arcadius and Honorius; nearly three centuries older than the British Empire is now: — the cyclic force is running out, centripetalism very nearly wasted. In these one-nineties we find two non-entitous brothers quarreling for the throne: who has eyes to see, now, can see that the days of Han are numbered. All comes to an end in 220, ten years before the third half-cycle (and therefore second ‘day’) of the Eastern Han series; there is not force enough left to carry things

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through till 230. Han Hienti, the survivor of the two brothers aforesaid, retired into private life; the dynasty was at an end, and the empire split in three. In Ssechuan a Han prince set up a small unstable throne; another went to Armenia, and became a great man there; but in Loyang the capital, Ts'ao Ts'ao, the man who engineered the fall of the Hans, set his son as Wei Wenti on the throne.

He was a very typical figure, this Ts'ao Ts'ao: a man ominous of disintegration. You cannot go far in Chinese poetry without meeting references to him. He rose during the reign of the last Han,— the Chien-An period, as it is called, from 196 to 221,— by superiority of energies and cunning, from a wild irregular youth spent as hanger-on of no particular position at the court,— the son of a man that had been adopted by a chief eunuch,— to be prime minister, commander of vast armies (he had at one time, says Dr. H. A. Giles, as many as a million men under arms), father of the empress; holder of supreme power; then, overturning of the Han, and founder of the Wei dynasty. Civilization had become effete; and such a strong wildling could play ducks and drakes with affairs. But he could not hold the empire together. Centrifugalism was stronger than Ts'ao Ts'ao.

The cycles and all else here become confused. The period from 220 to 265 — about a half-cycle, you will note, from 196 and the beginning of the Chien-An time, or the end of the main Han Cycle,— is known as that of the San Koue or Three Kingdoms: its annals read like Froissart, they say; — gay with raidings, excursions, and alarms. It was the riot of life disorganized in the corpse, when organized life had gone. A great historical novel dealing with this time,— one not unworthy, it is said, of Scott,— remains to be translated. Then, by way of reaction, came another half-cycle (roughly) of reunion: an unwarlike period of timid politics and a super-refined effeminate court; it was, says Professor Harper Parker, “a great age of calligraphy, belles lettres, fans, chess, wine-bibbing and poetry-making.” Then, early in the fourth century, China split up again: crafty ladylike Chinese houses ruling in the south; and in the north a wild medley of dynasties, Turkish, Tungus, Tatar, and Tibetan,— even some relics of the Huns; sometimes one at a time, sometimes half a dozen all together. Each barbarian race took on hastily something of Chinese culture, and in turn imparted to it certain wild vigorous qualities which one sees very well in the northern art of the period: strong, fierce, dramatic landscapes; Nature painted in her sudden and terrific moods. China was still in manvantara, though under obscuratation; she still drew her moiety of Crest-Wave souls: there were great men, but through a lack of co-ordination, they failed to make a great empire or nation. So here we may take leave of her for a couple of centuries.

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Just why the vigor of the Crest-Wave was called off in the two-twenties, causing her to split then, we shall see presently. Back now to Rome, at the time of the death of Pan Chow the Hun-expeller and the end of the one glorious half-cycle of the Eastern Hans.

As China went down, Rome came up. Pan Chow died early in the reign of Trajan, the first great Roman conqueror since Julius Caesar; and only the Caspian Sea, and perhaps a few years, divided Trajan's eastern outposts from the western outposts of the Hans. We need not stay with this Spaniard longer than to note that here was a case where grand military abilities were of practical value: Trajan used his to subserve the greatness of his statesmanship; only a general of the first water could have brought the army under the new constitutional régime. The soldiers had been setting up Caesars ever since the night they pitched on old Claudius in his litter; now came a Caesar who could set the soldiers down. — His nineteen years of sovereignty were followed by the twenty-one of Hadrian: a very great emperor indeed; a master statesman, and queer mass of contradictions whose private life is much better uninquired into. He was a mighty builder and splendid adorer of cities; all that remained unsystematized in the Augustan system, he reduced to perfect system and order. His laws were excellent and humane; he introduced a special training for the Civil Service, which wrought enormous economies in public affairs: officials were no longer to obtain their posts by imperial appointment, which might be wise or not, but because of their own tested efficiency for the work. — Then came the golden twenty-three years of Antoninus Pius, from 138 to 161: a time of peace and strength, with a wise and saintly emperor on the throne. The flower Rome now was in perfect bloom: an urbane, polished, and ordered civilization covered the whole expanse of the empire. Hadrian had legislated for the down-trodden: no longer had you power of life and death over your slaves; they were protected by the law like other men; you could not even treat them harshly. True, there was slavery,— a canker; and there were the gladiatorial games: we may feel piously superior if we like. But there was much humanism also. There was no proletariat perpetually on the verge of starvation, as in nineteenth and twentieth century Europe. If we can look back now and say, There was this, that, or the other sign of oncoming decay; the thing could not last; — it will also be remarkably easy for us, two thousand years hence, to be just as wise about these present years 'of grace.' It is perhaps safe to say — as I think Gibbon says — that there was greater happiness among a greater number than there has been at any time in Christendom since. Gibbon calculates that there were twice as many slaves as free citizens: we do know that their number was immense,— that it was not unusual for one man to own

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several thousand. But they were well treated; often highly educated; might become free with no insuperable difficulty: — their position was perhaps comparable with that of slaves in Turkey now, who are insulted if you call them servants. Gibbon estimates the population at a hundred and twenty millions; many authorities think the figure too high; but Gibbon may well be right, or even under the mark, — and it may account for the rapid decline that followed the age of the Antonines. For I suspect that a too great population is a great danger; that hosts at such times pour into incarnation, besides those that have good right to call themselves human souls: — that the maxim “fewer children and better ones” is based upon deep and occult laws. China in her great days would never appear to have had more than from fifty to seventy millions: the present enormous figures have grown up only since the Manchu conquest.

There was no great stir of creative intellect and imagination in second century Rome: little noteworthy production in literature after Trajan's death. The greatest energies went into building; especially under Hadrian. The time was mainly static, — though golden. There were huge and opulent cities, and they were beautiful; there was enormous wealth; an even and widespread culture affecting to sweetness and light the lives of millions — by race Britons, Gauls, Moors, Asiatics or what not, but all proud to be Romans; all sharing in the blessings of the Roman Citizenship and Peace. Not without self-government, either, in local affairs: thus we find Welsh clans in Britain still with kings, and stranger still, with senates, of their own.

It was the quiet and perfect moment at the apex of a cycle: the moment that precedes descent. The old impulse of conquest flickered up, almost for the last time, under Trajan, some of whose gains wise Hadrian wisely abandoned. Under whom it was, and under the first Antonine, that the empire stood in its perfect and final form: neither growing nor decreasing; neither on the offensive nor actively on the defensive. — Now remember the cycles: sixty-five years of manvantara under Augustus and Tiberius, — B. C. 29 to A. D. 36. Then sixty-five mostly of pralaya from 36 to 101; and now sixty-five more of manvantara under the Five Good Emperors (or three of them), from 101 to 166.

But why stop at 166, you ask. Had not Marcus Aurelius, the best of them all, until 180 to reign? — He had; and yet the change came in 166; after that year Rome stood on the defensive until she fell. It was in that year, you will remember, that King An-tun Aurelius's envoys reached Loyang by way of Burmah and the sea.

But note this: Domitian was killed, and Nerva came to the throne, and Rome had leave to breathe freely again, in 96, — five years before the half-cycle of shadows should have ended: the two years of Nerva, and

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the first three of Trajan, we may call borrowed by the dawning manvantara from the dusk of the pralaya that was passing. Now if we took the strictness of the cycles *au very pied de lettre*, we should be a little uneasy about the last five years of that manvantara; we should expect them at least to be filled with omens of coming evil; we should expect to find in them a dark compensation for the five bright years at the tail of the old pralaya. — Well, cycles have sometimes a pretty way of fulfilling expectations. For see what happened:—

Marcus Aurelius came to the throne in 161: a known man, not untried; one, certainly, to keep the Golden Age in being,—if kept in being it might be. Greatly capable in action, saintly in life and ideals: what could Rome ask better? Or what had she to fear? — The king is the representative man: it must have been a wonderful Rome, we may note in passing, that was ruled by and went with and loved well those two saintly philosophic Antonines enthroned. — Nothing, then, could seem more hopeful. Under the circumstances it was rather a mean trick on the part of Father Tiber (to whom the Romans pray), that before a year was out he must needs be breeding trouble for his votaries: overflowing, the ingrate, and sweeping away large parts of his city; wasting fields and slaughtering men (to quote Macaulay again); drowning cattle wholesale, and causing shortage of supplies. And he does but give the hint to the other gods, it seems; who are not slow to follow suit. Earthquakes are the next thing; then fires; then comes in Beelzebub with a plague of insects. There is no end to it. The legions in Britain,— after all this long peace and good order,— grow frisky: mind them of ancient and profitable times when you might catch big fish in troubled waters; — and try to induce their general to revolt. Then Parthian Vologaeses sees his chance; declares war, annihilates a Roman army, and overruns Syria. Verus, co-emperor by a certain too generous unwisdom that remains a kind of admirable fly in the ointment of the character of Aurelius, shows his mettle against the Parthians,— taking his command as a chance for having a luxurious fling beyond the reach and supervision of his severe colleague; — and things would go ill indeed in the East but for Avidius Cassius, Verus' second in command. This Cassius returns victorious in 165, and brings in his wake disaster worse than any Parthians: — after battle, murder, and sudden death come plague, pestilence, and famine. In 166 the first of these latter three broke out, devastated Rome, Italy, the empire in general; famine followed; — it was thought the end of all things was at hand. It was the first stroke of the cataclysm that sent Rome down. . . . Then came Quadi and Marcomans, Hun-impelled, thundering on the doors of Pannonia; and for the next eleven years Aurelius was busy fighting them. Then Avidius Cassius revolted in Asia;

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— but was soon assassinated. Then the Christians emerged from their obscurity, preachers of what seemed anti-national doctrine; and the wise and noble emperor found himself obliged to deal with them harshly. He *was* wise and noble,— there is no impugning that; and he *did* deal with them harshly: we may regret it; as he must have regretted it then.

So the reign marks a definite turning-point: that at which the empire began to go down. In it the three main causes of the ruin of the ancient world appeared: the first of the pestilences that depopulated it; the first incursion of the barbarians that broke it down from without; the new religion that, with its loyalty primarily to a church, an *imperium in imperio*, undermined Roman patriotism from within. Nero's persecution of the Christians had been on a different footing: a madman's lust to be cruel, the sensuality that finds satisfaction in watching torture: there was neither statecraft nor religion in it; but here the Roman state saw itself threatened. It was threatened; but it is a pity Aurelius could find no other way.

In himself he was the culmination of all the good that had been Roman: a Stoic, and the finest fruit of Stoicism,— which was the finest fruit of philosophy unilluminated (as I think) by the spiritual light of mysticism. He practised all the virtues; but (perhaps) we do not find in him that knowledge of the Inner Laws and Worlds which alone can make practise of the virtues a saving energy in the life of nations, and the inspiration of great ages and awakener of the hidden god in the creative imagination of man. The burden of his *Meditations* is self-mastery: a reasoning of himself out of the power of the small and great annoyances of life; — this is to stand on the defensive; but the spiritual World-Conqueror must march out, and flash his conquering armies over all the continents of thought. An underlying sadness is to be felt in Aurelius's writings. He lived greatly and nobly for a world he could not save . . . that could not be saved, so far as he knew. He died in 180; and another Nero, without Nero's artistic instincts, came to the throne in his son Commodus: pralaya, military rule, disruption, had definitely set in.

Now anciently a manvantara had begun in Western Asia somewhere about 1890 B. C.; had lasted fifteen centuries, as the wont of them appears to be; and had given place to pralaya about 390; and that, in turn, was due to end in or about 220 A. D. We should, if we had confidence in these cycles, look for what remained of the Crest-Wave in Europe to be wandering flickeringly eastward about this time. Hitherto it had been in two of the three world-centers of civilization: in China and in Europe; now for a few centuries it was to be divided between three. — I am irrigating the garden, and get a fine flow from the faucet, which gives me a sense of inward peace and satisfaction. Suddenly the fine flow diminishes to

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a miserable dribble, and all my happiness is gone. I look eastward, to the next garden below on the slope; and see my neighbors busy there: their faucet has been turned on, and is flowing royally; and I know where the water is going. — The West-Asian faucet was due to be turned on in the two-twenties; now watch the spray from the sprinklers in the Chinese and Roman gardens. In those two-twenties we saw China split into three; and it rather looked as if the manvantara had ended. I shall not look at West Asia yet, but leave it for a future lecture. But in Europe, with Marcus Aurelius died almost the last Italian you could call a Crest-Wave Ego. The cyclic forces, outworn and old, produced after that no order that you can go upon: events followed each other higgledipiggledy and inertly; — but you can trace the Crest-Wave flowing east. Commodus was followed, after a year of scrambling, by the first emperor whose native language was not Latin: the Carthaginian-speaking Septimius Severus; — but it was the Illyrian legions that put him on the throne. Note that Illyria: it is what we shall soon grow accustomed to calling *Jugoslavia*. Severus's reign of eighteen years, from 193 to 211, was the only strong one, almost the only one not disgraceful, until 268; by which time the Roman world was in anarchy, split into dozens, with emperors springing up like mushrooms everywhere. Then came a succession of strong soldiers who re-established unity: Claudius Gothicus, an Illyrian peasant; Aurelian, an Illyrian peasant; Tacitus, a Roman senator, for one year only; Probus, an Illyrian peasant; Carus, an Illyrian; then that greatest of all statesmen since Hadrian, who re-founded the empire on a new plan,— the Illyrian who began life as Docles the slave, rose to be Diocles the soldier, and finally, in 284, tiaraed Diocletian reigning with all the pomp and mystery and magnificence of an Eastern King of kings. He it was who felt the cyclic flow, and moved his capital to Nicomedia, which is about fifty miles south and east from Constantinople.

One can speak of no Illyrian cycle; rather only of the Crest-Wave dropping a number of strong men there as it trailed eastward towards West Asia. The intellect of the empire, in that third century, and the spiritual force, all incarnated in the Roman West-Asian seats: in Egypt, Asia Minor, and Syria, as we shall see in a moment. But you note how beautifully orderly, in a geographical sense, are the movements of the Wave in the Roman world and epoch: beginning in Italy in the first century B. C.; going west to Spain about A. D. 1,— and to Gaul too, though there kindling chiefly material and industrial greatness; passing through Italy again in the late first and in the second century, in the time of the Flavians and the Five Good Emperors; then in the third like a swan flying eastward, with one wing, the material one, stretched over Illyria raising up mighty soldiers and administrators there, and the other,

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the spiritual wing, over Egypt, there fanning (as we shall see) the fires of esotericism to flame.

For it was in that third century, while disaster on disaster was engulfing the power and prestige of Rome, that the strongest spiritual movement of all the Roman period came into being. History would not take much note of the year in which a porter in Alexandria was born; so the birth-date of the man we come to now is unknown. It would have been, however, not later than 180; since he had among his pupils one man at least born not later than 185. According to Eusebius, he was born a Christian; and H. P. Blavatsky, in *The Key to Theosophy*, seems to accept, or at least not to contradict, this view. I think she often did allow popular views on non-essentials to pass, for lack of time and immediate need to contradict them. But Eusebius (of whom she has much to say, and none of it complimentary to his truthfulness) is, I believe, the sole authority for it; and scholars since have found good reason for supposing that he was mixing this man with another of the same name, who *was* a Christian; whereas (it is thought) this man was not. Be that as it may, we know almost nothing about him; except that he began life as a porter, with the job of carrying goods in sacks; whence he got the surname Sakko-phoros, later shortened to Saccas; — from which you will have divined by this time that his personal name was Ammonius. We know also that early in the third century he had gathered disciples about him, and was teaching them a doctrine he called *Theosophy*; very properly, since it was and is the Wisdom of the Gods or Divine Wisdom. An eclectic system, as they say; wherein the truths in all such philosophies and religions as came handy were fitted together and set forth. But in truth all this was but the nexus of his teaching: Theosophy, then as now, is eclectic only in this sense: that some truth out of it underlies all religions and systems; which they derive from it, and it from them nothing.

All through the long West-Asian pralaya,— West-Asian includes Egyptian,— the seeds of the Esoteric Wisdom remained in those parts; they lacked vitalization, because the world-currents were not playing there then; but they survived there like seed in the soil waiting for the rains. As they survived in India for H. P. Blavatsky to quicken them when she came, so they survived in Egypt from the Egyptian Mysteries of old; and as in India you might have found men who knew about them, but not how to use them for the uplifting of the world,— so doubtless you should have found such men in Egypt during the Ptolemaic and Roman periods. Hence the statement of Diogenes Laertius, that the Theosophy of Ammonius Saccas originated with one Pot Ammun, a priest of Ptolemaic times: who, perhaps, was one of those who transmitted the doctrine in secret. The seeds were there, then; and now that the Crest

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Wave was coming back to West Asia, it was possible for Ammonius to quicken them; and this he did. But it had not quite come back; so he made nothing public. He wrote nothing; he had his circle of disciples, and what he taught is to be known from them. Among them was Origen, who was born, or became, a Christian; but who introduced into, or emphasized in, his Christianity much sound Theosophical teaching: very likely he was deputed to capture Christianity, or some part of it, for truth. Here I may offer a little explanation of something that may have puzzled some of us: it will be remembered that Mr. Judge says somewhere that Reincarnation was condemned by the Council of Constantinople; and that in a series of learned articles which appeared in *THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH* recently, the late Rev. S. J. Neill contradicted this assertion. The truth seems to be this: Origen taught, if not Reincarnation, at least the pre-existence of souls; and, says the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*: "It is true that many scholars deny that Origen [read, his teachings] was condemned by this council [of Constantinople, A. D. 553]; but Möller rightly holds that the condemnation is proved."

Another pupil of Ammonius was Cassius Longinus, born in 213 at Emessa (Homs) in Asia Minor. Later he taught Platonism for thirty years at Athens; then in the two-sixties went east to the court of Zenobia at Palmyra,— whose brilliant empire, though it fell before the Illyrian Aurelian, was a sign in its time that the Crest-Wave had come back to West Asia. Longinus became her chief counselor; it was by his advice that she resisted Aurelian; — who pardoned the Arab queen, and, after she had paraded Rome in his triumph, became very good friends with her; but condemned her counselor to death. But Longinus I think had failed to follow in the paths laid down for him by his Teacher: we find him in disagreement with that Teacher's successor.

Who was Plotinus, born of Roman parents at Lycopolis in Egypt. It is from his writings we get the best account of Ammonius' doctrine. He was with the latter until 243; then joined Gordian III's expedition against Persia, with a view to studying Persian and Indian philosophies at their source. But Gordian was assassinated; and Plotinus, after a stay at Antioch, made his way to Rome and opened a school there. This was in the so-called Age of the Thirty Tyrants, when the central government was at its weakest. Gallienus was emperor in Rome, and every province had an emperorlet of its own; — it was before the Illyrian peasant-soldiers had set affairs on their feet again. A lazy erratic creature, this Gallienus; says Gibbon: "In every art that he attempted his lively genius enabled him to succeed; and, as his genius was destitute of judgment, he attempted every art, except the important ones of war and government. He was master of several curious but useless sciences, a

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ready orator, an elegant poet, a skilful gardener, an excellent cook, and a most contemptible prince." Yet he had a curious higher side to his nature, wherewith he might have done much for humanity,— if he had ever bothered to bring it to the fore. He, and his wife, were deeply interested in the teachings of Plotinus. Such a man may sometimes be 'run,' and made the instrument of great accomplishment: a morass through which here and there are solid footholds; if you can find them, you may reach firm ground, but you must walk infinitely carefully. It is the old tale of the Prince with the dual nature, and the Initiate who tries to use him for the saving of the world,— and fails.

Plotinus knew what he was about. Was it last week we were talking of the endless need of the ages: a stronghold of the Gods to be established in this world, whence they might conduct their cyclic raidings? What had Pythagoras tried to do in his day? — Found a Center of Learning in the West, in which the Laws of Life, physical, mental, moral, and spiritual, should be taught. He did find it,— at Croton; but Croton was destroyed, and all the history of the next seven centuries suffered from the destruction. Then — it was seven centuries after his death,— Ammonius Saccas arose, and started things again; and left a successor who was able to carry them forward almost to the point where Pythagoras left them. For the fame of this Neo-Platonic Theosophy had traveled by this time right over the empire; and Plotinus in Rome, and in high favor with Gallienus, was a man on whom all eyes were turned. He proposed to found a Point Loma in Campania; to be called Platonopolis. Things were well in hand; the emperor and empress were enthusiastic: — as your Gallienuses will be, for quarter of an hour at a time, over any high project. But certain of his ministers were against it; and he wobbled; and delayed; and thought of something else; and hung fire; and presently was killed. And Claudius, the first of the Illyrian emperors, who succeeded him, was much too busy defeating the Goths to come to Rome even, — much less could he pay attention to spiritual projects. Two years later Plotinus died, in 270; — and the chance was not to come again for more than sixteen centuries.

But Neo-Platonism was not done with yet, by any means. Plotinus left a successor in his disciple Porphyry, born at Tyre or at Batanea in Syria in 233. You see they were all West Asians, at least by birth: the first spiritual fruits of the Crest-Wave's influx there. Porphyry's name was originally Malchus (the Arabic *Malek*, meaning *king*); but as a king was a wearer of the purple, someone changed it for him to Porphyry or 'Purple.' In 262 he went to Rome to study under Plotinus, and was with him for six years; then his health broke down, and he retired to Sicily to recover. In 273 he returned,— Plotinus had died three years

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before,— and opened a Neo-Platonic School of his own. He taught through the last quarter of that century, while the Illyrian emperors were smashing back invaders on the frontiers or upstart emperors in the provinces. Without imperial support, no Platonopolis could have been founded; and there was no time for any of those Illyrians to think of such things,— even if they had had it in them to do so, as they had not:— witness Aurelian's execution of Longinus. The time had gone by for that highest of all victories: as it might have gone by in our own day, but for events in Chicago, in February, 1898. When Porphyry died in 304, he left a successor indeed; but now one that did not concern himself with Rome.

It was Iamblichus, born in the Lebanon region; we do not know in what year; or much about him at all, beyond that he was an aristocrat, and well-to-do; and that he conducted his Theosophic activities mainly from his native city of Chalcis. He died between 330 and 333: thus through thirteen decades, from the beginning of the third century, these four great Neo-Platonist Adepts were teaching Theosophy in the Roman world;— Ammonius in Egypt; Plotinus and Porphyry,— the arm of the Movement stretched westward to save, if saved they might be, the Roman west and Europe,— in Rome itself; then, since that was not to be done, Iamblichus in Syria. We hear of no man to be named as successor to Iamblichus; I imagine the great line of Teachers came to an end with him. Yet, as we shall see, their impulse, or movement, or propaganda, did not cease then: it did not fail to reach an arm down into secular history, and to light up one fiery dynamic soul on the Imperial Throne, who did all that a God-ensouled Man could do to save the dying Roman world. Diocletian, that great but quite unillumined pagan, was dead; the new order, that subverted Rome at last, had been established by Constantine; and the House of Constantine, with all that it implied, was in power. But a year or two before the death of Iamblichus it chanced that a Great Soul stole a march on the House of Constantine, and (as you may say) surreptitiously incarnated in it, for the Cause of the Gods and Sublime Perfection. And to him, in his lonely and desolate youth, kept in confinement or captivity by the Christian on the throne, came one Maximus of Smyrna, a disciple of Iamblichus;— and lit in the soul of Prince Julian that divine knowledge of Theosophy wherewith afterwards he made his splendid and tragic effort for Heaven.

## PARADISE OR PROTOPLASM?

T. HENRY, M. A.

### THE CANON TASTES THE FORBIDDEN FRUIT



FAMILIAR controversy has flamed out again recently in connexion with a speech delivered by Canon Barnes, a dignitary of the Church of England, before the recent annual congress of the British Association for the Advancement of Science.

#### DID MAN FALL FROM HEAVEN, OR DID HE RISE FROM THE MUD?

He said that Christian thinkers now find it necessary to abandon the doctrine of the Fall in its literal sense and the arguments deduced from it.

“It now seemed highly probable that from some fundamental stuff in the universe the electrons rose. From them came matter. From matter, life emerged. From life came mind. From mind, spiritual consciousness was developing.”

He thinks no truly religious mind can find its faith impaired by an act of mental integrity; and we agree. Let him have the merit of a man who frankly says ‘I don’t know’; and let us hope that his flock will be edified.

But though he declines to take *Genesis* literally, he is equally cautious about taking it allegorically. He scents a subterfuge, a wish to shirk the burden of scientific revelations; and he is so resolved to stand by science that he will not be suspected of resorting to a weak device.

Under a later date Canon Barnes writes to the *Manchester Weekly Guardian* to comment on his own sermon and on the controversy it has raised. He explains that he announced his acceptance of the evolutionary hypothesis of the origin of all species including man, and that he was concerned to show that the assumption is compatible with theistic belief and with the Christian doctrine of personal immortality. But he considered that the *Genesis* narrative of the Fall is incompatible. The narrative (he says) is regarded as unhistorical, derived from primitive folk-lore in the Euphrates valley, a much-edited compilation. He admits that it is a good allegory within certain limits, but points to some of its inconsistencies, and hopes that it will not be allowed to divert people from an honest attitude towards the problems concerned.

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### THE SCIENTIFIC GOSPEL

In our comments on this we do not propose to go into the details of this familiar controversy, but to emphasize the broad outlines and bring out the salient points. We of course agree that honesty is not merely desirable but imperative.

First, as regards the scientific gospel — if so we may call it. We can claim to be of a scientific turn of mind, and to be familiar with the facts revealed by science, with the laws it has formulated, and with the hypotheses it has constructed. The statement made in our first quotation, as to the scientific *Genesis* or cosmogony, is of course condensed and lacking in detail; but even so we opine that, if expanded, it would still be quite sketchy and leave many gaps. To us it seems that, even if we should accept implicitly and without reservation the entire scientific genesis, facts and speculations and all, from man back to the 'some fundamental stuff,' we should still feel that we had made about as much progress on the path of knowledge as a man who runs around the earth would have made on a voyage to the moon. In short, we should find ourselves just ready to begin. For it is just at this very 'fundamental stuff' that the real problem begins; all the rest is merely preliminary. In striving to pass from matter to what lies beyond, we fail to see the necessity of going back to the fundamental stuff at all, since that journey does not take us across the bridge, nor to any point nearer to the opposite shore.

We are far from accepting the teachings of science as to the origin of species and the descent of man. Much of it is unconfirmed speculation, some is in conflict with facts. Yet, even if we did accept it, we should have achieved nothing more than an idea of the history of the human organism; and the whole vast and all-important problem of the origin, descent, nature, and destiny of Man himself would be no clearer than before. Hence we should find an unlimited sphere open to religion, a whole domain of our mental life uncontested by science, and waiting to be filled.

It seems to us that the issues are very much confused, and that often an issue is imagined where there is no issue at all. We cannot see how the theories and discoveries of science can join in any internecine strife with the allegories of the Old Testament.

### WHENCE CAME THE HUMAN SOUL?

Science has revealed the analogies that run through the successive degrees in the scale of animate beings, and it has imagined that this analogy implies that the forms were derived from one another successively

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But this is just the point where evidence is totally lacking. Nowhere can we find man coming from an animal, or one kind of animal coming from another kind. We do find that the body of man develops, in our own time, from the seed, through various successive stages to its complete form; and so far we have a visible evolution before our eyes. But whether the amoeba, the amphioxus, etc., have generated each other successively in a historical sense during past ages, we do not know and take leave to doubt.

But in any case what have we learnt about the origin of man the self-conscious Mind and Soul? What have we learnt about the origin of any kind of mind or soul? Science, as quoted by the Canon, may say that from matter, life arose; and from life came mind. But is this any better than *Genesis*? Is it any better than the earth resting on an elephant, and the elephant resting on a tortoise?

And why, to find the origin of my mind and soul, should we turn our eyes along the scale of organic forms or into the geologic past? Why not look into our own being, as we find it ready to hand today, and examine the contemporary evidence around us in our fellow-beings?

To sum up: we recognise what science has done, and also its profound limitations. And we see that *Genesis* is a much-edited and corrupted allegory. But we do not accept the usual scholarly views as to folklore. We believe that these cosmogonical myths are far more than the mere vaporings of humanity's childhood. The story of the Creation and Fall are found elsewhere in Asia, and also in ancient America, Africa, Polynesia, and other places. It is necessary to consider mythology as a whole and not merely to study any particular myth as if it were unique. And we take the view of these myths expounded by H. P. Blavatsky.

"The Secret Doctrine was the universally diffused religion of the ancient and prehistoric world."— *The Secret Doctrine*, I, xxxiv

"In the twentieth century of our era scholars will begin to recognise that the *Secret Doctrine* has neither been invented nor exaggerated, but, on the contrary, simply outlined; and finally, that its teachings antedate the Vedas."— I, xxxvii

"In Century the Twentieth some disciple more informed, and far better fitted, may be sent by the Masters of Wisdom to give final and irrefutable proofs that there exists a science called *Guptâ-Vidyâ*: and that, like the once mysterious sources of the Nile, the source of all religions and philosophies now known to the world has been for many ages forgotten and lost to men, but is at last found."— I, xxxviii

## THE ANTIQUITY OF CIVILIZATION

In a word, we take so greatly enlarged a view of human history that the Canon's problem takes on quite a new aspect. It is the contention of H. P. Blavatsky and the conviction of Theosophists that humanity — even civilized humanity — has lived on earth for millions of years,

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during which ages (comparatively small as geological time is reckoned) it has passed through many phases both of exaltation and depression; waves of high civilization and culture have swept on from land to land, alternating with waves of barbarism and ignorance. It has been one of the great aims of H. P. Blavatsky and her pupils to interpret adequately the evidence supplied by archaeology. From this evidence we find that there must have flourished in the far past, earlier than the remotest ages to which ordinary history reaches, great civilizations able to construct buildings vaster and more wonderful than any that we can find in our own times. Witness for example the Cyclopean architecture of Peru. Further, we find in the ancient literature of India, Egypt, and other lands, the actual records of a culture ancient and profound. It is maintained by H. P. Blavatsky, and accepted by Theosophists as a consequence of their studies, that the knowledge and wisdom attained by these mighty civilizations of the far past has never been lost, but is preserved, constituting what has been called the Secret Doctrine or Wisdom-Religion. Such stories as those of *Genesis* are mutilated and decayed records of the teachings of the Secret Doctrine.

### TWO CREATIONS OF MAN

In the Bible, for instance, we are told of two creations of man. In the first creation (in chapter two) man is made of the dust of the ground and is a 'living soul'; but in the second creation (in chapter one) he has the divine intelligence breathed into him and becomes a God, knowing good and evil. This is one of the teachings of the Secret Doctrine, by which it is shown that man's physical organism is that of a perfected animal, but that Man himself did not exist until this physical organism was endowed with *Manas* — self-conscious thought. This is a thing of which the scientific theories of evolution take no account; and indeed it is evident that, if man is to be evolved from the lower organisms, this evolution can only be accomplished either by the influence of some extraneous power or else by making the lower organisms more potent than the man whom they produce. In either case the question of the nature and origin of the human mind and soul is not solved.

In short, whatever the *body* of man may have done, the intelligence of man has descended from the eternal and universal Intelligence. All matter is raised and evolved by means of the universal life acting in it; and science studies the visible effects of this evolution without explaining the cause.

So far, then, from finding an irreconcilable conflict between science and the Bible, we realize that both science and the Bible must be pressed

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into full service, together with archaeology, the study of symbology, anthropology, and everything else we can lay our hands on, in order that we may try to arrive at something like an adequate and comprehensive view of the whole vast subject. It is right for the churches to abandon their old dogmas and literal interpretations of corrupt translations of corrupt Hebrew texts; but the religion of science is scarcely sufficient in its present form to provide food for all man's aspirations. Man *is* a Soul, infinite in possibilities, incarnate in an animal body. He is the heir of long ages, not of childishness or bestiality, but of knowledge and dignity. His Soul is immortal, and incarnates from age to age in mortal vestures, its temporary abodes, the instruments which it uses to accomplish its great purposes. Such is Man: a pilgrim through the halls of terrestrial experience and trial.

It is an essential part of the teachings of the Wisdom-Religion that Man was a spiritual being before he became a physical being; that he is an incarnate deity; and that the most important part of his evolution consisted in the union between the divine and the terrestrial, whereby the complete Man was produced. At least three distinct lines of evolution are recognised: the terrestrial, which modern science is trying to unravel; the spiritual, consisting of the gradual descent of the divine towards its state of incarnation; and the Mânasic, pertaining to self-conscious Mind. Natural evolution, such as produces the various kingdoms of organic beings, mineral, animal, and vegetable, is caused by the interaction between the universal Life and Matter; but this kind of evolution cannot unaided produce Man. Such is the teaching of the Secret Doctrine. To produce Man it was necessary that the faculty of self-conscious Mind should be imparted, to serve as a link between the divine and the terrestrial. Thus Man is a triad, a trinity: by means of his self-conscious human Mind he unites the divine with the terrestrial.

### APES FROM MAN, NOT MAN FROM APES

And since the Canon champions modern science, we may remind him that not a few eminent authorities have indorsed the view maintained by H. P. Blavatsky long ago, that the anthropoid apes represent a descending and degenerative side-shoot from the human stem, and are not in the line of human evolution at all. The 'missing link' is still missing, and seems likely to be. We are quite as loyal to ascertained fact as any conscientious divine can be; but we find that the more archaeology and anthropology proceed, the less evidence do they find that Man has ever progressed along the lines mapped out for him in theory. The man of countless ages ago seems to have been of the same type as the man of

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today. And here, to avoid the imputation (sometimes heard) that this implies a static condition and no progress, it must be pointed out that the individual human Souls are progressing all the while, though the bodies by which they climb may change with great slowness throughout the cycle of evolution. To take a simple analogy: we know that babies are born continually; but this does not imply that men do not grow up.

### REAL MEANING OF THE FALL

The meaning of the story of the Fall has been gone into at considerable length by H. P. Blavatsky, and has often been treated by her pupils; but a brief summary is all that can here be attempted. In brief, then, we have a somewhat corrupted allegory of that epoch in human evolution when Man acquired his gift of self-conscious Mind, and thus lost his former state of innocent irresponsibility and was thrown on his own will and choice. This gift is symbolized by the Serpent, which endowed Man with the power to do wrong and equally with the power consciously to do right. The result is a probation (or temptation). Man makes a mistake and brings suffering on himself; but this suffering is attended with the promise of future reinstatement.

Is the drama allegoric or historic? It is both. It refers, as has been said, to a definite event in human evolution; but it also represents what takes place continually both in man the race and in man the individual — a continual falling away from light and a continual self-redemption by virtue of the inherent divinity within. There was a time when Man definitely chose the fruits of the tree of knowledge, when he was given a choice, being both warned and encouraged. And there are always times in our life when we throw off heedlessness and take on responsibilities, thus incurring the risk of error but gaining the hope of greater achievement. The important part of the doctrine of the Fall is the Resurrection. We have within us the power to redeem ourselves; for the same Will that caused us to fall can raise us again.

To sum up this article. We accept the findings of science, so far as they represent solid fact, but reserve the right to question what is mere speculation or what is contradicted by facts. We recognise the existence of vast fields of inquiry untouched by science. We regard the Bible story as one out of very many allegorical records of the teachings of the Secret Doctrine, and to be interpreted by comparison with the rest of these records. And we maintain that the facts disclosed by archaeology as to the immense antiquity of civilization change the whole aspect of the questions involved. Finally, the real nature of Man, as an incarnating Soul, must be borne in mind, if evolution is to be properly understood.

## CaSO<sub>4</sub>!

H. TRAVERS, M. A.

HE President of the British Association, in his address on oceanography, alluded to the "celebrated myth of 'Bathybius.'" In the sixties of last century samples of Atlantic mud were taken from great depths and preserved in alcohol. When examined by Huxley, Haeckel, and others, they were found to contain what seemed to be a very primitive protoplasmic organism, and this was supposed to be widely diffused over the ocean floor and to afford food for the denizens of those darksome abysses. This was Haeckel's celebrated Bathybius, origin of all creatures — your ancestor, reader, and mine, through who knows what links of animal forms from the gastropod to the ape that lives in the forest trees. But alas for Haeckel's sublime genealogical tree; it was rotten at the root. For Buchanan and Murray in 1875 proved that this all-pervading protoplasmic urschleim, which (like great Brahm himself) was the origin of all creatures, was actually —

"An amorphous precipitate of sulphate of lime, thrown down from the sea-water in the mud by the addition of alcohol."

So that you and I, reader, are descended from sulphate of lime. What a heritage! May we prove worthy of our sublime (or rather sulphate of lime) forbears! Still there is much food for hope that, considering the progress we have made since then, we may one day rise as high above our present level as we now stand above the level of amorphous gypsum. Such are the marvels of evolution.

But note that the Bathybius was actually created on the spot by the people who collected him. He had not existed before. It was the alcohol that precipitated him. They tried to preserve him, but merely created him; and finally he was destroyed. Thus we have another analogy with Brahm, in his triple aspect of creator, preserver, and destroyer. One is reminded of the analyst who found arsenic in the stomach of the deceased, and of the learned judge who elicited the important fact that there was arsenic in the materials used for making the test.

As to this same Bathybius, we find the following in *The Secret Doctrine*:

"The speck of the perfectly homogeneous substance, the sarcode of the Haeckelian *monera*, is now viewed as the *archebiosis* of terrestrial existence."

This is followed by a footnote which says:

"Unfortunately, as these pages are being written, the '*archebiosis* of terrestrial existence' has turned, under a somewhat stricter chemical analysis, into a simple precipitate of sulphate

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of lime — hence from the scientific standpoint not even an *organic* substance!!! *Sic transit gloria mundi!* — I, 542

In a footnote on page 164 of Volume II we find a quotation from Haeckel himself as follows:

“How did life, the living world of organisms, arise? And, secondly, the special question: How did the human race originate? The first of these two inquiries . . . can only be decided empirically [shrieks by H. P. B.] by proof of the so-called Archebiosis, or equivocal generation, or the spontaneous production of organisms of the simplest conceivable kind. Such are the Monera (Protogenes, Protamoeba, etc.), exceedingly simple microscopic masses of protoplasm without structure or organization, which take in nutriment and *reproduce themselves by division*. Such a Moneron as that primordial organism, *discovered* by the renowned English zoologist Huxley, and named *Bathybius Haeckelii*, appears as a continuous thick protoplasmic covering at the greatest depths of the ocean, between 3000 and 30,000 feet. *It is true that the first appearance of such Monera has not up to the present moment been actually observed*; but there is nothing intrinsically improbable in such an evolution.”

In the reference first given, H. P. Blavatsky states that the homogeneous primordial element, alleged to be the origin of all material organisms, is simple on the physical plane alone; but that, “even on the next higher plane” it would be pronounced as “something very complex indeed.” Haeckel’s Archebiosis has to be traced to its pre-terrestrial archebiosis.

In the next reference she continues the same theme, pointing out that we are required to believe that evolution has proceeded solely from a marvelous protoplasmic slime — which has “up to the present not been actually observed”; and yet we are denied the belief in the influence of omnipresent intelligence — an influence patent to all — as the cause of evolution. And finally on page 190 of Volume II we find this question:

“What lies ‘beyond’ Haeckel’s theory? Why *Bathybius Haeckelii*, and no more!”

I think we are beginning to realize better now that, however far back we may trace a line of physical evolution, we are no nearer the great mystery than before. In fact the problem is made worse in one respect at least; for, as we narrow down the physical proportions of the organism, so do we provide a smaller vehicle for all those marvelous properties with which we must fain endow it. We find, in short, that our urschleim, our protoplasmic speck, our biologic atom, has usurped the place usually occupied by the original Creator: he is the origin and maker of all things. It is clear that we must go beyond the physical plane altogether, in order to seek the causes which give rise to it. And, this being the case, why is it necessary to go back to the amoeba at all? Is it any easier to jump from the amoeba to the ultra-physical regions beyond than to jump from our own complex human organism to the same regions? In that organism we can still find the protoplasmic speck, if it is necessary to have such a bridge.

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The gap between mind and matter is no doubt a most interesting and important question, and one on which it might well be possible to say much more that would be highly suggestive. But the important point to bear in mind with respect to the evolution of organic forms is that the *idea* must always precede the *form*. Evolution cannot proceed blindly and experimentally towards a non-existent ideal or goal. Hence we must infer that the entire plan of evolution has already existed in the world of ideas before it became manifest to our vision in the world of physical forms.

### WHY TEMPORIZE WITH THE ENEMIES OF OUR OWN HOUSEHOLD?

R. MACHELL

NE of the first things that a student of Theosophy learns, is the duality of human nature; and the learning of this lesson brings about a complete change in his position with regard to enemies and friends: for the duality in nature must be taken into account in every case, including his own personality. In fact, it necessitates a complete change in his estimate of those he considers to be his enemies or his friends. Later he will come to realize that his worst enemies are precisely those that have crept into his own household in the guise of friends: and he will in time perhaps decide that his real household is within his own personality: he may then come to understand that it is only the enemies in his own character that can really injure him, or allow him to be hurt. Truly, a man's worst enemies are they of his own household.

Opposition calls out strength, and develops the most desirable qualities in one who is struggling against a host of supposed enemies. Even in the midst of the battle the fighter may learn that defeat can only come to him by the treachery of some of his own. It has been well said, "Protect me from my friends, and I will defend myself against my enemies."

"Love your enemies!" is an injunction that is seldom understood, when first heard. It is an impossibility to love one's enemies, without, in the act, changing the attitude of mind that saw enmity in the opposition that in fact is necessary to one's growth. Opposition is not really enmity. Perhaps the injunction to love one's enemies should be changed in form, and the word 'understand' should be substituted for 'love.' There is a French saying: "*Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner*," "to understand is to forgive." When a man understands his own nature and

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that of other people, he becomes strangely tolerant of their opposition and strangely bitter against the treachery of false friends, those of his own household. To understand one's own nature fully is perhaps the last word of human wisdom: the first step in that direction is to recognise that it is at least a duality, and probably a complexity of a sevenfold character: but the duality is enough to begin with.

To realize that there is the possibility of untold good and undreamed of evil in one's own heart, is to take a big step towards the understanding of life and its problems. Then the determined identification of self with the good side of this complexity, which we call ourself, enables one to see the possibility of good in another, who may be for the moment wholly under the influence of his lower nature. Such a person becomes at once an object of pity rather than of aversion. And when one sees the beauty of a soul peeping out through a veil of iniquity one can no longer hate the victim of delusion who acts like an enemy.

This kind of tolerance is not the same as temporizing with recognised evil: on the contrary, it is the clear distinction between the two natures. To be in a state of enmity is to be deluded by one's own lower nature. To meet attacks strongly and determinedly does not entail looking on one's opponents with hatred or enmity nor does a fight with one's own lower nature require one to assume an attitude of self-contempt or of self-condemnation.

To confess oneself a miserable sinner is to identify one's self with the deluded lower nature, which asks nothing better than to be mistaken for the real self. The confident assertion of one's own divinity, even when one is fully aware of the as yet unconquered strength of the lower nature, is an assumption of an attitude that goes far to secure the victorious realization of what may at first seem but an empty boast.

To see clearly one must open one's eyes; to go forward one must stand up; to grovel in the dust of self-abasement is to stay down, with a fair chance of being run over where one lies in the mud of a false humility. I think that true humility is only possible to one who has a clear comprehension of his own essential divinity, and a full realization of the essential divinity of every other human soul. For the ordinary mortal, humility is merely hypocrisy, an attempt of pride to escape detection: it is an accentuation of egotism. The true humility is simply self-forgetfulness, which is of very rare occurrence.

But how are we to know the enemies of our own household? How can we distinguish friends from enemies, when both are so near?

Theosophy teaches that man is divine in essence; but it is evident that there are very many self-styled Theosophists whose essential divinity is completely masked by a very earthly lower nature, which latter in some

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cases attains to almost unearthly ugliness. And it is such as these that are often loud in their talk of brotherly love, and in their profession of wide tolerance for the most abominable abuses. Such as these are indeed enemies in the Theosophical household, and they must be treated as such, or they will mislead others more ignorant than themselves. No wise man fears opposition; what he dreads is treachery: the real enemy of Theosophy knows this, and works accordingly.

Theosophy is spiritual wisdom; and the enemy is the monster egotism. It is pride, ambition, selfishness; and it works by subtle insinuation, by argument and criticism, in order to destroy faith, and to foster suspicion.

It has been said that self is the enemy of Self: and in that lies the difficulty of dealing with the danger. Without the knowledge of the duality in human nature, the problem would be eternally insoluble. It was to meet this difficulty no doubt that the churches or their founders invented a devil and a personal God; which might serve as symbols of the internal duality in man, but which soon came to be looked upon as external realities.

How can we distinguish our enemies from our friends in the strange confusion that exists in the human heart at this stage of man's evolution?

We must first learn to distinguish the two forces constantly at work in our own nature, before we can recognise either friend or enemy outside, with any degree of certainty. Yet we have been given instruction in such works as *The Voice of the Silence*, and *Light on the Path*, from which we can fashion a simple test. The touchstone of right action is purpose; and this can be tested by the selfishness or the selflessness of the life or by the general trend and bearing of the teaching and counsel offered by those who pose as teachers, guides, or critics. To apply such a test safely a man must first have proved its value as a test for his own conduct.

All the troubles of man come from this one cause, the delusion of self; which causes us to mistake the false self or the personality for the true Self, which is universal. This mistake leads to the struggle for self-aggrandisement, which is the effort of each particular self to get for itself more of the things desired than naturally falls to his lot, or to protect his possessions from the greed of others.

All modern civilizations have been built up on some such basis of personal competition. The 'struggle for existence' has been used as an excuse for the struggle for possessions; and this struggle is now destroying civilization before our eyes. It is the glorification of the false self, the attempt to put the illusive personal self in the place of the universal spiritual and selfless self, for which we now can hardly find a name, so utterly has it been forgotten in the world. Therefore we preach brother-

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hood, and practice it. The life of the Theosophist, who is on the right path, is a path of progress towards the elimination of all merely selfish motives and the substitution of the ideal of service for that of self-aggrandisement.

One evidence of the rightness of this line of self-development is the happiness that results from working with nature instead of against her laws. The constitution of our organization declares that brotherhood is a fact in nature and asserts as the first object of the Society the demonstration that it is a fact in nature, and the making of it a living power in the life of humanity. The need of this teaching has been widely recognised; but many men seem to believe that brotherhood can be established by violence; which is a manifest delusion. The reason why nations are willing to go to war in the interest of peace is that 'the enemy in the household' has played upon the love of power and the desire for authority in the hearts of the people to lead them on to self-destruction, deluding them with the lure of self-aggrandisement, which is spiritual suicide, or the triumph of the lower self.

A man who is completely under the domination of his lower nature is insane, whether he be declared mad or not; and a nation is as surely insane when selfish motives control its policy: it is on the path of self-destruction; we have only to read the events of history to see the truth of this. And we can see clearly that fine phrases are no protection against the evils that spring naturally from wrong action. We have seen that the enemy of our own household is always ready to wave the flag of altruism, or patriotism, or even of peace, while stirring up trouble which must end in war. We must search our own hearts to find the real motives for our own acts; and having learned to recognise the enemy there, we may know him again when we meet him in the wider field of national life; and when we meet him we must not temporize with him out of respect for his fine clothing or his venerable appearance. The path of progress is the path of effort, and of obstacles to be overcome; but the real enemy is not the opponent who openly challenges the pioneer or the reformer. The real enemy is rather the false friend, who seeks to stand well with both sides hoping to draw profit from both, or aspiring, perhaps, to rise to power by playing one party against another.

Theosophy has been openly attacked by sincere opponents, who, in their attempts to shake its foundations, have actually done good service to the cause of truth by spreading a knowledge of its fundamental principles, and by the very arguments they have used to refute the ancient teachings. Such opponents are the friends of truth, and will find their place in the ranks of true Theosophists some day.

But very different are the attacks that come in the guise of devotion

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to principles while insinuating criticism of the Theosophical teachers who have led the movement. Such enemies nearly wrecked the Society during Madame Blavatsky's lifetime, and the most venomous of the attacks against her leadership were made under cover of a professed devotion to the principles of Theosophy, or to those who were her teachers. Similar attacks shortened the life of her successor William Q. Judge, but failed to disintegrate the Society. And when Mr. Judge appointed Katherine Tingley as his successor he bequeathed to her a legacy of the same kind. The enemies who first attacked her were of the Theosophic household, and they professed the deepest devotion to the principles of Theosophy, merely seeking to destroy the outer and visible head of the Movement, in order to replace her by another of their own selection. But Katherine Tingley did not temporize with these enemies, she forced them to declare themselves; thus putting them where they belonged, in the ranks of open opponents, whose open attacks could only serve to strengthen the Movement. She has constantly worked to force secret enemies out into the open, where they may have an opportunity to see themselves in a true light, and where they will be powerless for evil. In doing this she is helping them to find themselves, and is not seeking to punish them. The idea of punishment is one that is foreign to Theosophy: for the law of Karma takes care of all readjustments in human affairs; it leaves the Theosophist free to forgive the enemy and ready to help him again to find the path, when the time comes for his return to sanity in this life or in a later one.

Insanity is invariably characterized by an accentuation of vanity, egotism, pompous pride, or abject self-contempt. Self in some exaggerated form fills the whole field of consciousness, self-exaltation, self-indulgence, self-mortification, self-destruction. And, as egotism is the dominant note of human character at this stage of man's evolution on earth, this kind of general insanity has led many a philosopher to speak of this earth as a vast lunatic asylum. In the same way many of the ancients looked upon the Sun as the home of man's spiritual consciousness, and as the source of spiritual illumination. But they were careful to explain that the true Sun is not the visible solar disk or orb, nor was the moon that we see the real source of the disturbing influence supposed to emanate from the true moon. Duality was recognised in these forces also.

If we study life we are bound to find evidence of the duality in everything. And nowhere is it more marked than in our own human nature; for man is at a turning-point in evolution, and seems to be vacillating continually between opposing forces, as if he had lost his bearings and had forgotten the object of his existence. And this general kind of insanity has been aggravated by the horrors of the last few years; so that

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there is an enormous increase of insanity that has not yet been officially recognised as such, because it is so general. It is called by many polite names, and is attributed to many causes; but it shows itself in a loss of mental balance; which incapacitates a man for right thinking and clear judgment. In such a condition a man is peculiarly open to suggestion, and is liable to be seriously influenced by his supposed friends, 'they of his own household,' who have their own desires to serve. These suggestions, coming from such a source as that of a trusted friend or relative, may be accepted unconsciously, and adopted without question; till the man's whole nature has been perverted from its original honesty. Vanity may help to blind him, and to convince him that he is thinking for himself all the time, while in reality he is being 'led by the nose' in ignominious slavery: and this because of his failure to recognise the duality in himself and in his intimate associates. Some one of these otherwise lovable friends may have allowed the lower nature to get control, and, under this influence, may have developed characteristics entirely unworthy of the higher side of the nature, thus becoming an enemy, while still holding the position of trusted friend and counselor. Such a one should be brought face to face with this false self and given the chance to recover self-control, so as to paralyse the evil influence. But who shall do this, if the one most concerned refuses to see the facts, and fails to realize that the true self of the trusted friend is temporarily at the mercy of a lunatic, an egotist, crafty, cunning, ambitious, and malignant?

It takes courage and determination to face such a situation; and a weak man will probably temporize and excuse, and will end by submitting to the evil influence, which he should have immediately recognised and challenged as the enemy in disguise.

These tragedies are of constant occurrence; and cause utter bewilderment to those who have no sufficient philosophy of life to help them.

It must also be remembered that weak-willed people are liable to be unaccountably and suddenly invaded by impulses to commit actual crimes that would horrify the normal mind of the one to whom they come perhaps as messages from some spiritual source, being in fact but the floating thoughts of vicious natures thrown off in moments of passion, like moral disease germs, that fasten on a weak-willed victim and make him their tool. Such things are not mere fancies, but are the common facts of daily experience.

It was to make men and women strong and clean and self-reliant, and proof against such suggestions, that Katherine Tingley created the Râja-Yoga School, in which children are taught the duality of their own nature, and are trained to combine all their faculties in one harmonious whole, and to place this beautiful human instrument at the

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disposal of the spiritual self, or the real self. To accomplish the complete mastery of the lower by the higher is the aim of Râja-Yoga. One who has attained to this perfection is a god-like being in comparison with the helpless hysterical creatures that are to be met on every side today in ever-increasing proportions.

True Râja-Yoga does not temporize with the enemies of its own household, but challenges them to come out and show their true character. Râja-Yoga is uncompromising in dealing with enemies of this kind; but is also compassionate in resisting the evil, without retaliation or desire to punish. In the pure atmosphere of Râja-Yoga, justice and mercy are seen as but two aspects of the one harmony that is perhaps beyond the reach of ordinary terms to express. And Râja-Yoga, as practised at Point Loma, is no dream, but a rule of life that makes life worth living, a thing of joy and beauty: but in Râja-Yoga there is no temporizing with the enemies of our own household; the enemies are challenged.

## THE POOL IN THE MEADOW

LEOLINE

O LITTLE pool in the meadow green,  
As pure as a baby's smiling face,  
How sweet to find your dimpled sheen  
Within this fresh and quiet place!

All day you hold your magic glass  
For bird and bee and dragon-fly,  
For bending clover in the grass,  
And every pearly cloud on high.

O little pool, you are sometimes sad;  
You quiver with a dream of pain,  
When all the light that made you glad  
Is quenched in tears of silver rain.

And then when falls the quiet night  
From out the zenith's purple deep,  
How near you bring the far-off light  
Of shining worlds that watch our sleep!

## IMPULSE VS. PRINCIPLE

H. T. EDGE, M. A.



Notice in a column of editorial comment that a certain professor has been advocating "go-as-you-please" schools, conducted on the principle of "Do what you will"; with the belief that the natural interest of pupils in subjects which attract them will advance their education better than the usual methods of a set syllabus and time-table. As we have not the whole of his argument, and the fragmentary comment may not do him justice, it will be better to omit names, and confine our remarks to the general question raised. The editor, by the way, opines that the doctrine of "please yourself" is quite sufficiently applied to the world's affairs at present, without any aid from the schoolroom.

We do not know what may have been the experience of the advocate of such a theory and policy of education, and can only say that experience in tuition usually leads to quite other conclusions. It is generally found, in a schoolroom as in other associations of people working together, that order, direction, and leadership are indispensable. The pupils themselves feel this, and would, we imagine, be the first to object to any go-as-you-please method. Assuming for the moment that it is good for a single person to go as he pleases, it does not follow that it is good for a dozen or a score in one room to do as each one of them pleases. It would mean that each one would have to do as the others pleased; or that the quiet ones would have to do as the boisterous ones pleased. In such circumstances the entry of a teacher bearing the ensigns of authority and discipline would be found welcome to all desirous of accomplishing anything and wishing protection against their more unruly associates. Pupils desire to be shown how, to be led, advised, encouraged — commanded. They do not like to be told to learn as much as they like, or as much as they think they can; they insist on having a definite lesson set. They like to have their times mapped out. In short they love order and system.

This is not to say that young pupils will not be disorderly and disobedient and lazy and self-willed. They will be all of these. But such things are only their weaknesses. They may yield to these obstacles in their nature, but their real wishes are otherwise; and what they need and desire is the guidance and help of a wiser head and a stronger hand to enable them to overcome these weaknesses. The man who advocates a go-as-you-please policy, advocates an alliance between the teacher and

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the weak side of the pupils' nature. Ordinary common sense has preferred that the teacher should ally himself with the pupils' better nature.

Both teachers and pupils would quickly find that the "natural interest" of the young pupil would lead him hither and thither, attracting him violently to one study, only to relinquish it for another when the first difficulties set in. Older people may have acquired enough foresight and self-control to carry them through painful drudgery; but we can hardly expect this of children. And consequently we have to supply these qualities for them in the shape of school discipline and definite syllabuses and time-tables.

There may be bad teachers and bad schedules; but this should induce us to correct them, not scare us into adopting weak teachers and no schedule at all. If indeed our only choice be between the weak teacher and the foolish one, we are in a sorry plight; but may we not hope that teachers who are both wise and strong will be available? This is the kind the pupils respect and obey.

All this is of course very trite; but the blame for saying it must be thrown on those who have given the occasion. We can only conclude by saying that we cannot see that anything new has happened lately, either in human nature or in circumstances, which would justify us in setting aside the ordinary usages of common sense and practical wisdom in favor of a diametrically opposite policy.

But, setting aside the particular subject of school, something remains to be said on the question of go-as-you-please in general.

It is indeed true that there is too much go-as-you-please — theoretically at least — abroad in our midst today. Even on the assumption that a man, by following his inclinations, would prosper, he would nevertheless become the creature of his inclinations, no matter how estimable and innocent these might seem. And it is supposed to be well understood that mere individual inclination cannot be made the controlling force in human affairs. A man who obeys inclination obeys a motley crowd of attractive and repulsive forces, and his will and his faculties become servants and followers rather than lord and master. To follow inclination may be a safe and sound rule for the animal kingdom, whose inclinations are confined within narrow and unsurpassable limits, and whose proclivities are adjusted to each other by a larger supervising intelligence which each creature unwittingly obeys. But with Man the case is widely different, because he is endowed with the human mind, a faculty which imports into desire an element of infinite exaggeration and turns the humble instinct into a consuming and insatiable fire.

This again is all very commonplace wisdom. In the case of Man it has always been recognised that some higher rule must be found than the

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rule of personal inclination; and in Religion we see the manifold endeavors of man to understand and interpret the higher laws of his own nature.

Go-as-you-please is found to be impracticable by every man, woman, or child outside of a desert island. A married man has to observe some other law, willy nilly. And the same in various degrees and ways of all other men who rub up against their fellows.

At the present time we find that go-as-you-please is asserting itself over go-as-you-ought; or, in other words, impulse is asserting itself against principle. And it is a regrettable fact that so much of what passes as science should be found lending its sanction to the former rather than to the latter. This is because the restricted sphere of modern science has concentrated its attention on the lower and more external aspects of human nature; while neither science nor accepted religion affords us adequate information as to the higher and more important parts of our make-up.

Reverting to the subject of tuition, we point out the antagonism between the self-will of the pupils and the will of the master; but nothing is said about the *higher nature of the pupils*. Yet it is this third factor that solves the problem, affording the good instead of the choice of evils. The aim of the master should be to call into play the self-controlling power of the pupils, thus rendering them obedient to a higher law recognised by both. This again is a not unfamiliar principle of practical philosophy, but appears to require continual restating. But Theosophy, by its teachings, provides what may be called an intellectual sanction for this principle; for Theosophy shows the dual origin and dual nature of Man, and how he derives both from physical Nature and from the spiritual source of universal life and intelligence that rules throughout Nature. In a word, Theosophy recognises as a practical fact the existence in Man of a superior fount of power and guidance, upon which he can call for aid against the wayward and destructive impulses of his lower nature. And it is to the evocation of this power in each and all the pupils that we must look for the securing of true guidance and discipline and order.

It is evident from the above that the go-as-you-please proposition implies a weakness and lack of resource in the teacher; an attempt to achieve by weak compliance what one has failed to do by personal force of character and efficiency in one's profession. And we find the same in the world today: people left at the mercy of their personal caprices, or of those caprices of the crowd which are not the less harmful because collective,—because there is no visible authority able to champion and urge the claims of *principle*.

We must try to avoid the notion that humanity today has achieved

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some new step in its evolution that renders it superior to the time-honored allegiance to conscience and principle; and we must understand instead that humanity is but passing round a sharp corner and needs more than ever a strengthening of its safeguards against the storms that shake it.

Theosophy reaffirms the eternal principles of human conduct, based as they are upon laws of Nature; and restates them in language suitable to the intellect of today. It substitutes for the scant and inadequate treatment of human nature accorded by science and accepted religions the masterly interpretation of human nature derived from the undying traditions of the Wisdom-Religion. It makes for order and stability.

### WAS THE TELESCOPE KNOWN IN ANCIENT TIMES?

C. J. RYAN

HE puzzling question of the amount of scientific knowledge possessed by the ancient peoples of the earth becomes more insistent every day. It is no use for the superior persons who delight in assuring the vanity of this age that it is the only really scientific period, and that "we are the people," to declare that the ancients were ignoramuses, dreamers, who only worked on empiric rules, and so forth, for there are numerous facts which confute these slanders. To most persons, brought up in the scholastic atmosphere of contempt for former ages which got on without newspapers, steamships, trains, or our modern brand of religion, it is difficult to realize the possibility that many scientific facts, recently discovered, may have been quite familiar to the learned scholars in the temple-colleges of ancient Egypt, India, Chaldea, and elsewhere. But it is not unreasonable for us to modify our prejudices when definite information reaches us of some antique observation of a truly scientific nature which cannot easily fit into the theory of primitive ignorance.

Another cause for suspecting that we are living in a great illusion when we think modern civilization is the highest efflorescence of human progress, is the enormous antiquity of mankind. The geological age in which man's relics — bones or implements — are recognised, is being pushed back farther and farther; a few years ago the race was allowed forty or fifty thousand years; remains were then found (or *admitted* after having been found long before) from the late Tertiary, then earlier, and now the primitive flint implements called eoliths are generally accepted as of

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human manufacture — *and they have been found in the immensely ancient Oligocene at Boncelles.*

According to the testimony of the breaking down of radio-active minerals into lead and helium, the Oligocene is not less than six million years old! What, then, has mankind been doing all these ages? Vegetating in the most primitive way, until the Chaldaean age in the Old World and the Chimus in the New, a few thousand years ago, ten at the outside? How absurd this sounds when placed nakedly! The truth is, as it has always been taught in the East, that there have been innumerable rises and falls in civilization, and that progress is extremely slow.

In *The Scientific American Monthly* for June there is an article by Dr. Heinrich Hein upon the possibility of the ancient Babylonian astronomers possessing telescopes, which shows that the problem is not decided in the negative. Dr. Hein offers some very interesting information which makes it probable that optical aid was not unknown in very ancient times, in Mesopotamia at least, but he also omits to mention some facts of great significance in proof of considerably greater astronomical knowledge in antiquity than is generally known. He says that there is no indication in the writings of the Greeks, Romans, or Arabs that before Galileo (in 1609 and later) any one had ever perceived the crescent form of Venus. He is partially in error here, as will be shown. He says, however, that some years ago the following prophecy was discovered, written in cuneiform characters as uttered by some ancient Babylonian astrologer:

“When it cometh to pass that Venus hideth a star with her right horn and when Venus is large and the star is small, then will the king of Elam be strong and mighty, holding sway over the four corners of the earth, and other kings will pay him tribute.”

Dr. Hein commenting on this, says:

“This is immediately repeated with the exception that the word *right* is replaced by *left* and the name Elam by that of Akkad. Akkad signifies Babylonia, the arch enemy of Elam, and these two nations were in ancient days (c. 2,000 B. C.) the only two great powers in Asia Minor, and were engaged in a struggle with each other for the mastery of the world as known to them, *i. e.*, for the rulership over the whole of Asia Minor. The blotting out of a small star by the ‘horn’ of Venus must have been such an extraordinary occurrence as to induce the astrologer to connect it with the greatest prize in his power to offer, dominion over the four corners of the world. There is absolutely no doubt that the Babylonian word in question signifies horn. Hence it really looks as if the Babylonians had recognised the phases of Venus.”

Dr. Hein then considers the possibility of sharp-sighted persons seeing the horns of Venus in Mesopotamia. But he, points out, even if Babylonia has very clear air, so have many other places. In Europe the planet often shines brightly enough to throw a shadow, and surely the Arabians live under a brilliant and transparent sky. He mentions an astronomer, Heis, who had such penetrating sight that he could easily see Venus, Jupiter,

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and Mercury in daylight, and eleven stars in the Pleiades where the normal person sees six, but Heis did not report seeing the crescent form of Venus.

Babylonian texts also speak of the 'horns' of Mars. Now Mars, of course, being an outer planet is never seen as a crescent, but at certain times it is distinctly gibbous, that is to say, a large proportion of its surface is in shadow, and the effect is like that of the Moon when about nine days old; the shape is so far from circular that it might easily be called horned. Mars, when strongly gibbous, is so small, hardly more than 15", that it could not possibly be visible to the naked eye. Venus is about 55" in diameter when at the clearest crescent phase, and even this is far too small for any shape to be distinguished without optical assistance. The mention of the horns of Mars, therefore, adds to the probability that the Babylonian astronomers either had some kind of telescope or learned their science from some others who had. There is of course the third possibility that 'horns' has a mystical or symbolical significance, as it has elsewhere in the Semitic tongues.

Regarding the possibility of the Babylonians knowing that Saturn had a ring, Dr. Hein is rather vague, saying that only a direct mention of the rings in a cuneiform text would be convincing. Others have thought it more than probable that the Babylonians knew about the rings, and this in spite of the well-known fact that the astronomers of the seventeenth century, Galileo and his successors, found it very difficult to recognise the true shape of the rings though they had telescopes of a simple kind. Galileo's glass, which showed Jupiter's moons and the phases of Venus, did not define Saturn's ring unmistakably.

Dr. Hein speculates as to the kind of telescope the Babylonians might have had, but only mentions the possible use of the concave mirror — the reflecting form. He refers to the story of Archimedes projecting the concentrated rays of the sun by means of mirrors against the Roman fleet at Syracuse in 212 B. C. and thereby setting ships on fire, in support of the possibility of the existence of concave mirrors in antiquity.

Dr. Hein does not seem to be aware of certain facts which, from quite ordinary, matter-of-fact evidence, make it more than probable that the ancients knew a great deal about the planets, including the crescent shape of Venus and Mercury, the gibbosity of Mars, the Rings of Saturn, and even the four moons of Jupiter and possibly seven moons of Saturn!

Tests to determine whether the half-moon or crescent shape of Venus can be seen by persons of unusually keen vision were made a couple of years ago in the brilliant atmosphere of Algeria. Drawings of the planet, well lighted and free from the distracting glare which makes Venus such a difficult object for the telescope at twilight and dawn, were made and examined by specially sharp-sighted Algerian college students at

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varying distances. No shape could be distinguished until the pictures were near enough to appear twice the diameter of the planet at its position of best definition of shape. Full reports appeared in the scientific journals of this valuable proof of the impossibility of seeing the crescent shape of Venus or Mercury without a glass.

Furthermore, an ancient Irish astronomical text-book contains the statements that in certain positions Venus and Mercury are horned like the New Moon. This text-book was translated, at least for the most part, into the Irish language from a Latin version of a work by Masch Allah, an Arabian or Jewish astronomer of the eighth century A. D. It was translated into Latin in the thirteenth century and into Irish about 1400. How did the Arabs (or the translators in 1400, if they added the information which is not likely) know anything about the phases of the inferior planets long before Galileo's telescope was thought of (1609) unless they had seen them or had received the true teachings from earlier scientists who had observed their shapes by means of telescopes? And these early observers may have been Chaldaeans or Egyptians or Hindûs, or even men of nations now utterly lost to history, such as the Atlanteans.

We know that the Chaldaeans had a good deal of knowledge of astronomy. The Babylonians used the sun-dial and had fairly accurate ideas as to the relative distances of the sun, moon, and planets from the Earth. Professor Rawlinson thought their knowledge was much greater than the Romans and Greeks believed, and he gives evidence to show that the Chaldaeans observed the four larger satellites of Jupiter, the ring of Saturn and *seven* of its satellites, some of which are very small and require a large telescope to show them.

Dr. Hein suggests that the Babylonians used the reflecting form of telescope with concave mirrors, and that this would be conclusively proved if we were quite certain that they did see Saturn's ring, etc. But is it not much more probable that they used the refracting telescope? Such a form of telescope consists entirely of transparent lenses, and a lens was actually found in the ruins of Nimrud, Assyria. Professor Sayce, in *Babylonian and Assyrian Life* (1914) says:

"The lens, which is of crystal, has been turned on a lathe and is now in the British Museum."

A magnifying glass is needed properly to read the minute writing on many of the clay tablets. The carved reliefs of Baal or Ninib, in which the god is standing within a ring, are very significant, for he has been identified with the planet Saturn, according to Prof. Sayce.

According to the teachings of Theosophy, the ancients possessed far more knowledge than our attitude of mind allows us to suspect, and we are slowly rediscovering many things that were once well known.

## 'AS A MAN THINKETH, SO IS HE'

GERTRUDE VAN PELT, B. SC., M. D.



AN old saying is this, with as much meaning for the one who utters it as he has taken steps in his evolution. Every day of growth reveals a little more of its meaning. But like a long woodland path, which seems always to be ending a few stretches ahead, each new vantage point uncovers fresh vistas. All this is true over the long familiar roads. But after the message of Theosophy has been heard, the spell of centuries is broken. Suddenly there is a change, and instead of woodland paths or even journeys round the earth, worlds within worlds open up to the eyes of the soul, and multiply each vista a thousandfold. The chains of old customs melt; the entangling cords of creeds and dogma burst; new currents rush into the stifling air of narrow prejudice; and lo! the openings seen ahead, behind, in all directions, seem in comparison with the old myopic vision, to be lost in the haze of infinity. Such is the magic of the message of Theosophy.

It is not surprising that man should be as he thinks, for he is essentially a thinker. He is much else potentially and inclusively, certainly. But here and now, he is developing the faculty of thought. The common objective view of him is delusive, and will not bear analysis. He is plainly only inhabiting his visible organism, the workings of which his brain-mind does not at all understand. It is quite outside of this consciousness, though his intimate connexion with it reports as pain anything going wrong; just as through other nerve-currents he is affected, without understanding and generally without recognising it, by discord in his nation, his race, or in the world. But the workings of his body are a mystery which forever escapes him. Some wonderful artisan, of course, must understand them, and must have hosts of smaller and smaller entities working under and with him. Such exquisite co-ordination reveals plainly an exquisite intelligence of some sort. Systems within systems and organs within organs are functioning together in such perfect harmony and co-operation that they seem like one. Study of the human body offers suggestive analogy for thought in meditating on the universal order. Every organ has its separate little brain, with cells built up into special tissues to accomplish a definite purpose — no two alike. The duties of each are quite distinct. All fed from the same reservoir of life, yet each having the selective intelligence to take from the universal supply just what it needs and no more. We find small centres, whose business it is to secrete fluids for specific needs; others, to collect from

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the general organism, fluids for excretion; some to prepare the different kinds of food for digestion; others to take it up. Indeed, so intricate are the various transformations, that no one yet has been able to follow them with any certainty. Then there are channels and vehicles for distribution to the remotest circumference, and so on, almost without limit; and the whole of this marvelous world, bound together by two separate nervous systems, not only with a general headquarters, but also each part with every other, a maze of detail. The least injury gives a signal, apparently without lapse of time, to small bodies, known as phagocytes, which flock to the scene of trouble to offer relief. If the injury is grave, they come in myriads and devour the poisons which might otherwise wreck the general organism. Without hesitancy hosts of them offer up their lives, dying in uncountable numbers. No social or civic fabric has ever approached in efficiency such perfection. And yet of all this colossal system of workers, this army of masters and servants, co-ordinators and guardians, man is absolutely ignorant. If all goes well, he is quite unconscious of them, and for the most part does little but inject discord and difficulties through carelessness or greed. The little that has been learned of the human organism fills volumes, and all the knowledge has been gathered so far, as one might study a stone or a tree.

So man can hardly be said to be his body. The ancient teaching is that the real man dwells in Manas or the thought-principle, for the purpose of developing it. The earth is said to be a man-bearing planet, and the evolution taking place upon it, that which accords with a period between two Manus, or supernal intelligences. Its duration is billions of years, or the time it takes to perfect a man. What is to be learned in that time, through the unlimited experiences which this globe offers, is *how to think*; and at each stage the actor in the drama is 'as he thinks.'

Now, the average human being can scarcely be said to have developed the faculty of thought to any extent. Thoughts rush into his mind from any quarter without his volition, and he is quite carried away following them one after the other with as much deliberate aim as a butterfly exercises in winging its airy paths. He is unable to distinguish his own thoughts from those which have simply floated in as motes or dust specks float before the eyes. Let the average man watch his mind just as he is dropping to sleep, just before unconsciousness closes the scene; and he will be surprised at the aimless, useless pictures photographed on his mental retina. In waking moments, some minds suggest a kaleidoscope filled with broken bits of glass, and presenting a new delusion with each turn. Even when the ordinary man attempts to use purposely this exquisite instrument with which he is endowed, and to concentrate his thoughts upon a chosen subject, extraneous ideas or pictures dart in from

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every side; creep round the corners of his mind; yet more, wander impertinently across his direct field of vision, as if they were living entities, sporting disrespectfully with the owner of that mind. Those even who have gained enough freedom from such annoyances to make much progress in study, find themselves more or less at the mercy of unwelcome thoughts; enough so, doubtless, to fill the mental atmosphere with dust and smoke.

But the perfected man will be something quite different from all this and beyond human imagination. From what is revealed in the ancient teachings, it is clear that no thought unbidden will ever cross the sacred portals of *his* mind. All within will be pure and clear like the diamond; illuminated with the light of intuition. There will be no need for lenses, retorts, or edged tools, in studying the human body, for by the inherent force of his will, he may through his mind enter all the precincts of any organ, even to the finest cell; become it or them, as it were, temporarily, and know what the cell knows; how it makes its myriad transformations; what the organs do; what are the now uncounted steps between a grain of wheat and a muscle fiber. He will be able through the wonderful, unguessed power of mind to enter the life of a tree; a pebble; to expand into the life of the earth in its totality; to discover what makes of it one vast organism, just as does the lord of his body make of it the same. He will be able to sweep from earth to its sister-stars, and learn their relation to each other and to him, as part of the mighty whole. The solar system itself will hold no secrets from him, — but beyond that he may not go, as perfected man. It must be another order of evolution, which will cross these boundaries. Thus saith the ancient teaching, supported by an unassailable philosophy; an array of formidable facts, arranged in masterly order, maintained by analogies and logic, which leave the teaching in perfect poise — incontrovertible.

The enormous difference between the present “grub” state and perfected man lies in the quality, bent, and power of mind. Many now latent centers will, of course, become active, and there are to be physical transformations following the inner growth; but essentially, the evolution is to be mental and spiritual. At any moment, during the many hundreds of millions of years these changes will consume, it will always be true that “as a man thinketh, so is he.” He is at just that point in his evolution that the character, force, and direction of his mind indicate.

Instructions are given, as they always have been, how to make this journey through time in the right way and with the least pain. The Golden Rule, the injunctions to purity of mind and heart, the curse pronounced upon selfishness in its manifold forms, running through all the religions, are not sentiment, but the statement of law in the moral world, as inflexible as the law of light or gravity. Break it, and the

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natural consequences follow, increasingly serious the higher and more comprehensive the law. Thus, the effects of a conscious and deliberate violation of a moral law are infinitely more far reaching than that of any physical mistake. The universal purpose has been interfered with much nearer its centre. The one who is guilty of it has allied himself to that extent with the lower evil forces; becomes indeed an evil force, and has to meet with scientific exactness from the Higher Law, a discipline equal to his opposition to it.

As said, the whole of the enormous period of earth-life — an eternity for human realization — is consecrated to the development of mind. The one who is using it is the one who is evolving it, which, of course, implies that mind is simply an instrument, and no more the man than is his body. It is more delicate than the poise of a feather on a knife's edge. It is more swift than the lightning. The merest whiff will waft it from zenith to nadir, in a flash. It is more powerful than the wind; as vast as space. How great must be the real man within, to control such an instrument!

The difficulty and mystery seem to lie in this, that man sees and knows no earth through that which he is in the process of creating. He cannot know until he has created; he cannot create until he knows. The situation might suggest a deadlock. But it is not so hopeless as it seems. From the over-world, shining like a star, is the light of intuition; within, is the still, small voice -- the voice of conscience. These two open channels from the world of actual knowledge, make always possible growth of the lower evolving mind, and, consequently, increase in knowledge to be gained through it. There is always enough illumination for the next step ahead. More comes after taking this in accordance with the Higher Guidance. For man understands on this plane, as he creates his organ of understanding. He has to forge his own sword, and with it cut his own path, blazed by ancient heroes. No savior is coming down to do the work for him. No outside power can remove the difficulties. To make a god means supereffort and aeons of training, and the perfected instrument, mind, is the insignia of his title. Thus the Ego in man is not only greater than his present mind, but above and beyond the final achievement a veritable Titan, though buried, hedged in, and, at times, well nigh overpowered. Like a king in his natural Home, he is practically and verily at any given moment in this world, 'as he thinks.'

The mysterious position has been variously compared by the ancients to a labyrinth; a rock to which the Great One is chained; a perilous journey; an agelong pilgrimage, and so on.

It might likewise be compared in one aspect to a closed mine, buried deep in the world of matter. The divine miner must by a self-emitted

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ray of light, that ray which comes to him from the over-world, discover the infinite treasures which lie therein; must carve his road to freedom. Many will be the false alleys he will construct, leading back to the starting point; leading to spots of torture; ending in cul-de-sacs. And each one until reclosed will be there to beguile or deceive. But victory comes at last. Other miners can be heard, working all about, and like blind leading the blind, will shout their counsel. Beyond, in the fresh, sweet air, are those Herculese, who have in bygone ages toiled through similar mines and unearthed their gems; forged their swords of will, and mastered the demons of the underworld. They call continually to their comrades of a later age. Their voices penetrating to the deepest layer can reach those who listen. They are the great Teachers of man. They teach him how to find the secrets of life, and how to act. They bid him shun the deathly fumes of hate, anger, envy; and should he meet them unawares, instead of adding to them, like poisons, they bid him to awaken love, the universal transformer of all things ugly, mean, or low. Thus only shall he gain the strength to open the Way to the Light. It is these directors who make it possible for man to finally work his way out of his dungeon of matter.

Theosophy proclaims the existence of World-Teachers, who are sometimes known; more often, not. Indeed, it is itself indisputable evidence of their presence and interest in human affairs. They are a philosophical and practical necessity. Synthetic knowledge is only possible to those who have already mastered the knowledge *they* synthesize. Life is unthinkable without them. Nothing is clear until they are mentally perceived. Read *The Secret Doctrine* to realize the full import of this. Half evolved beings cannot give the key they have not yet found. Moral sense demands them. Do we, even at this stage, throw our children into life without an effort to enrich them with our past experience? On the contrary, the divine element in us, though still obscured, forces us to furnish schools and study opportunities for growth in the interest of the youth. Those refusing this are stigmatized as a disgrace to human kind. Are we likely to be less generous, less responsible, to feel less concern for the welfare of others after we have suffered and enjoyed for ages; after we know with a keenness not now imaginable, just what it means to overcome and be strong? Shall we be selfish after having gained that which is the reward of an absolute surrender of self? Nor are They. Indeed, They are said to be not only masters of wisdom, of knowledge and life, but masters of compassion. Though possibly not essential, up to a certain degree of growth, to know that such men exist and labor for the world, the knowledge of it is always a help, an inspiration, a clarifying influence in the mind. For noble examples always inspire effort.

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One often hears that it matters little what one believes if he only lives aright. But this is one of those muddy mixtures of truth and error which leaves nothing clear. Wrong thinking does not produce right living. Nor do narrow, provincial, grotesque beliefs lead to the mountain tops, though occasionally we find one reaching them in spite of such handicaps, when love and compassion have grown great enough to lift him, temporarily, quite above their influence.

The truth is, we have two minds, which act and react upon each other; one, belonging to our essential permanent nature, generous, great, all-knowing, and functioning in its natural element: the other, little, personal, selfish, functioning here on earth and in the process of becoming. One furnishing, so to say, the back-ground, and revealing its presence in the individual through color, quality, atmosphere, right motive, or character — occasionally, as in genius, sending down real thoughts, perfect, beautiful, ripe; the other, busy with the things of the day, and all involved with ambitions, sensations, fears, joys, emotions of every kind. The task which lies before every one is to bring these two minds *en rapport*; little by little to prepare the vehicle for more and more of the higher mind to enter. When the vehicle is perfected, there will be the descent of the Holy Ghost; the higher mind will dwell in it, expand it, and we shall have man completed — millions upon millions of years hence.

But meantime, many things happen. Selfishness clogs the channel between the two minds, so that messages seldom pass. This is said to be a characteristic of this present civilization — great intellects, using their energies for selfish and hence evil ends. The finale for them, unless they alter their ways, must be dissolution through self-generated poisons. Then we have spiritual aspirations and longings filtering down upon an ill-regulated and illogical lower mind. Witness the numerous erratic cults, known as fads. We see lower minds, many of them, full of distractions, aimless, whose incessant chatter makes it impossible for the higher to gain their attention: and again, lower minds all awry with wrong conceptions; willing and anxious for guidance, but misinterpreting the meaning. There must have been many medieval ascetics who realized intensely the spiritual world, and longed for it, yet wasted and contracted their lives through torture of the body, and seclusion from their fellows. They had no real idea of brotherhood. Their minds were saturated with the false teachings of anthropomorphism; their wills and faculties harnessed to the crude desire for a personal heaven. Sound basic beliefs would have checked them here and there, before they became enveloped in delusions. Their undeniable devotion to duty and their ability for self-control, would have led them into useful paths and shown them the *true* way to dominate their bodies, had they been guided by the light.

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The play of currents between the higher and lower natures is verily infinite, but our observations of life, and the evidence of actual teachings given to the world at the turn of the tides, make it plain that it is of great consequence not only how we think, but what we think; whether, in other words, we are approaching truth or receding from it. It is of supreme importance in what light we regard others and ourselves. The 'worm of the dust' theory leads in quite a different direction from the 'Ye are gods' teaching.

There was once a youth who had known only toil and drudgery during his short life. Held in servitude by a cruel and powerful master, life offered nothing attractive within his narrow horizon. He was growing stooped and careless, even ambition was being smothered under oppression. One day, when heavily trudging over the highway, he met a venerable man of lordly mien, who said, "Youth, I have tidings for thee. Thou art a prince. When but a babe, thou wert stolen from thy father's castle, robbed of thy heritage, since when thou hast been reared in the prison of mean thoughts. But lift thy eyes and take courage. Tell no man of this, but when the hour is ripe thou shalt be restored." As suddenly as the old man came, he vanished. A magic change took place. The youth straightened himself to his full height. Fire came into his eyes. His step became elastic; his form grew supple with energy. His manners softened; his mind developed. "If I am a prince," said he, "I must have noble thoughts." And thus rapidly the new standpoint produced a transformation.

Dogma has grown out of a distortion of this truth that it matters what one thinks. In the past, men in high official positions, with limited minds and minds not always honest, have formulated their own narrow conceptions of some of the great teachings, often drawing inferences which had no relation to the real facts, and then have used their power to force their opinions on the ignorant masses. To put men's bodies in chains is terrible, but it is nothing to the sin of enslaving the mind. This has been the crime of the Christian era, and it produced a race of mental cripples. Finally, shut off from rational contemplation of spiritual matters, the racial energy flowed in a material direction with such force that in many natures the higher faculties atrophied, and spiritual realities became an absolute blank to their consciousness.

Teachers of dogma do not bear the credentials of spiritual guides. These know that man is a thinker and must evolve through thought. Whatever else comes or does not come to him at any time, thought must be free, if he is to grow. *Bodily* fetters *may* be made by the thinker a means of growth sometimes, but mental shackles, never. And yet the truths about man, his nature, his history, and destiny: about life as

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a whole, its purpose, and all vital questions, must be presented. They must be taught, explained, reiterated, in every new race and new age. The real Teachers do this unfailingly, but they lay not a feather's weight to coerce belief. They have no dogmas. This is one of the signs by which they may be known. They give truths which shine by their own inner light, but offer them freely, to be accepted or rejected by any or all. *Give*, however, is not the right word. Truth must be won. No language can shape it to form. Even the best use of words can only beckon in its direction, and each one in his time must pass beyond them. Though more subtil symbols than words may be used to convey it, still all must prepare themselves through their own efforts to receive such teachings. Moreover, with every step onward, the formulated truth changes its aspect. As no two beings are, it is said, in exactly identical positions, the same words can never have precisely the same meaning for them. Dogma puts splints on the mind; holds it chained to a dwarfed conception, and, in time, kills out spiritual discernment. Where, except in Theosophy, can such complete, profound, comprehensive teaching be found, with an absolute exclusion of dogma? This is one of the marks by which it may be known from the outside as Truth. The final evidence comes to the thinker, who in accepting it as Guide finds he has verily entered the Land of the Gods; that fetters drop off; that horizons stretch to infinity; that harmony supersedes confusion and that Light discloses beauty in the forms which had seemed grotesque in the semi-darkness. It is not to be expected that a simple intellectual assent will discover all this,—the real man, the thinker, being beyond intellect, which is only one of his gateways. The pleasure in music lies deeper than a knowledge of the mathematics of harmony; or in art, than a mastery of its technique.

The great thing is to know that thought is the instrument which shapes destiny, that even the lightest cloud has had its source in the thoughts of this or some previous life; that bitter fruits are the trail of the serpent of evil thoughts; and that sooner or later every thought comes to the surface as a crystallized joy or sorrow. The greater thing is to know that all have latent the absolute power to select and direct their thoughts; that they actually can close the door upon petty, unworthy ones, and invite those which are beautiful and ennobling; that no exterior god or demon forces arbitrarily any event, whatever may be the seeming contrary evidence; and that there is no need to retain any quality which makes one unloved, unhappy, or useless. The greatest thing of all is, after knowing all this, to call upon one's will and translate it into action. "He who conquereth himself, is greater than he who taketh a city." In fact, it is this last only which can transform simple information into personal knowledge.

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In the words of Mme. Blavatsky: "We stand bewildered before the mystery of our own making and the riddles of life that *we will not solve*, and then accuse the great Sphinx of devouring us. But verily there is not an accident in our lives, not a misshapen day or a misfortune, that could not be traced back to our own doings in this or another life." She came to proclaim and awaken the god in man. She came as the herald of a new age.

Gods cannot be vanquished. Failure then is impossible to those who persevere. Out of this consciousness grows courage. What is there to fear for one who knows that only eternal harmonies endure; that beneath the ceaseless ebb and flow of life's tides, there is an undertone, strong as all the worlds, shaping the motions to the destiny of gods; that out of the refuse of the world-stuff, out of the sorrows and failures of life, even out of its horrors, time weaves a luminous garment of splendor, and Mother Earth, after dire devastations, mantles herself once more in loveliness.



"NATURE conceived the idea of us before she formed us, and, indeed, we are no such trifling piece of work as could have fallen from her hands unheeded. See how great privileges she has bestowed upon us, how far beyond the human race the empire of mankind extends; consider how widely she allows us to roam, not having restricted us to the land alone, but permitted us to traverse every part of herself; consider, too, the audacity of our intellect, the only one which knows of the gods or seeks for them, and how we can raise our mind high above the earth, and commune with those divine influences; you will perceive that man is not a hurriedly put together, or an unstudied piece of work. Among her noblest products nature has none of which she can boast more than man, and assuredly no other which can comprehend her boast. What madness is this, to call the gods in question for their bounty? . . . Suppose that such men as these say, 'I do not want it,' 'Let him keep it to himself,' 'Who asks him for it?' and so forth, with all the other speeches of insolent minds: still, he whose bounty reaches you, although you say that it does not, lays you under an obligation, nevertheless; indeed, perhaps the greatest part of the benefit which he bestows is that he is ready to give even when you are complaining against him."

— SENECA, *On Benefits*, xxiii, (Translation by A. Stewart)

## ATOMS OF SOUND

MAGISTER ARTIUM



CORRESPONDENT in the *English Mechanic* says:

“Science now recognises the atomic structure of both electricity and light, and by deduction from their correlation the other physical forces, those of heat and sound, must also possess an atomic structure. The atoms of both heat and sound, however, have yet to be discovered.”

The inference is somewhat violent. Because two forces are correlated, and one is atomic, therefore the other is atomic. Also there is a certain delightful freedom in speaking of the structure of a force, as being atomic or otherwise. Atomic matter we are familiar with, but atomic force demands an additional scratching of our head. We supposed that science had pronounced electricity and light to be substances or grades of matter, and that the atoms spoken of were small units of this matter. We have also gathered that, when there is a vagueness as to the terms matter and energy, the word atom can be replaced by the word quantum. So light and electricity are either energy divided into quanta, or matter divided into atoms. Time has been spoken of as atomic, or as being divisible into ultimate indivisible units or quanta. But should we classify time as a form of matter or as a form of energy? It doesn't strike one at first sight as coming conveniently under either head. True, one has heard of people staggering under a load of years, but the expression is metaphorical and scarcely implies that time is a ponderable substance. Again, one has heard of the flight of time, but seeks in vain to recall an instance of such flight being violently arrested and thereby developing heat by the transformation of kinetic energy into its thermal equivalent.

Atoms of sound is, we confess, a notion that had not occurred to us; but that was merely an oversight which we are glad to have corrected. In a natural attempt to conceive this idea, to reduce it to some sort of mental equivalent, we find ourselves asking first what is sound. Is it a sensation in my head or a form of vibratory motion in the particles of ponderable matter? Both definitions are given, but the latter is clearly the one here intended. So we have a piece of solid matter, whose particles are vibrating around points at the rate of so many times a second; and we are asked to conceive this state of affairs as being atomic in structure. Perhaps one vibration might be suggested as the atom of vibration.

With regard to heat, the difficulty in conception does not seem so

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great. One has only to resuscitate the old phlogiston theory, by which heat was regarded as a substance which enters or leaves bodies. If told that a hot body does not weigh any more than a cold one, we can take refuge in the belief that heat is a substance unaffected by gravity; but then what about Rumford and Davy?

In lucubrations like that quoted at the head of this article we observe the confusion of thought and want of metaphysical proficiency which characterize the mental sphere of many people. Not the least among these confusions, and one that has been characteristic of scientific thought, and often pointed out, is the neglect to discriminate between entities and abstractions. If sound is merely the name given to vibrations of a certain order, then it is a descriptive name and stands for an abstraction or mental category. In this sense it belongs to the same class of terms as height, weight, complexion, etc., as applied to the human species. It is absurd to speculate as to the structure, atomic or otherwise, of sound, if the word denotes merely an abstraction such as this. But behind this we discern, lurking in the mind of the speculator, the notion that sound is something more than this, that it is an entity, some mysterious force, power, agent, or substance, which exists of itself independently and provokes in physical matter those vibrations that are classified under the name of sound. And surely this is the truer view. It may well be that sound exists thus independently, and that the rôle played by physical matter is that of rendering sound perceptible to our physical senses.

In certain ancient philosophies, with which Theosophy is to some extent concerned, sound is represented as among the most mysterious and occult potencies, and is said to be the characteristic quality of that species of superphysical matter known as âkâsa. It is a creative force, connected with that which in Occult Science is known as the Word. Much of interest on this question will be found in *The Secret Doctrine*.

Nineteenth-century science was prone to define the primal forces by their physical effects, thus reducing them to abstractions, *modes* of motion or of energy. It recognised nothing more real than these same effects. The trend of twentieth-century science is to regard them rather as things in themselves, capable of existing apart from physical matter and of exciting effects therein; and this is the view which the mind instinctively takes. We no longer regard electricity as a mere mode of energy in matter, but as an independent substance or force (the meaning of these terms is much confused). The same is probably destined to happen to our notions of heat and sound.

All this bears closely on the present revolution in ideas by which our ground-notions of time and space are becoming so modified. It was sufficient for the temporary purposes of nineteenth-century science to refer

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phenomena to a postulated temporal and spatial framework; but now our greater refinements in research require that we shall recognise the artificial and temporary character of this framework; and, though we must still keep some framework in the back of our minds, if we are to think at all, yet we shall have made notable progress by this new recognition.

## THE GARDEN OF EDEN

H. TRAVERS, M. A.

“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

“And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

“And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. . . .

“And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

“And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

“But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”



● runs the familiar story, and equally familiar is its sequel. We know how the Serpent tempted the woman, telling her that, if she ate of the forbidden fruit, she would not die, but that “Ye shall become as Gods, knowing good and evil”; and how she ate of the fruit, and gave to Adam, and he also ate. Then their innocence fell from them, and they were driven forth from the garden of Eden, to labor for their bread in the outer world.

There is something about this story that lingers in the memory; nor can its undying charm be accounted for solely by its familiarity to our childhood's ears. Perhaps the reason may be that the story is *true* in a sense; and perhaps there is something about a *truth* that forces itself home to our conviction despite the obstacles of doubt and misunderstanding. We have been taught to believe that the story is folk-lore and superstition; and indeed such a belief is a natural reaction against the unintelligent literal dead-letter interpretation which we have had driven into us at the Sunday-school. But despite these misunderstandings and scoffs, we still feel the charm of the story and it will not die.

It is but natural that devout readers of the Bible should have sought

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zealously to fix the geographical location of the Garden of Eden. So much of the narrative is associated with places that can actually be fixed or even visited today. The particulars as to the river which parts into four streams might seem to afford a clue. Yet how uncertain this clue is may be seen from the variety of the conjectures arrived at. We give a few.

Josephus thought that the four rivers were the Euphrates, Tigris, Ganges, and Nile. Calvin believed Eden to have been at the mouth of the Euphrates on the Persian Gulf. General Gordon and others were strongly of the opinion that Eden was in one of the Seychelles Islands in the Indian Ocean. Others, who have heard something of American archaeology, think that Eden was in Yucatan. Still others believe it was at the North Pole, which, according to Geology, was formerly warm.

And we have H. P. Blavatsky's authority for the following statement:

"The Garden of Eden as a locality is no myth at all; it belongs to those landmarks of history which occasionally disclose to the student that the Bible is not all mere allegory. Eden, or the Hebrew Gan-Eden, meaning park or garden of Eden, is an archaic name of the country watered by the Euphrates and its many branches, from Asia and Armenia to the Erythraean Sea."— *Isis Unveiled*, I, 575

But now let us set against this another circumstance. Turning to a book called *Myths of the New World*, by Professor Daniel Brinton, we find the following:

"Constantly from the palace of the Lord of the world, seated on the high hill of heaven, blow four winds, pour four streams, refreshing and fecundating the earth. Therefore, in the myths of ancient Irân there is mention of a celestial fountain . . . whence four all-nourishing rivers roll their waves toward the cardinal points; therefore the Tibetans believe that on the sacred mountain of Himâvata grows the tree of life Zampu, from whose foot once more flow the waters of life in four streams to the four quarters of the world; and therefore it is that the same tale is told by the Chinese of the mountain Kuantun, by the Edda of the mountain in Asaheim, whence flows the spring Hvergelmir, by the Brâhmans of Mount Meru, and by the Parsees of Mount Albors in the Caucasus. . . .

"The Aztec priests never chanted more regretful dirges than when they sang of Tulan, the cradle of their race, where once it dwelt in peaceful happiness, whose groves were filled with birds of sweet voices and gay plumage, whose generous soil brought forth spontaneously maize, cacao, aromatic gums, and fragrant flowers. . . . The myth of the Quichés but changes the name of this pleasant land. With them it was Pan-paxilpa-cayala, where the waters divide in falling. . . . Once again, in the legends of the Mixtecas, we hear the old story repeated of the garden where the first two brothers dwelt. . . . 'Many trees were there, such as yield flowers and roses, very luscious fruits, divers herbs, and aromatic spices.'"

And we might go on quoting indefinitely from many other sources. It seems clear that the Eden story is no monopoly of the Hebrew Christian Bible, or of the ancient Hebrews, or even of their predecessors the Chaldees. It is everywhere, even as far removed as America. How are we to reconcile this with the other statement — that the Garden of Eden was the country watered by the Euphrates? Elsewhere, too, H. P. Blavatsky speaks of Eden as referring to a land now submerged beneath

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the sea, and of the Eden mentioned in Ezekiel as referring to the ancient continent of Lemuria.

Evidently the story is one of those whose meaning is of both universal and particular application. The same can be said of the Flood, the Tower of Babel, and the confusion of tongues. Every people, including as before the American aborigines, has its story of the Ark or something similar; every people has its sacred mountain. But though the story is always the same in all essential respects, there are local differences. The sacred mountain is always some mountain in the country known to those who tell the story; the kind of birds, trees, etc., differs correspondingly. Here is therefore a case of adoption and adaptation. But let us seek further light in the meaning of the legend.

It describes the existence of a unit of humanity, figuratively spoken of as Adam and Eve, in a state of innocent bliss, with every bounty which heaven and earth can afford, but as yet without the power of free choice between good and evil. Man was in the child-state. The drama provides two deific powers, one called in the Hebrew Jahveh or Jehovah, and translated "the Lord God"; the other called the Serpent. Now the Serpent is a universal symbol of wisdom. In every religious cult we find it, and the serpent-mounds of this country are as familiar as are the snake-dances of certain Indians. Even in the Bible the Serpent is spoken of in this sense, as in the well-known passage: "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." But for some mysterious reason it has been with us a symbol of evil. The Bible, however, is an ancient oriental book; and the narrative itself shows us that this Serpent had power and wisdom in no way inferior to that of Jehovah. It persuades the man and woman to taste of the tree which Jehovah had forbidden them to taste, assuring them that his threat of death was untrue, and that they should thereby become wise. And we are told that, upon eating the fruit, their eyes were opened.

Taken in connexion with the corresponding accounts in the allegories of other peoples, we may infer that man received at the hands of the Serpent the gift of free-will — man's curse and man's blessing; the power that begins by causing him to err, but ends by saving him. In short, in reading this story, we find ourselves present at an initiation, during which man is tested and offered a choice. He is at once forbidden and persuaded to taste the fruit. It is ridiculous to suppose that the Serpent acted as an enemy of the Lord God, and the Lord God was an all-powerful deity who yet was unable to control his own subjects. Such is indeed the absurd version of the story to which many of us have been accustomed, and it is small wonder that our faith has been severely tried by it. We all know the childish question: "Mother, why doesn't God kill the devil?"

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Man, then, chooses the perilous gift and takes upon himself by his own choice the responsibility for his actions. He had received from his creators everything they could give; but how could they give him wisdom? This was a thing that could not be given, but must be chosen. So man was permitted to choose, and he chose wisdom.

The result was that he lost his innocence and could no longer remain in Eden. So does a man lose his childhood when he grows up; so does the unconsciousness of infancy vanish when the self-consciousness of youth sets in. And he goes forth into the outer world. And what use did he make of his new power? There can be little doubt that he made a wrong use of it and went astray. There can be little doubt that he suffered and still suffers, as he cherishes ever in his heart the memory of that lost Eden and never ceases from his endeavor to regain it.

The allegory, therefore, refers in its larger meaning to one of the earliest chapters in the history of mankind. It will be acknowledged that the accounts given in Genesis are somewhat confused. There are two accounts of the Creation of man: one in the first chapter, the other in the second. In chapter i the animals are created first; in chapter ii man is created first. In verse 7 of this chapter we read:

“The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”

The Lord God is Jehovah Elohim, as we find by referring to the Hebrew original; and the word which is translated ‘living soul’ means ‘animal soul,’ as is pointed out in Young’s Biblical Concordance. This, then, was the first creation of man, whereby he was made a perfect animal being, but was as yet not endowed with his characteristic Intelligence. In the other account we read that:

“God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. . . . So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.”

The word translated God here is the Hebrew Elohim, meaning Spiritual Powers or Divine Beings, and it is to be noted that the plural pronouns *us* and *our* are used.

Now a double creation of man is to be found in the ancient allegories and mythologies all over the world, as a study of comparative religion shows us. And it should be taken into account in interpreting the Bible. Failing in this, through lack of knowledge, our commentators have jumbled the accounts as if they both referred to the same event; and thus they have left the discrepancies and contradictions unexplained. Further, in the story of the Garden of Eden, we have yet another account. For here we find that man is at first mindless, and afterwards receives the gift of mind and his eyes are opened and he becomes as a

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God. — So in this account the two creations are again represented.

Lest it might be thought that this interpretation is arbitrary and fanciful, let it be said again that it is arrived at by a study of the ancient religions of the world, with a view to finding out their points of agreement. It would not be possible to go into this subject now, but anyone interested will find plenty of facts in H. P. Blavatsky's works and other Theosophical literature.

The next meaning of the Eden story is that which refers to the golden age of different races. As said before, various races in various lands have adapted the story, localized it, and colored it according to their own particular surroundings and ideas. In this case it refers to the golden age of the various races. Our present race is the Aryan Race, or Fifth Root-Race; and we belong to the fifth subrace of this Fifth Root-Race. The Golden Age of the Aryan Race occurred long long ago while its earlier subraces were flourishing. And it occupied a part of Central Asia. It has dispersed and given rise to many smaller subdivisions, as our history-books tell us. It is well-known that there is a great similarity in the legends of members of the Aryan family, extending even so far as fairy-tales and nursery rimes; also that their languages all belong to one family. Every one of these scattered races, too, preserves legends telling of a golden age in the past, when man was sinless and happy, which gave way to ages of decline. The Eden story is such an allegory.

Only today I read in a magazine that there exists a prevalent belief that man, as a race, is decaying. The golden ages are all in the past, it is said. The writer must surely have forgotten that the retrospects towards past golden ages are always accompanied by prospects towards golden ages yet to come. Is not Paradise Lost but the prelude to its sequel, Paradise Regained? The path of evolution is a spiral curve, which advances by a succession of ups and downs. That this is no mere speculation, but a fact, is seen if we observe evolution on the small scale. Is not our life made of ups and downs? Does not day follow night, and night day; winter follow summer, only to be succeeded by another spring? The life of a race may be compared with the life of a man. The golden age of childhood, with its glow of the heaven-world whence came the newly incarnate Soul, passes away; but we look for a return to the heaven-world after death. Every race passes through its seven ages; and of these seven the first three are in a descending curve, the fourth is the lowest, and the last three are an ascent. This explains why our Fifth Root-Race is now but a little beyond its lowest point, and has glories both behind and before it.

Finally the Eden story refers to the drama of the human Soul. Each one of us is a Divinity dwelling in a house of clay. We are conscious of

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our Divinity — however dimly; and this consciousness forbids us to sleep the sleep of indifference. It impels us ever onward. It is the presence of the Divine Flame in man that fills him with restless insatiable aspirations and drives him ever forward in the pursuit of satisfaction. This satisfaction he can never find in the things of sense; for such things cannot avail to satisfy man's aspirations. He seizes upon one thing after another, only to fling it away in disappointment; for in it he finds not that which he sought — that which alone can satisfy. The ardor of romantic attachment may beckon him onward and upward, holding out prospects of a richer fuller life; yet he seizes the shadow and misses the substance, and the shadow melts in his grasp. He is disappointed; and often, because his ideal has escaped him, he petulantly cries that there is no ideal. He tries cynicism, but that cannot satisfy, and he must enter anew on his perpetual quest.

And what must be the end? He must sooner or later realize that, before he can enter Eden, he must become a child once again. He cannot carry his earth-stained garments therein. He must be pure, free from selfishness and desire. He uses his temptations as opportunities, "mounts on stepping-stones of his dead selves to higher things," and finds that the great Tempter was in reality the great Teacher.

Paradise Regained! There is a watchword for all of us. And the regaining of this Paradise is a matter within the power of every man. I do not refer to any special powers, I speak but of the consolations and encouragements which such a faith can give to the humblest student of life. But is Paradise nothing but a land with golden streets and flowing with milk and honey? Or is it a land of feather-beds — whether actual material feather-beds or feather-beds for the pampered soul? Nay, such a paradise would be intolerable to the healthy and vigorous Soul. We must recognise that all experiences are welcome to the vigorous Soul, as equally providing opportunity for self-expression and achievement. I would regard the Paradise rather as a condition of knowledge and wisdom, of inward poise and strength, from which we have departed, and which we seek to regain.

The power which carried man down the hill is the very same power that can carry him up the ascending slope that lies before him. His power of choice, and all his accumulated strength and determination will furnish the momentum. It is not in his own personal desires that he trusts; he finds out that those are erring guides. He seeks a higher power in the depths of his nature. He cries, with the Psalmist:

"Create in me a clean heart, ● God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit."

## THE POWER OF IDEALS

And the God which he addresses is the One Eternal Spirit dwelling in the hearts of all men. But supplication is of no use without effort. We dare not abrogate the freewill with which we are endowed. We must use the powers we possess. And if we wait in expectancy for a salvation to be conferred on us by someone else, we shall grow weary with the waiting. We must put our own shoulder to the wheel and resolve to win back the joy and peace that are our heritage.

The Bible also contains the promise of paradise regained; but if we are to take it in the dead-letter sense, we shall make as little of it as some people have made of the Eden story. We shall have a picture of the Deity creating man, then allowing a demon to interfere and spoil his work, then petulantly driving out the man and cursing him; and finally repenting and offering to save man on certain extraordinary conditions. But the Son of God, who is sacrificed to save man is the Divinity in man himself, sacrificed by being incased in matter and made to undergo the experiences of worldly life. But it is destined ultimately to be man's savior, and then truly will the promise have been fulfilled and man will be fit to re-enter Eden — this time not in the innocence of ignorance but in the majesty of knowledge.

## THE POWER OF IDEALS

MAGISTER ARTIUM

**F**ROM an article entitled 'Effective Idealism,' in the *Hibbert Journal* for July, we glean the following impressions. That many people who contemplate high ideals of world-love fail in effectiveness because their ideals are too broad and vague. As the world is too large to be comprehended in an act of devotion, we are prone to select from it certain few aspects, which appeal to our sympathies, and to love those; like one who feels his heart warm and expand in the presence of beautiful nature, but is soon irritated and disgusted by the intrusion of some unwelcome aspect or person. And this is perhaps really a species of self-love.

It is sometimes said that a love of the world will induce a love of our neighbor; but it may be the other way round. A love of our neighbor may induce a love of the world.

The attempt to apply a high and vague ideal may do harm as well as good; such ideal being an affair of the imagination rather than the heart, and hence not being adapted to actual circumstances. On the other

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

hand, one who loves his neighbor, whose heart is sympathetic and conduct amiable, does actual practical work.

Such are the impressions given by the article; and the writer seems to find a difficulty in realizing how such love as the latter kind can be fruitful on a large scale; instancing the case of a man in prison, whose activities were reduced to mere kindness of behavior towards his fellow-prisoners and keepers. How could such acts, all unknown as they were, influence the world for good? They could develop the man's character, so as to render him a power for good if he came out of prison, but what more? They could influence the other men whom he contacted and so render their conduct useful to the world. But still, what more?

Here is where we need more faith in the power of thought, in the power of heart-life. Here is where we are cramped by our materialism.

There is a school of thought which dwells on the power of mind, but it is preoccupied with narrow and selfish applications of the principle. It bids us be well and happy, make money and dominate our fellows, succeed in our loves, and (inferentially) in our hates.

Thus co-operation is needed among the schools of thought. Some are denying the power of mind; others are admitting it, but restricting it to unworthy objects.

If we feel that we cannot move the world, but can only influence our immediate sphere, why let physical geometry interfere with its laws of material force and distance, when our souls dwell not in that kind of space, nor are limited by that kind of force? Stone walls do not a prison make, except for the outer man.

The philosopher who is full of bright schemes for mankind, but cannot stand cold mutton, may live to grow disgusted with his impracticability, and learn to find more self-expression and joy in cultivating the qualities of adaptability and simple service than in spinning beautiful cobwebs in his irritable armchair. Let him have faith that thus he is really accomplishing more good for mankind. Even physically his usefulness will be vastly increased; for the wisdom gained by sympathy will enable him to say the right word at the right moment, and to help along at every opportunity instead of making difficulties as has been his wont. And if his body is within stone walls, his mind is behind no iron bars, while his soul is yet more free than his mind. Let us not limit ourselves by trying to imagine that the activities of the mind and soul are fettered by the conditions of physical space and energy. To cherish high ideals, and to realize them to the extent of the opportunities afforded us — what more can we do or hope to do? And if we but try it, we shall find the sphere of those opportunities expand beyond the range of our utmost aspirations.

## OFF NEWBURYPORT BAR

OUT of the chambers of the sea the gale  
Blows through the ancient town. And all its breath  
Is bitter with the salt spume that has knit  
Fans of white fire above the straining tops  
Of masts that quiver to their fall. All night  
Hollows of the horizon heave vast sighs;  
We hear great organ-music through our dreams,  
Or wake to tremble at the helpless cry  
Of surges roaring into nothingness.

But in the narrow ways of streets and courts  
And under battling boughs, though wild sound smite  
Pulses to stillness, yet is the sight forfend  
Of all the plain of the dim deep whose wreaths  
That soar and sink are powdered into air  
Blown thinner than a ghost. Nor ours to see  
Torment of watery tumultuousness,  
Nor any seething of the shoaling seas  
In heartbreak of dull twilight; nor when clear  
The moon along the edge of the clouds runs out  
To touch the leaping spray, and hurrying hides  
In caverns of the night and storm, while gulfs  
Of black and silver burst in monstrous shapes  
Hovering and swooping; nor when springing day  
A swift and sudden arrow shoots and wakes  
The cock of sacrifice upon his spire  
To splendid life.

He, on his spindle set,  
Nor veering in the teeth of the blast that sings  
In mighty rhythms from the outer east,  
Looks with defiant eye across the bar  
That, vague with changing phantoms of the foam,  
Rears all its flashing crest from march to march  
Of the low sand-dunes.

He, and he alone,  
Sees lines of parting coast, and one long league  
Combed white as wool where the broad breaker tears  
The tide incoming to suck down the shore

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

With every plunge of its mad shock that plays  
With continents for counters. Wide and wild —  
Again the gracious gold of morning lost —  
He sees in gloom the gray expanses meet  
Gray heaven, if that be heaven which bends so low  
It mantles jets and shafts and flying falls  
Of spinning scud and the chance wave that looms  
Like some wan giant vanishing in cloud  
Upon the swell.

He, when in one great sheet  
The rending mists let out a sudden sea  
With bout of blast and billow, on his watch  
That compasses meridians of storm,  
Sees at broad anchorage the fishing-craft,  
Stripped to the challenge of the tempest; sees  
Far off the fated barque whose broken mast  
Rakes the last verge, and up whose slant deck ride  
The hungry hordes that ravage her, the while  
She drifts through weltering furrows to the land  
That lies in treacherous wait beneath its mask  
Of shallows that in the sunshine of yestere'en  
Played green and azure beauty over sands  
Tarnished and tawny.

Still within the east  
That, sullen, gathers back its bitter breath,  
He sees gaunt wings that shine in flame and snow,  
Skim in wide circles, sweep and dip to snatch  
The long tress streaming weed-like through the wave  
That glasses dead illusion, sliding on  
From slope to slope and ever shoreward tossed  
Where the fierce ledges wade to meet their prey.  
And with the passing of the day he sees  
The Ipswich and White Island lenses fire  
With racing sparkles all the red-lipped pack  
Rolling and ravening beneath. He sees  
Across the waste of tumbling waters then  
Spent sailors clinging to the shrouds that ring  
To dreadful music, multitudinous song,  
Far born and swollen full of death and doom,  
Voice breaking into voice above their graves,  
Their shifting graves — while all the lights of home  
Begin to tremble through the evening air,

## TALES OF CATHAY

The purple evening that the great gale leaves  
Still shaken with long soughs and sobs.

But we,  
Shut in among our streets and narrow ways  
From all the gusty tumult of the seas  
And yeasty evanescence, only know  
The room that like a rose with firelight blooms,  
And the worn woman screening with her hand  
The pane through which she peers, then shuddering turns  
To mark the little children at the hearth  
Watch with strange thrills, half terror and half sport,  
Her mounting shadow climb and follow her  
And crouch and sink upon her like a pall  
As the ash gathers and the brand burns black.

*Harriet Prescott Spofford in the North American Review*

## TALES OF CATHAY

H. T. PATTERSON

AR away, to the south of Cathay, lies the land of Ind. Noted is that land for its sandal, its pomegranates, its elephants, its tigers and its venomous snakes, its temples, its sages, and its saints. Of old, wise were the people of that land, great were they in the building of mighty fanes; but not peaceful were they, as are the children of Cathay, nor did they know the teaching of Tao. Yet, perchance, had they in their own teachings that which was acceptable, for the teaching of each is according to the needs of each, and it were ungenerous to belittle that teaching which is not ours, for, mayhap, we understand it not.

In that beautiful land of Ind, where the sun shineth more hot than it doth in this our land of Cathay, for it lieth nearer the mid-circle of the earth, there are many potentates, inasmuch as that land hath not one ruler, as hath the land of Cathay, but many, some of greater and some of lesser dignity, but all lesser than the great Chan who ruleth over the flowery kingdom, which hath the Dragon of Wisdom emblazoned on its flag as an emblem.

Now, in that beautiful land of Ind there did dwell of yore, as sover-

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

eign thereof, a ruler noted for his much riches, for the justice of his rule, for his much great wisdom, and for the saintliness of his life. This mighty potentate belonged to the Kshatriya class, for in that land all the people are divided into classes: the one called the Kshatriya; the other, the second, the Brâhmana; the other, the third, the Vaiśya; the other, the fourth, the Śûdra, for thus are they divided and named. The Kshatriya class are they that fight and hold sovereignty; the Brâhmana class are they who conduct sacrifices and religious ceremonies and rites; the Vaiśya class are they who barter, who buy and sell; the Śûdra class are they who till the soil and serve.

Now it is so that there is ever rivalry and dispute between the Brâhmana class and the Kshatriya class. The one sayeth that it is the holier, inasmuch as it conducteth the ceremonies of offerings to the Gods, that it eateth no flesh, neither of beast, nor of bird, nor of fish, that it uniteth man and woman in wedlock, and that it presideth at the burning of the dead, for in that land do they burn the bodies of those who have departed unto the home of their ancestors, and they bury them not as do we. And the other, the Kshatriya class, likewise, claimeth superiority, for that it ruleth and governeth the state, and protecteth the people so that they can follow their avocation and perform their duties, each in his own way, even though it be the living in seclusion in the forests and apart from men.

Once upon a time, times and times before our fathers' fathers' day, there ruled in that land of Ind a sovereign of the name of Lalla Das. Powerful was he and mighty was the army which guarded his kingdom and his throne. Great were his palaces, and wonderful the riches and the treasures of art therein. Uncountable was the store of his silver, his gold, and his precious gems—rubies, diamonds, pearls, emeralds, sapphires, amethysts, carnelian. But greater than his power, his wealth, and the extent of his domain, was his wisdom and the sanctity of his life. The noise of this did reach from the one to the other sea by which the land of Ind is surrounded, for that land extendeth far to the south—even from the great mountain chain which separateth it from the land of Cathay—between the two seas, even to a point where the land mergeth into the ocean; and beyond that be many isles, one greater and the others lesser, but of them we know not excepting that there be such.

It did so behap that in another kingdom,— which lay to the west of the kingdom of Cathay— where there be wild beasts of many kinds and serpents venomous, there dwelt a hermit, the fame of whom, for his much sanctity and his austerities, had reached even so far as had the fame of Lalla Das, the great king. Now be it known that the heart of that hermit was stirred by emulation and envy in thinking of that great king, who

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practiced not the austerities and lived not the life of an anchorite, yet, forsooth, was esteemed even holier than those who dwelt in the forests, and lived on herbs and roots, and drank the water from the snow-capped range. Therefore, with his bowl suspended from his neck, clad in his long yellow robe, and his turban about his head, did he proceed toward the city of that great king, even the city of Lalla Das.

Now wit ye well that that fair city, the capital of Lalla Das, was in a large plain, rich in grain and cattle. And that fair city was walled about on all sides with high walls, and in that city were broad avenues, and the greatest of these were in the midst of that city, the one, the first, running north and south; the other, the second, running east and west. These two were the greatest of the avenues, very wide, with trees large and fair on either side thereof; and between the trees were figures and statues of the Gods; some with many arms and many heads, with crowns upon their heads, and with weapons in their hands, many and of divers kinds. At each end of these avenues was a gate, massive and well guarded, with the guards ever on watch, guards at either side of each gate and in the room which was above each gate. Ever, at the setting of the sun, were these gates closed, and at its rising were they again opened.

Beyond the city, to the west thereof, was another and a lesser city, which was upon an high hill. Well built was it and fair, and those who approached from the west were wont to rest in that city over night, before they did enter the great city, even the capital of Lalla Das.

Ananta, for such was the name of that hermit who journeyed to meet and look upon Lalla Das and ascertain the wisdom of him, entered not that fair city upon the hill, as he was asked to do by the governor thereof — for Lalla Das had prescience of the coming of that hermit and had bade that he should be received and entertained with all courtesy and respect — but he did pass the night outside of the gates of that city, sleeping upon the hard ground, unprotected from the harshness of the air, and from the beasts and serpents that were wont to be thereabout. And, lo! before the sun had risen, had Ananta made his ablutions in the cold water of that tank which was without the walls of that city, though albeit there were many crocodiles in that tank, fierce and waiting for their food. But they disturbed him not. There, having repeated the *gâyatri*, which sayeth, “Unveil, O thou that givest sustenance to the universe, that face of the true sun now hidden by a vase of golden light that we may see the truth and do our whole duty on our journey to thy sacred seat,” and having eaten a little rice from his bowl, he did pass onward toward Jhunpur, the capital city of Lalla Das, consenting not to ride upon the elephant which had been sent to meet him.

As he left the city upon the hill he did perceive, in the distance, below

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him, Jhunpur, even the capital city of Lalla Das. Beautiful was that city of Jhunpur as it glistened beneath the golden rays of the morning sun. The breezes made to flutter the silken banners on the walls, the large towers were outlined against the clear blue sky, the gilded domes of the temples and their spires were gorgeous in the rosy dawn, the castles were fairy-like, as though they had been sculptured by divine architects, their walls the color of the tusk of the elephant when that tusk is old and creamy-colored with age.

Then came he to the western gate of the city, where were the guards; and beyond the guards at that gate was the broad avenue leading onward; and on each side thereof were soldiers, clad in full armor, with swords drawn and raised; and behind the soldiers could Ananta see the trees and the statues, both of men and of Gods; and behind the trees were pleasant walks, one on each side of that avenue; and behind these pleasant walks were the homes of the rich and the mighty, great palaces, adorned with sculptured tracery, even as finely wrought as is the most costly lace.

Now was Ananta amazed at that which he did behold, and ye shall marvel not over much thereat, for, as aforesaid, he was wont to dwell in the forest, and never before had he been in a city, albeit it were one of small size and insignificant in splendor. As Ananta gazed at the wondrous things lying before him, a soldier, clad in rich armor, stepped up to him and bade a Śûdra, who stood nigh beside him, to place a water jar, full to the rim, upon the head of Ananta. Then did the general, for such was the soldier clad in rich armor, say unto Ananta, in a stern and commanding voice: "Lo, the avenue upon which thou art about to enter leadeth to the assembly hall of Lalla Das, great and powerful amongst the princes of the earth. Upon either side, as thou hast seen, are warriors with drawn swords, sharp and well-tempered, ready to strike. Our great sovereign, even Lalla Das, hath commanded that thou shalt approach him through this avenue, with this jar, filled to the rim thereof, borne upon thy head, and if thou spillest, upon the way, the liquid therein, even to the least drop thereof, then will thy life be reft from thee by that soldier with the drawn sword, sharp and well-tempered, before whom thou spillest that sacred fluid, even to the least drop thereof."

At this was Ananta dismayed in his heart, but he said naught, and the rather walked stedfastly to the throne of the king, even the king Lalla Das, seeing naught either at the right hand of him, nor at the left hand of him, for his mind was utterly bent upon the carrying of the precious liquid and the spilling of it not, even to the least drop thereof. Thereupon did the good king, even Lalla Das, when Ananta had reached to the throne, step graciously therefrom and order that the vessel be

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taken from the hands of Ananta, even that hermit of the forest. Then, taking the hand of that hermit in his own he did seat him by his side upon the throne, even at his own right hand. Then said he unto Ananta: "Tell me, I pray thee, what didst thou see as thou camest from the gate, down the avenue, unto the throne?"

At this was Ananta wroth and angered, even more than he had been heretofore, and he replied: "Ungracious is this the treatment which thou hast had shown unto me. Lo, hearing of thy greatness and of the holiness of thy life, I did come to see thee and to hear thy wisdom, and, now, without cause, hast thou let make that I should be treated thus shamefully, and therein hast thou shown unto me great disrespect and unkindness. Verily, do I believe that thou art not better but that thou art worse than other men."

Then did Lalla Das, the great king, answer him thus: "Nay, be not anangered. I did know that in thy heart thou didst disbelieve that a king could follow the path of righteousness. Therefore, did I put this trial upon thee; for, as thou, in fear lest thou shouldst stumble and spill of the liquid in the vessel which thou wast ordered to bear upon thy head, didst look neither to the right hand nor to the left hand, but didst keep steadily upon the way to this my throne — which I deem as of little worth, excepting as it be serviceable to my fellow-men and all creatures — so do I, on my way to that far-off throne which is the goal of the soul, turn neither to the right hand nor to the left hand, lest, peradventure, I should fall by the way, being destroyed by the enemies who ever await to ensnare the soul on its pilgrimage through the land of Myalba, even on its pilgrimage through this our sorrowful earth."



"I WILL now tell you a few things. The lust of the eye is for beauty. The lust of the ear is for music. The lust of the palate is for flavor. The lust of ambition is for gratification. Man's greatest age is one hundred years. A medium old age is eighty years. The lowest estimate is sixty years. Take away from this the hours of sickness, disease, death, mourning, sorrow, and trouble, and there will not remain more than four or five days a month upon which a man may open his mouth to laugh. Heaven and Earth are everlasting. Sooner or later every man has to die. That which thus has a limit, as compared with that which is everlasting, is a mere flash, like the passage of some swift steed seen through a crack. And those who cannot gratify their ambition and live through their allotted span, are men who have not attained to TAO."—CHUANG TZU, page 396, (Translated by Herbert A. Giles)