

# THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

KATHERINE TINGLEY, EDITOR

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“He whose mind is free from the illusion of self, will stand and not fall in the battle of life.”

## THE SEARCHLIGHT \*

KATHERINE TINGLEY

**I**T is not in the nature of an honest man to live for himself and be satisfied; when one arrives at that point where he says — “Lo! I am satisfied, I am sufficient unto myself. Behold I need neither helper or teacher — Karma must take its course” — then you may be sure that that one is either a weakling, a fool, or a caricature.

Possibly he may be a hypocrite of an ambitious mind, seeking to create a little world of his own wherein he may hold sway, and pose before men as the light of the coming ages.

Such as he may even cry freedom, liberty, distinctive independence, from the house-tops, the by-ways, and the high-ways; or he may be one of a more subtle kind, standing apart from the ‘common herd’ and in the society of ‘well-groomed men and women,’ writing and talking in whispers of warning of the coming dangers that await those who do not seek independence and follow him into his self-made kingdom of liberty. How much we have to learn when we see appearances like these, and realize the condition of the present time, and the battle that lies before us on the material and spiritual plane!

Are there not in our civilization today signs that mark a unique barbarism among us, showing an immense danger of retrogression? Can we not see in spite of all the good there is in the world, that the very blood of some of our brothers is teeming with a heartless cruelty, a subtle viciousness, and a monstrous selfishness and hypocrisy? Is not the world brimful of unrest, unhappiness, injustice, and despair; and are we not on the very edge of a condition which, if not improved, must sweep away the bright prospects of our present civilization?

Viewing the present striking aspects can we for one moment be satisfied to live contentedly and selfishly in the shadow of darkness and unrest?

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Is it possible for anyone having one grain of human pity in his heart, or love of truth and justice, to do aught but work, work, all the time unflinchingly, and unselfishly for his brother-man and all creatures,— not apart, but among them, with a courage and devotion that obscures all thought of self - - on a line of simple justice and in the spirit of true peace?

“We need not fear excessive influence. A more generous trust is permitted. . . . Stick at no humiliation. Grudge no office thou canst render. Be the limb of their body, the breath of their mouth. Compromise thy egotism. Who cares for that, so thou gain aught wider and nobler? Never mind the taunt of Boswellism: the devotion may easily be greater than the wretched pride which is guarding its own skirts.”

The recognition of the divinity in us all, is necessary to comprehend the foundation of brotherhood. The paths we have trodden in learning Nature's laws should enable us to extend invaluable assistance to our fellow-men.

Dr. Minot J. Savage is giving a series of lectures in this city on the subject of 'Unitarianism.' In the first sermon of the course, preached last Sunday, he made the statement that liberality of thought might belong to any people of any country and be accepted by them as expressing their innate religion. Dr. Savage said: “We have discovered the unity of thought, and we have learned to know that there is just one thought in the universe. Should we not believe in the unity of God when we see one eternal changeless order? There is a unity of love, of man, of ethics, righteousness. There is but one religion. All of us are the children of God. There is but one destiny. Some day every soul, however stained, however small, however distorted, will rise.”

### “THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD” \*



<sup>E. A. NERESHEIMER</sup>  
THE momentous tide of the new cycle which gave birth to a grand organization on the 18th day of February last is a complete vindication of all that had been told and promised in this direction; yea, all was foreshadowed by wave upon wave of growing sensibilities in the hearts of a nucleus of earnest souls who have held fast to the torch of truth which was handed down by the Gods for the enlightenment of mankind.

This beacon-light will now blaze forth brilliant and bright so that all

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## “THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD”

who walk the earth may see; it is the message of man's liberation, freedom from bondage.

This newly-born organization declares that Brotherhood is a fact in nature; its principal purpose is to teach brotherhood, demonstrate that it is a fact in nature and make it a living power in the life of Humanity.

The superb literature which was produced by the Theosophical Movement from the keynote given by the first messenger, H. P. Blavatsky, has brought to the world a sound philosophy of the life and destiny of mankind as well as a basis for conduct of individual existence. The principal feature of this philosophy, that brotherhood is a fact in nature and that it can be proved is now sufficiently grounded in the hearts and minds of a large contingent of students who have endeavored to make it a part of their lives to enable them to effectually interpret and promulgate these truths for the benefit of the people of the earth and all creatures.

Thanks also to the undying efforts of our chief, William Q. Judge, who guided the movement successfully through the period of preservation and assimilation as the second stage of the evolution of this all-embracing ideal, though the tide of materialistic activity was strong and the public ear apparently deaf to the divine message, the teachings have nevertheless penetrated subtly but permanently the minds of millions of men and women. The large extent to which this has been accomplished has made it possible to launch the movement forward before the world at the termination of the first cycle of 5000 years of the Kali-Yuga that it may now become the hope of the future for the ultimate welfare within the appointed time of the whole human race on this globe.

As the ideal precedes the practical in all things so has it been in this great movement; but, after the first two stages of inception and preservation, there remained yet to be done the master-stroke to make it practical so that it might reach the masses and become a lasting light among them.

The living torch-bearer at the present time, Katherine Tingley, who has taken upon herself the responsibility and burden of guiding this spiritual movement forward into the ages to come has already touched the keynote to the third stage which shall be the most lasting pillar of the temple — *Practical application of the philosophy!*

Already magnificent expositions in simple form by heretofore obscure students have come forward under this touch, the power and wisdom which has been stored up all this time during the existence of the Theosophical Society is now to come to the surface and spread its light among the hungrily seeking multitude of despairing souls. Then, practical philanthropic work backed by this philosophy of hope which as already outlined and inaugurated by this leader is not the palliative like casual

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or promiscuous application of benevolence, shall go to the root by simultaneously awakening the true principle of helpfulness.

While the Theosophical Society, as an instrument and vehicle for bringing the light of truth to the present point of usefulness, has done wonders thanks to the wise leadership of the guiding messengers and the devoted labors of its votaries — it was not a competent instrument to reach the ear of the world. To do this it had to broaden its views as an organization and fortunately for the world, its members perceived that the movement had outgrown the confines of an ordinary worldly society. The Theosophical Society in America had to become what it now is: a department in a fitting place of the world-wide movement for brotherhood in which there are other departments whose function the Theosophical Society in America could never have undertaken and much less have carried out, and which other organizations were seeking to monopolize.

One of the obstacles against popularization of Theosophy was its too high altitude in the scale of education, though this was necessary for a period until the philosophic foundation in a sufficiently large number had reached an impregnable standard of attainment. However, nothing is so certain as the destiny of destruction which would have awaited it, had it remained at the mercy of imperfect human nature alone. Its history has caused untold anxiety in the hearts of the seriously devoted members on account of the troubles and vicissitudes within its folds by ambitious individuals who sought to become leaders; it is only too well known that much power was wasted in scrambling for offices and strife for personal recognition; thereby its growth was impeded and greater spread of the doctrine prevented. All this is now obviated for all time to come.

From the beginning and up to this day the members have always tacitly recognised that the inception of the Movement in this century was due to the compassionate aid of Helpers, who yet hope to revive the slumbering faculties of man's divine nature, who also assisted in the establishment of its magnificent literature and teachings. It is undoubtedly true that the cause has been guided in its unfoldment at all important crises and even at all times in its plans and policy.

While thus recognising the actual condition and largely depending on this help in the future, the unique and extremely liberal platform of the outward organization was not made conformable to this belief. The time had not yet come. Meanwhile some members became enamored with the mere shell which they elected to preserve, though it might not now serve the purpose of the true work.

However, the intuition of the units had grown to such an extent that at the proper occasion, on the 18th day of February, 1898, an overwhelming

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majority of them asserted that they will declare to the world their belief in the ideal foundation of this institution.

The Gods are descending again among mankind under cyclic law. It is quite certain that no one human being, except a high occultist of the white order, can be entrusted with the guidance of a spiritual movement such as this.

Whatever the truth may be, the members of the Theosophical Society in America, in a supreme moment of inspiration, with genuine enthusiasm declared their belief that the Gods have come among us again to point the way whereby we may realize the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity.

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H. T. EDGE, M. A.



DOGMAS fetter the soul, we say, when we are condemning other people's beliefs; but we are prone to forget that we too may have dogmas of another kind that fetter our soul. We may be "compounding for sins we are inclined to, by damning those we have no mind to." It is as possible to be hidebound by theories scientific or theories political as by theories theological. Another kind of dogmatism that fetters the soul is done up in those neat parcels or tabloids called aphorisms or maxims or proverbs. True, when one of these is hurled at your head, you can always, if smart enough, reply by hurling back another; for proverbs go in pairs and neutralize each other. For an instance of such a dogmatic proverb, take this: "Genius is born, not made."

Here we recognise the familiar, "Thus far shalt thou go and no further." A dose of cold water is enough to put out some fires, but others it merely feeds; and some natures, when confronted with such an apothegm, thrown at their aspiring head, will feel disposed to question its validity. They will say to themselves: "Perhaps the reason why this is said is that it is not true, but only expresses a wish on the part of the sayer." Is genius always and inevitably innate? Can it never be acquired? Am I everlastingly damned and predestinated by a birth which I did not choose? Away with such a thought! says the voice of my non-finite nature from within. If genius has hitherto been innate only, it shall from this time forth be otherwise.

And what indeed can produce genius, if not growth?

It is surely a general law — our observations tell us — that perfections are the result of growth. The alternative, in the case of human genius, is that they may be a special gift or grace, arbitrarily bestowed by a supernal

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power, a power great enough to be able to do this, and yet small enough to be able thus to distinguish that atomic speck known as a human personality. The fallacy is doubtless due to the dogma of setting a limit to the life of the Soul by making it begin at a point in time. Our observations show us that some people are born with genius and others not. We trace the line of growth no further back than the cradle, and so we have to assume that the Soul has arrived at that stage at a jump — that it was especially endowed at its creation (its creation being for us synonymous with its birth into earth-life).

But suppose there is a spark of life in man which never dies, but which is continued after all bodily and mental vestures have decayed or passed into invisibility, and is again clothed with a mind and a body. In this view, the life of the Soul is continuous, and growth goes on from incarnation to incarnation; so that genius is merely ability acquired by long exercise.

This view will cause an answering ray of hope to spring up in our heart, for it will show us that our efforts are not vain, and that our handicap is not insurmountable.

Another thought — progress is achieved by the degree continuous or the degree discrete (to use an expression of Swedenborg's). Geologists recognise this, when they point out that some changes in the earth's surface are slow and continuous and others sudden and great. Physicists recognise it when they show that water can be gradually heated up to a certain point, after which it undergoes a sudden and complete change of state into a gas. In our own growth, within the range of our own ready observation, we notice changes that are slow and continuous and changes that are sudden and revolutionary.

Putting these facts together, may we not reasonably infer (first) that slow plodding may eventually, if not in one life, then in more than one, achieve the towering heights of genius; (second) that we may at any moment achieve the degree discrete and pass at a bound from a narrower to a wider sphere? It might be that, in one climate, a plant would never yield more than leaves, and in another climate spring into blossoms overnight. There are plants that do next to nothing for many years, and then suddenly throw up a tall stem with flowers and fruit; there are insects which lie latent for long years and put forth wings only after certain periods.

It is possible through misguided effort to miss what we are aiming at; our very attempt defeats itself. In striving to recollect a name, we only push it further from our mind, and the memory comes suddenly back after we have ceased trying to recall it. Put too much mind into the tying of a shoestring, and you will boggle it; do a problem in your head,

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and your fingers will tie the knot of themselves. Do we make such misguided efforts in our attempts to achieve genius?

It is said that the essence of genius is impersonality — that it belongs to a plane above and beyond the plane of self-seeking. If so, it is evidently useless to try and achieve it by the familiar and humdrum method of exercising the will and patience under the urge of personal desire and ambition. Perhaps we do not need to strive harder, so much as to strive differently.

The great Teachers of all ages tell us that man is held in a narrow groove by the force of his personal desires, which bind him down to a limited circle of possible attainment. The harder he strives along these lines, the more he binds himself down.

“In the land of Wu-Ti there was a sausage machine. Its sausages were famous throughout all Wu-Ti. Gratified with its fame, it studied how to increase its capacity, and now the whole earth is filled with its sausages. Yet men held it not in high esteem and were wont to speak contemptuously of it. In the land of Ting-Fang there was a printing-press, and all the earth was filled with the fame of the wise words it printed. ‘Sir,’ said the sausage machine; ‘I observe that all men praise you, while I am spoken slightly of everywhere. Pray tell me how is this?’ ‘Go to!’ answered the printing-press; ‘all your efforts are wasted; they result only in the production of more sausages. If you want to produce wise words, you must cease making sausages.’ And the sausage machine was vexed, and said: ‘I fear, Sir, your internal economy is seriously affected.’ And it put on more steam, so that now the whole earth cannot contain the sausages which it makes. Yet men revere it not more than formerly.”

“God tried to make man and failed. ‘Give me more dirt,’ said he. ‘Go to!’ said the other God; ‘what you want is less dirt and a little of the breath of life.’”

And everywhere we see people making the same mistake. The rich man makes money and more money and never makes anything else. The manufacturer turns out ever more complete machines in one day, and dies a manufacturer — a manufacturer of that one machine. The savant piles up vast learning, and sends for the village priest to soothe his last doubts and fears. This is not growth; it is stagnation — stagnation *in excelsis*. There have been Theosophists who, burning with a new zeal, have shut their eyes and rushed headlong down some blind alley, where they are now vainly trying to butt through the stone wall at the end. Teachers say that selfish ambition is the great obstacle to wisdom and real attainment; it carries us ever along the same blind alley, and zeal merely hastens our career. How shall we avoid this disastrous mistake?

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Genius is the power to rise above the ordinary limitations which people impose upon themselves, and to manifest the higher and finer qualities of human nature. These limitations are those which we have ourselves made, for we built ourselves; we live in a house which we have made out of our own substance, and we crawl slowly on the ground with this house on our back. It shelters us, no doubt, and we are afraid to leave it.

In seeking to abandon personal desires, we are apt merely to change and enlarge them, so that, although we seem to have widened our sphere, we are still working from the same center after all, and still following personal ambition. The change needed is therefore one of kind, not merely of degree. 'The man who should develop his personal powers until he excelled his fellows in some few particulars, would become a lonely tower, cut off largely from sympathies — a talented man but not a genius. This is not the right path. Geniuses attract attention to their work rather than to their personality. Of some speakers we say, 'What a marvelous orator he is,' without remembering what he said; of others we remember and profit by their words, forgetting where we heard those words.

The gist of this article is that man, after reaching a certain stage in his growth, checks his own further growth by refusing to take the next step; and, instead of this, he goes on repeating himself, like a plant that, instead of yielding fruit, goes on producing larger and better leaves.

Man has gradually through the ages built up a great personality for himself, in the midst of which he dwells; and when it becomes time for him to step out into a larger sphere, he lacks the faith or courage to do it. This is because he has no confidence in what lies beyond his familiar limits. We continually see, both in individuals and in nations, that a certain point is reached when the individual or the nation stands poised and hesitating on the brink, undecided whether to go on or to fall back; and then falls back. The opportunity is missed for that time, but it must come again; for the undying spirit within compels growth, and increasing stress will eventually give the strength necessary for the advance.



“THE brain force is but the piano upon which the divine quality of man may play. This divine quality may become a living compassionate love for all Humanity. It adapts itself to every human need in life. Humanity has for ages been depending upon the brain-mind of man, resulting in too many words and too little cultivation of the spiritual. This condition is appalling in many parts of the world. Selfishness is the ruler, and love for mankind gives place to creeds and dogmas.”— KATHERINE TINGLEY

## ON THE VALUE OF PROOF

QUINTUS REYNOLDS

**W**E hear much nowadays from those who, with material evidence, are to 'prove' the reality of spiritual things — such as the survival of man after death,—and so uplift humanity to higher levels of religion. They have received letters from the dead, and parade all manner of 'phenomenal' occurrences; and go forth as prophets of a new faith. Professor So-and-so has discovered the Soul, just as Professor Somebody-else discovered radium; so now we must all become spiritually-minded. Of course; there is nothing else to do.

As a matter of fact the discoveries of scientists make no difference to the spiritual status of anybody; and if these particular prophets had discovered, or were to discover, anything, it would effect no advantage to the spirituality of any mortal creature. Supposing you could prove the Soul's existence, so that our brain-minds must believe in that, as they believe in saltpeter, submarines, or soft soap,—it would not be the Soul's existence that had been proven at all: the Soul would be remote from that captured situation, so to say; it would refuse to be the subject of such belief. It would not be there; the thing believed in would be something else. You cannot reduce it to the level of soap and saltpeter; if you could, it would be something on their level, and not the Soul at all. It would still be as non-existent, with respect to those believers, as it was before. I believe in radium, having never seen it; but that kind of faith has nothing to do with my spiritual nature: I am neither the better nor the worse for it. But that kind of faith cannot be applied to the Soul or the things of the Soul; can never reach to it. It would be more sensible to try to reach Sirius with ladders; granted you had a ladder long enough, we may suppose (for the sake of argument) that you could get to the star; but if you carried your ladder of phenomenal evidence quite *ad infinitum*, it would still be as far as ever from getting to the Soul, or its immortality, or anything connected with it. Indeed farther; because the direction taken would be necessarily wrong. I probably never shall see radium, or any of that long list of chemical elements that I believe in thoroughly, and don't know the names of; whether I see them or not, it will leave my belief in them entirely unaffected: that belief I keep in a textbook (borrowable from the public library — not on my own shelves); — as folk commonly keep their religious beliefs in a creed in the prayer-book,— where it can always be looked up when one wants to know what one's opinion really is. But belief in the Soul is a matter of the stirring

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of the Soul itself within one; at least it is an invocation of the Soul so to stir. Who does any generous or altruistic action, effectively then believes in the Soul; though his brain-mind may convince itself that he is the veriest materialist. The Soul knows itself to be existent, and immortal; that in us which doubts or itches for immortality, is mortal; let it pass! From the immortality of the dead we are never separated, while we have any hold on the immortality in ourselves. But as for these proofs,—granted that dear departed So-and-so has made a test case of himself, for any committee of scientists to sit on; and got a good thumping verdict from them, too; — why, then immortality would have nothing to do with it; the Soul would have nothing to do with it; the Soul would not have spoken, nor would it have been immortality that had been proclaimed; the thing that spoke with that mortal voice into this mortal world would be as mortal as anything else therein; as mortal as the brain-mind of you or me to whom it spoke.

This world is a very kaleidoscope of mortality and perpetual change; and all things that belong to it partake of its nature, including our personal selves. Your body is a little more durable than the clothes it wears; your mind than the body it wears; — but bless my soul! if you could prove that that mind, that thinking-machine through which the riffraff of personal ‘thought’ drifts, and which has for wheels and cogs and pistons the little vanities and emotions and self-seekings and prides and lusts and affections of common life,— if you could prove that that thing endured for a thousand ages after its body had been decently cremated or buried, what then? You would still have left the question of immortality untouched; you would not have come a jot nearer the Soul than you were before. For *that* is beyond and outside Time, which slides by and touches it not: the Soul is *now*, and its immortality is *now*; and in the self-forgetting mood we enter into it, and enjoy its immortality.

The letters that prove immortality come to a man out of the secret reaches of his heart; or for that matter, from the hearts of other men; because all the noble action of the Soul is in a way convincing. You see a man conscious of his soulhood, and (in so far as you have any decent susceptibility in you) do not escape the infection; if you are quite unsusceptible, it may stir you only to animosity; — for there is a warfare deep-seated in the nature of things, and the mortal part of us is envious of its great Superior.

Change is another name for death; and we all die daily. A passion that today is a great part of one’s being,— that dominates one’s life and sweeps all thought before it,— tomorrow is gone: it is dead: change has taken place in the man, which is the death of a great section of himself. Divine faculties, which once we possessed, die with neglect or misuse;

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evil tendencies, which once threatened our lives, die with the attainment of self-mastery. Most deeply rooted of them all is the sense of self; in which certainly there is nothing nobler than the levels of this mortal world. It is the thing that can come to hurt so much, that the suicide, to have (as he thinks) done with it, will brave the canons fixed against self-slaughter: a pretty immortality it would be, that should fix that burden on us through the ages! But thank Heaven it is mortal: changing constantly during life, it undergoes at last the great change called death, — which may be a process lasting years after it begins with the death of the body. So dear departed So-and-so's letters, supposing their genuineness proved, are but the communications of a dying thing waning gradually away — a thing less qualified to speak for immortality than is the living Soul in any one of us here.

Render unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's; prove soap and saltpeter and those chemical elements by phenomenal evidence; — but do not ask Caesar Brain-mind to sit in judgment on God the Soul, whom by no possibility can you hail before that tribunal. The thing is not to be done.

— Oh then, you say, it is to be a matter of blind faith after all, is it? We have heard all this before, *ad nauseam*, you say, and there is nothing for the world's health in it. -- Not blind faith at all; a plague on blind faith! It is highly possible to prove immortality, and the existence of the Soul, which is immortal; -- only it must be done on the Soul's own terms. There is that in us which we may call the Heart-mind, as well as the brain-mind that argues: it is not the seat of the emotions; none of the love that is tainted with self pertains to it; but from it comes compassion, which is the substance of the immortality in man. Living in that, one is immortal, and aware of one's immortality. That is the only effective belief.

The other kind has been tried and found wanting. The mischief with the western world, these many centuries, has been that it believed immortality proved by phenomenal evidence, and made a dogma of it; and precisely because men did that — the thing they believed in was not immortality. We must remember that the dogmatic system known as Christianity (no connexion with the teachings of Jesus) was held to be true, indubitable, unassailable, because proved by miracles and prophecy. A writer in the *Hibbert Journal* recently brought out this point well. It was supposed to be certain that a man who suffered capital punishment in Judea in the reign of Tiberius — who was crucified, dead, and buried — rose again the third day and was seen and recognised by many: thereby proving conclusively the fact of post-mortem survival. His coming and the details of his life had been foretold by certain Hebrew writers of old time: phenomenal evidence; — he worked miracles: further phenomenal

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evidence; — last of all he rose from the dead: the case was beyond dispute. No verdict from all the scientific bodies in the world, no discovery, could establish dear departed So-and-so's letters and the inferences to be drawn from them with such compelling certainty for the modern mind, as the evidence was held to have established the resurrection of Jesus for the mind of historic Christendom. It was phenomenal evidence; its appeal was to the brain-mind; there was no question of spirituality involved. Now to see what it did for Jesus himself and for mankind.

He certainly came to prove immortality. He went about it in the only possible way: by seeking to arouse in others the Heart-mind, so blazingly active in himself. What is told of him (with any ring of truth in it) shows that he was moved by a fiery love for humanity, for its divine side; and directed all the thunders of his thought and speech against what obscured the beauty and triumph of man. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"; you could have no terser statement of the truth about immortality; it is as much as to say that the heart, free from self, is that which perceives immortality, and to which it stands proved. There was a grand immortal heart-life behind the man that enunciated the aphorisms of the Sermon on the Mount; let those who will, believe that the same man . . . was careful to arrange details and stage his actions so as to impress folk with the belief that it was he of whom the Hebrew prophets had prophesied,— "that it might be accomplished that which was written." — All such business must look to the unprejudiced like charlatanry; and charlatanry can be thought no part of his character as revealed in his teachings. The teachings are spiritual; the playing up to the prophecies is anti-spiritual; they are the "two masters" that "no man can serve." The teachings prove immortality, because they come from the immortal in man.

But after his death a legend was made for him. First, he was the Messiah of the Jews, foretold by their prophets. Then, because he failed to fulfil expectations in that respect,— did not free the Jews from the Roman yoke and become their king and make of them a great nation, but instead fell very soon a victim to their hatred,— he had to be made the only-begotten Son of God, born miraculously, proving his godhood by a train of miracles; and his death, which at first sight would seem incompatible with such a status, had to be made the crowning miracle that proved it. So far from having been a tragedy or misfortune, it was made the very corner-stone of the scheme of things. He had been offered as a sacrifice by his Father to his Father, by God wishing to be merciful, but without sufficient omnipotence to compass it, to God inflamed with wrath — a sort of Philip sober to Philip drunk,— that mankind might be saved. Like many meaningless formulae there is something vastly impressive

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about it; it was well-calculated to stifle reasonable thought; above all, to erase from human consciousness all memory of the spiritual import of Jesus' life and teachings. Thus, if the dogma was true, and it was necessary to believe it or be damned, you did well, for instance, to wipe out the Mexican and Peruvian civilizations, and with massacre, burnings, and torture, impose saving belief on the helpless Indians. But if, on the other hand, the teachings had been worth anything at all, the men who did those things had better have had mill-stones tied about their necks while they were yet in mid-Atlantic, and have been cast quietly overboard before they had done any offense against the least of the Inca or Aztec little ones. There was no logical reconciling the dogma with the teachings. But the dogma had been proved to the brain-mind; it rested firmly on phenomenal evidence; — and the teachings, therefore, had to go.

Cruelty and lust of gold and conquest might have accomplished much the same results without the dogma to spur them on; but without the dogma, and the invented phenomenal evidence on which it rested (no one dreamed that it *was* invented), the teachings might possibly have been remembered occasionally. And no one would suggest that dear departed So-and-so's letters might lead to the burning of unbelievers or the stamping out of civilizations. But the illustration may show how little phenomenal evidence can touch the spiritual nature.

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T. HENRY, M. A.

"Theosophy leads to action — enforced action, instead of mere intention and talk."

— H. P. BLAVATSKY

 HIS saying, which is but one of many similar, refutes any statement that might be made to the effect that Theosophy is merely speculative and unpractical. It also serves to distinguish Theosophy from its counterfeits (some of the counterfeits being under the very name of Theosophy). We can surely point to the words of the Founder in definition of what Theosophy is and what it is not.

The inference is that anything which does not lead to action is not Theosophy, whatever it may call itself. The difference is the same as that between real and sham virtue, genuine compassion and mere emotionalism, merit and presumption, and, generally speaking, between all genuine things and their mere appearance.

Theosophy was never intended by its Reviver in our age to be a mere

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pursuit for the gratification of intellectual curiosity, love of the marvelous, or ambition; but strong efforts have always had to be made to keep it from becoming so. We may find even today people and coteries who use the name of Theosophy to designate unpractical activities of this kind; and they are in marked contrast with the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society, which alone carries on the work in the spirit of its Founder.

The teachings of Theosophy are of such a nature that they cannot be made serviceable to oneself unless one makes the sincere endeavor to apply them to one's conduct. And the application of Theosophical teachings to one's conduct implies that one shall engage in active practical work among men. As expressed by William Q. Judge:

“The power to know does not come from book-study nor from mere philosophy, but mostly from the actual practice of altruism in deed, word, and thought; for that practice purifies the covers of the soul and permits that light to shine down into the brain-mind.”

The Theosophical teachings, such as Karma, the septenary constitution of man, the spiritual unity of mankind, may be studied intellectually and made objects of pious meditation; but, unless put into practice, will remain in the state of all such intellectual beliefs — that is, detached from actual life and barren of results so far as betterment of that life, or the attainment of real knowledge, is concerned.

There are many people perfectly willing to change their religious beliefs and adopt any new ideas, so long as their *real* religion — that is, the settled principles on which their life is ordered — is not disturbed; but when that is threatened, they resist strongly and instinctively. The invariable resort of such people is to make the new ideas unpractical, to keep them in the state of merely intellectual beliefs.

But Theosophy, as is abundantly proved from the utterances of the Founder of the Society and her successors, is intended to work a reform in the very life of humanity, to supplant some of our fondest delusions, and to influence us to lay aside many prejudices in favor of broader and more unselfish aims.

This may help us to estimate the magnitude of the task undertaken by the Founder. She called in question the validity of a vast and time-grown concretion of rooted ideas. And from out the depths of this mass of conservatism there went forth a silent and determined opposition, which she had to confront. Such is the price paid by Teachers.

In a smaller way, each sincere Theosophist has to face just such a problem in his own character.

Among those who are drawn to Theosophy we may distinguish people who merely anticipate a pleasant new belief but are not prepared to make

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any sacrifices for it; and those who welcome Theosophy as a herald of better achievements in the line of conduct and duty. Calling the latter sincere Theosophists, be it observed in reference to them that there is a law of nature which is called into operation by the force of their aspirations. It is Newton's third law of motion, but in a sense less restricted than usual: to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. This law, however, does not prevent progress. A swimmer encounters the resistance of the water, which he does not arouse so long as he remains still; and in spite of this resistance he progresses. So the aspirant, by his aspiration, arouses resistance from the inertia of his character and his environment. Thus begins his practical work. It is the token that his Theosophy is sincere, has taken root in his character, and is accomplishing work. Theosophy leads perforce to action; otherwise what has been supposed to be Theosophy is mere intention and talk.

Obstacles, then, may be expected; but surely the wise man will hail them, not deplore. Are they not the tokens of his success?

As said in our second quotation, the practice of altruism purifies the covers of the soul. This refers to the teaching that the soul is the real knower, and the mind is one of its instruments, which should interpret it, but which in ordinary cases obscures it. Wisdom is to be attained by so purifying the mind that it is enabled to reflect the soul-wisdom. Desires and passions and wrong notions of all kinds are the great hindrances, for they throw the mind into a myriad fantastic forms, and no wisdom is able to penetrate. Hence real progress in Theosophy demands practical work, for so only can we render ourselves capable of appreciating the essence of its teachings.

It scarcely needs saying that, where there is the desire for practical work, the opportunity will not be wanting. Such opportunities present themselves all the time, and there is no need to go hunting for them. We have only to use the opportunities we have been hitherto letting slip. It is by no means an unknown experience that a student of Theosophy will, by his zeal, draw upon himself an opportunity; and then, instead of taking it, miss it. He has tested himself and failed at the test. If he is wise he will, looking back over the experience, learn a lesson that will prevent a similar mistake later on. Suppose, for example, that the student was anxious to overcome an irritable temper and acquire thereby a more equable and judicious disposition. In accordance with certain natural laws, which begin to become evident to the practical student of Theosophy, his aspiration would before long bring a test upon him. His desire to conquer his weakness would tend to bring about its own fulfilment. Then he would either win or lose in the opportunity. Thus practical work

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is indispensable, for who can overcome his temper theoretically and without actually trying?

People may say they have come across several different sorts of Theosophy, but there is only one practical, and therefore genuine, Theosophy; the others are of the mere talk-and-intention kind. Ardor and energy are the very essence of the character of the Founder. Hers was a herculean work. She had to go right beneath the surface and strike at many rooted ideas and prejudices in modern civilization. This roused a great amount of silent and determined opposition, and a character of surpassing strength was needed to stand the strain of such opposition. Thus Theosophy was anything but mere talk and intention for her: it was very practical indeed. And so it must always be for her pupils. If they aspire to the name of Theosophists, they must be endued with at least a portion of her spirit, however small; and this will mean that their desire is to achieve, to plant the seeds of real progress.

How, it may be asked, can we be practical in connexion with such a Theosophical teaching as Reincarnation? The answer is that the teaching was promulgated for the purpose of enduing man with that new hope and self-respect which is so necessary; it was not given out for the satisfaction of intellectual curiosity or to provide food for vain and foolish speculations and claims. We are expected to prove our belief in Reincarnation by acting as immortal Souls should act.

The desire for knowledge is a worthy aspiration, and Theosophy makes a point of assuring man that he is not forbidden to try and know as much as he can. But the sincere and earnest student is not long in finding out that he cannot advance in his quest for knowledge unless he obeys the necessary conditions — that is, unless he puts into practice what he has learned — puts it into practice in his conduct with himself and towards his fellows. There are some of us old members who were once attracted to the pursuit of vain speculations and experiments, but had our feet turned in a different direction by the Teacher, who showed us what were her real purposes and what Theosophy demanded of its adherents. Those speculations and experiments now seem by-paths, which cannot be profitably pursued until certain very urgent reforms have been accomplished in our own nature. The work of uprooting weaknesses becomes more important than the attempt to acquire new faculties. We are too top-heavy as it is, and need to acquire more strength at the center, more poise.

Theosophists are striving to create a better standard of life, for themselves and for others. And how can this be done except by continuous and strong practical endeavor? Mere talk and intention will not suffice.

## BIRDS OF PASSAGE

From the Swedish of Esaias Tegnér by Kenneth Morris

THE sun has banished the sweet of Spring,  
And no cool shades the palmtrees fling,  
And it's time to be seeking the North, the homeland —  
Birds of passage, to wing, to wing!  
— O'er the banks of Nile in squadrons rising,  
Home to the North, to wing, to wing!

Deep down below, and down below,  
The green earth shines, the blue waves flow;  
But only here in the sky is peace  
Where we and the winds and the cloudlets go.

There's a green mead in a wild-flower vale  
Where the snow-crowned mountains glint and pale;  
And there the green-robed Fay of the Forest  
Roams in the eve by moor and dale;

And there in the glimmering dusk a-winging,  
Gold-winged elves are dancing and singing,  
And deep in the dark the mountains under,  
Goblin hammers are clinking and ringing.

And there, in the flower-sweet Spring of the year,  
We shall light like snow through the sunlight clear,  
And fear no wandering fowler's nets,  
So far from the world, the Pole so near.

And there we shall build our nests, and lay,  
And hatch our eggs in the nightless day,  
And there we shall rear our downy fledglings,  
The low sun watching us far away.

And even when Winter stands on the height,  
And shakes from his wide wings snow and night,  
And shakes from his wings the noise of storms,  
And the skies are black and the world is white;

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And down from the Pole the wild winds roar,  
And the snow wings drift from the Polar shore,  
And the hare goes white-furred over the snow,  
And the red ash-berries are frosted o'er,

And the sun-rich Southland lures us away  
To the palmtree shade and the meadows gay,  
And we go — we shall bear in our hearts a longing  
For the Northland nests and the nightless day.

*International Theosophical Headquarters  
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## REINCARNATION AND SOME CRITICISMS

C. J. RYAN

### PART II



At the beginning of the Great War, a prominent writer said: "If a Greek tragedian were dealing with the events of today he would see in them a confirmation of his favorite theme that man strives in vain against the decrees of fate. No one in Europe today really wants a European war."

Another speaks of the chain of events which led up to it as having "all the inevitableness of ancient tragedy, where persons and events are controlled, not by reason, but by the spell of an ironic Fate."

Now according to Theosophy this attitude of mind is absolutely wrong, though strictly natural from the superficial, materialistic position so common today. The Greek poets knew better; we have utterly misrepresented their views by reading into them our ideas, which were not the popular ones in ancient times. The ancients recognised the fact that man lives many times on earth, and that in the long run justice prevails. When the law of justice or harmony, the law of Karma, and the natural method of evolution of the soul through re-embodiment or reincarnation, are taken into account, the aspect of life changes in a marvelous way and no longer can pessimistic and narrow fatalistic views be accepted. The great misfortune which throws so many into fatalism or pure agnosticism is the mental blindness or ignorance as to the methods by which justice is done and ultimate harmony produced in nature. This mental blindness has been fostered by long centuries of dogmatic teachings based on misunderstood and twisted interpretations of the simple Theosophical teachings given to the world by the great spiritual Helpers of Humanity

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throughout all ages, dogmas which put God's laws on the level of the edicts of a capricious tyrant, to be evaded by theological subterfuges, such as the vicarious atonement taken literally.

The law of Karma is not advanced as a dogma by the members of the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society -- the Society has no dogmas to which members are compelled to assent; the belief in the principle of Universal Brotherhood and the desire to promote its recognition are the only necessary qualifications for membership -- but we claim that a careful study of the law of Karma, the law that effects actually do follow causes in every department of life, moral, mental, as well as physical, is of supreme importance for the world. In the moral life it is the law of rational adjustment of the broken harmony produced by lack of self-control and ungoverned passion. Karma rewards generously those who work with nature and do not break her laws. To fulfill its decrees -- which are really our own, for we set the causes in motion -- appropriate conditions are required; one lifetime is not enough. In ordinary affairs of business we expect to reap the harvest of the seeds we planted in the field where they were sowed. What then can be more reasonable than the idea of reincarnation on earth, which provides opportunity for the fulfillment of the ordinary law of sowing and reaping? The states into which we pass after death between incarnations are not claimed in Theosophy to be conditions suitable for working the results of wrong action during life, but are for rest and refreshment and assimilation "after life's fitful fever."

The confusion of thought existing today upon the subject of justice, of cause and effect, is horrifying to students who have penetrated even a little way into its larger meaning on Theosophical lines, particularly when the truth has been so plainly set forth by all the great Teachers, including Jesus. Not only are the churches responsible for the perversion of the primitive teaching that what a man sows that and that only shall he reap, but ignorance of it on the part of secular leaders of modern thought has had its place. Look around at the works of prominent writers who have largely molded public opinion, both directly and by infiltration through minds they have powerfully influenced. The art of fiction is one of the strongest influences of modern times; nearly everyone reads at least a few good novels, and the most successful are widely translated. The drama, both the 'legitimate' and the 'movies,' has a strong appeal; and the more or less scientific articles in the Sunday papers must not be overlooked in considering the factors which affect public opinion. The church sermon is no longer the vital power it was before reading became universal, and the divisions in the churches and the impression that the ground has been cut under the feet of preachers by the sapping of 'almighty' science, have greatly weakened their in-

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fluence. Compare the number of churchgoers with the number of people who sit at home on Sunday mornings and read the newspaper!

The vast majority of writers who powerfully affect public opinion are wielding their great weapon, the pen, in ignorance of two of the greatest laws of life — Reincarnation and Karma. The spirit of the age is not naturally reverent, and the simple faith in some kind of divine government — it doesn't matter what — which kept former ages from the materialism in thought and conduct so prevalent today, has almost disappeared in the atmosphere of modern skepticism. In the domain of fiction, which so profoundly affects public opinion, take, for example, Thomas Hardy, a commanding figure in the literary world, a penetrating and careful observer of human nature in its ordinary workings. He, and many like him, are obsessed by the false and pessimistic notion that man is not the arbiter of his destiny, that one life on earth with its forced limitations rounds out his miserable career, and his message to the world is that we must endure as best we may the grinding of an overmastering and colossal *world-machine* which laughs at our puny efforts to defy it. It is all very well to talk eloquently about the heroism in defying the worst that blind fate can do (and the brave do not run away from the field of battle), but what does it all signify unless there is a soul to be strengthened by the exercise of fortitude, and a future in which the progress made would come to some useful end? It would be but "sound and fury, signifying nothing," tragical and purposeless. Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* or Ibsen's *Ghosts* are illustrations of this class of literature in which an inexorable destiny overwhelms the leading characters. You watch them struggling in vain like a fly in a spider's web. No suggestion is made that they have originated in some previous life the causes now working out, and that justice, not blind, insensate cruelty, is the guide of events. Such pictures of human life are drawn with great skill; the reader is thoroughly convinced that under such conditions and with such personal characteristics, the tragedy was inevitable; you see them with helpless pity following the line of least resistance to the edge of the precipice. From the one-life standpoint, you turn away saddened and with your sense of confidence and trust in the just government of the universe weakened.

A leading critic writes, in reference to a volume of short stories:

"Each creates its own impression, and all make clear the fact that there is an inevitable destiny which sweeps us along towards an irresistible end. In other words, the nameless thing which brings man, guilty and guiltless alike, to his doom, is Providence, Fate, or Chance. That is the problem propounded in all these stories, but it is a problem not solved, because it cannot be solved."

This is a frank expression of the prevailing negations, which are now so wide-spread. Thomas Hardy says, in regard to his attitude:

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“Existence is either ordered in a certain way or it is not so ordered, and conjectures which harmonize best with experience are removed above all comparison from other conjectures which do not so harmonize. . . . This story [Tess] is sent out in all sincerity of purpose, as an attempt to give artistic form to a true sequence of things.”

There is no question of the sincerity of our best literary artists; what we question and deny is their perception of the true sequence of things; we observe a great skill in the perception of the superficial sequence, or a part of the sequence, but a lack of understanding of the deeper causes. Dickens, who was broader and more reverent in outlook than many of his successors, ridicules a pot-boy in *Pickwick* who thought he was “seeing life” when he peered through the dirty window of a bar-parlor at the tipplers. Without pressing the comparison too far, let us try to realize the expansion of vision when we step out of the close mental atmosphere of the one-life theory and breathe the invigorating atmosphere of Theosophy. Instead of finding this world an inexplicable mystery, filled with incomprehensible injustices, with men and women blundering along in a lawless chaos, the simple idea of the pre-existence of the soul reduces everything to order. Think of one short life but as a ‘day’ in the life of the true Self. Throw aside what Herbert Spencer called “the paralysing thought” that perhaps there is no comprehension of the workings of the universe ever to be found. Dare to imagine that there may be methods by which we may find our way to knowledge that are superior to reasoning from insufficient data, in the manner so popular. In its respect for science the present age accepts the law of cause and effect in material things, in chemistry, in physics, but it has not carried it to the logical conclusion in the affairs of human life. It believes in the inexorable law in accordance with which a stone falls to the ground, but it still babbles of ‘chance’ and ‘fate’ and ‘accident’ when persistent ill-luck, ill-health, or unavoidable misfortune follow a family or a person for years.

The writer just quoted speaks of ‘Providence’ sweeping along guilty and guiltless alike to their irresistible end and doom. What is this Providence, this irresponsible, lawless, unreasonable tyrant? It cannot be the working of a Divine Law, a God who loves justice and righteousness, for how could such a Power sweep the guilty and *guiltless* alike to an irresistible doom? When, however, the fact of the pre-existence of the soul is realized, everything falls into place, and the apparent exception to the laws of nature — the existence of Results without Causes — is seen to be nothing but the imaginary child of ignorance.

It may be objected that if Reincarnation be true, such an important fact should be as plain as other controlling facts of life. As a matter of common knowledge, an immense proportion of the people of the earth do consider it a palpable fact, but for those to whom it is new the scientific

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method of elimination of useless theories must be adopted. The current theories may be separated into two main divisions, the materialist position which looks upon human life merely as a fleeting outcrop of the earth's vital energy, generation after generation vanishing into nothingness like mushrooms; and the group of theories which regard earth-life as the beginning of an endless future, a momentary flash in view of the eternities to follow. According to the orthodox creeds the few years of terrestrial existence determine the entire future happiness or misery of the soul. Now when all these notions have been tried at the bar of justice and reason and probability, and found wanting,— as they certainly will be,— the principle of Reincarnation comes as a revelation, a lightbringer.

The elimination of the illogical and unjust hypotheses which leaves Reincarnation paramount is the true scientific method to arrive at reasonable views. The final test in science is "Does the theory explain all the facts better than others?" Think of the difficulty the geologists had to persuade the mass of ignorant people about a century or so ago that the stratified mountains were not 'eternal,' that they had not been 'created' as they are by the hand of God, but that they were originally flat beds of sand and mud brought down by rivers and laid on the beds of oceans long vanished, which had been elevated by movements of the earth's crust. Still more difficult was it to induce the religious world to believe that the fossil shells, bones, and trees found in the rocks were the remains of living things. Public opinion was shocked at such a flouting of orthodox teachings; it was gravely declared that Satan had put the fossils there in order to mislead the curious and to tempt weak and rebellious men to doubt the Word of God. Some asserted that the fossils had merely an accidental resemblance to real shells and bones and plants! Anything to avoid facing the truth, and to uphold preconceived notions, however false. Yet we must not be too hard upon those who held to what they had been taught in their youth, for unless one takes a large and comprehensive view of the earth and its age and realizes how insignificant its little roughnesses are in comparison with its immense size, the suggestion that the Himâlaya mountains have been elevated nearly thirty thousand feet seems unreasonable and the old teaching that they were created as they are seems like common sense. Numerous illustrations could be brought forward in support of the principle that in nature the real causes of the most striking phenomena need persistent research to find them.

In a recent article we took for consideration criticisms received from various sources against Reincarnation; we will now examine a few more:

"If Reincarnation is true, why don't we remember our past lives? What use is it to have lived before if we know nothing about it? The God of Theosophy is more cruel than the Jewish Jehovah, who at least told his creatures for what they were so barbarously punished."

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This objection has two heads; we must consider each by itself. As the point about recollecting past lives is one of the first that presents itself to inquirers it must be that many persons assume that they could not have existed at all unless they had a clear recollection of the details of those former days. This assumption can be easily shown to be unfounded. Each one of us has undeniably lived at least a year — the first year of our lives — of which no record can be found in the memory; and lapses of memory occur in which the subject is apparently rational, can talk and act sensibly, and yet afterwards recollects nothing. The famous case of the Rev. Ansel Bourne is a perfect example. There was a man who disappeared from home and was found months afterwards in a distant city, leading a new life with a new name and carrying on a successful business, but without the slightest recollection of his former life. A shock restored the memory of his real name and condition, and then he forgot all that had happened since he left home. We remember little — often nothing — of our condition during sleep or under anaesthetics, yet we are certainly not annihilated during those hours. Memory of a state is not a necessary condition of having been in it, and so the question of Reincarnation is not affected by the fact that we, as we are today, do not recollect the details of past existences.

In connexion with the apparent loss of memory, there is a valuable sidelight in the experience of many persons when almost drowned. Numerous cases are recorded where the minutest details of the life have been revived at such moments of great strain, panoramas of events totally forgotten under normal conditions. Hypnotic experiments have proved that all that has happened to a person is recorded and can be made available to certain states of consciousness, though otherwise utterly lost. Certain hypnotic experiments have also shown that elaborate actions can be performed, apparently intelligently and with intention, by a person who is simply obeying orders previously given in the hypnotic state, and who has not the faintest recollection of having received such commands, but thinks he is acting on his own initiative. Sometimes the order is executed after weeks or months, at the very instant mentioned by the hypnotizer. The records of psychology are rich in observations showing that the absence of the recollection of an event is no proof that it did not occur. We remember very little that has occurred to us in this life, and, as Madame Blavatsky says, “it is not the fact that our memory has failed to record our precedent life and lives that ought to surprise us, but the contrary, were it to happen.” For those who would pursue the subject farther, there is much information in *The Key to Theosophy* and other Theosophical literature.

Concerning the alleged necessity of recollecting past lives for their

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experiences to be of use, the answer is twofold. Firstly, the true Ego, in its endeavor to guide and help the personal self, has the knowledge of ages of past experience clearly before it. When the conscience warns us against wrong-doing, what is that but the voice of the higher self which knows from experience the foolishness of such a course? Psychologists say that the conscience is not always infallible; there are times when it speaks with an uncertain voice; this is what we might expect, for the true Ego has not yet passed through all the experiences necessary for perfect wisdom. It is quite true that in our ordinary state — the brain-mind consciousness — we do not know the reasons for suffering which we have brought upon ourselves in former lives, neither can we tell why we should have special privileges. As was suggested in the first part of this paper (published in THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH for March, 1921) we should be much worse off if we positively *knew* we should live forever, and we should find the constant presence in memory of our past lives an unbearable burden. Few, if any, persons have led consistently noble and heroic lives through the ages, and there would be very much — perhaps nearly everything in some lives — that we should like to cancel. The sense of future immortality as a matter of positive *knowledge*, (but not of trust, faith, intuitive feeling, which we ought to have), would remove much of our power of concentration upon present-day duties, and would even deprive life of its stern teaching-force derived from the uncertainty concerning what will happen to the personality after the dissolution of the body; it would weaken the power of overcoming troubles and building up strong character. In respect to clear vision of the past, only very advanced, well-balanced souls, illuminated, could endure the pressure of those painful memories. For most of us, the agonized cry would be for oblivion. The weird legend of the Wandering Jew, though it does not explicitly teach reincarnation — probably because the medieval church would not permit it — depicts the sufferings of a man who remembered too much. For having mocked Jesus on his way to the crucifixion, so the story runs, he was to live on and on in full strength and consciousness until the second coming of the Lord. He would give anything for peace and forgetfulness, but he is obliged to see generation after generation find oblivion in the grave for their sins while he lives on alone with his haunting memories.

The Theosophical teaching is that when man becomes strong, god-like, when he has become one with the 'Father,' the Higher Self, when he is so splendidly balanced that nothing can shake him, the knowledge of the past opens itself to him. Even in the ordinary man's case, we are told that before taking up the burden of a new incarnation a sufficient glimpse of the past and of the self-sown causes which have led up to the coming

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experiences is given to the new personality so that it then realizes the perfect justice of what is coming to him under the Law. The influence of this illumination remains, though we cannot remember the details; it acts as a strengthener, a background of support to the trust which keeps alive some belief in the right ordering of events.

The objection that comes next shows wilful misunderstanding or complete ignorance of Reincarnation. It is this:

“Reincarnation outrages our sentimental feelings, for a mother nursing her baby would be lavishing her love upon a stranger; she would never know if she was rocking to sleep a cannibal or a Columbus, a Shakespeare or a savage.”

The Shakespeare or the savage do not reincarnate as such; the personality of the new baby is not the former cannibal or Columbus, but belongs to the family in which it is born quite closely enough to satisfy the most exacting parent. If the former personality was Shakespeare, so much the better; if the savage, it would show that the inner Ego was on the path of rapid progress; in neither case would the past personality be recognisable by ordinary means, nor would the mother have any excuse for failing to love her offspring. In India it is commonly believed that many children, when very young, have some recollection of their last incarnation, and no one is surprised when they speak of it. When a child indulges in such ‘fancies’ here, it is strictly forbidden to tell such fibs. But although family affection is quite as strong in India as anywhere else, there is no prejudice against a child because it once belonged to another family.

Another curious objection is:

“If kings and rulers have to return and incarnate in lower stations of life, how can we say that progress is the rule of life?”

This displays a false notion of real progress, which is identified by the objector with rank, power, riches, and position in the eyes of men. The real self is not looking for such things. The king who ruled badly is no higher than any other inferior personality, and it is not necessarily the reward of a noble life to reach a high position; rulers seldom appear to have had happy lives. The ruler who is truly qualified, who is wise and unselfish will certainly not fall back in spiritual development, though he may not retain his worldly position. He may be too advanced for those he governs; they may need the discipline that can only come from an incapable ruler or a tyrant. The illustration of the Wheel of Fortune upon which we are all bound is nearer the truth when applied to our experiences in successive lives than when confined to conditions in a single lifetime. We need far more varieties in experience than one or a dozen lives can offer. At one time it may be necessary to be a ruler over millions,

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at another to be a beggar. To become perfect through suffering is a Theosophical teaching found in the Christian scriptures as well as in those of other faiths.

It is hardly necessary to say more about the objection that Reincarnation cannot be true because many persons do not like the idea of returning to earth again, except that what we in our ignorance think pleasantest is not necessarily the best for us, usually rather the contrary, and that, if they prefer the theological teaching about the next world, they may go farther and fare worse! In contrast to the theatrical heaven and hell, how reasonable Reincarnation seems with its glorious opportunities for improvement and for service to humanity!

A serious and thoughtful critic brings up this point, which is the last of any importance:

“Reincarnation and Karma are true in a *metaphorical* sense; they mean that the spirituality of a lower order has to perfect itself through a series of mental experiences — evolutions from one plane of thought to another of higher degree. Rebirth is a metaphorical expression of character-development, because to return from spiritual life would be to degrade it. After having learned all that can be gained from the physical senses in one life on earth and having passed on to a higher sphere, why come back?”

We come back because we have not learned our lesson under physical conditions. Because in the intervals between earth-lives the immortal Ego, fresh from the trying experiences of the material plane, returns for rest and refreshment to its more natural state, that does not mean that it has won its great battle and finally risen above the seductions of sense, the conqueror of matter. In the latter part of *The Key to Theosophy*, H. P. Blavatsky discusses the necessity for Reincarnation very fully. She points out that, although there is so much pain and suffering on earth, the conditions here are necessary to induce us to acquire the wisdom which will give us permanent relief. Gradually the impression grows that we are dual in nature, and that the dominance of the lower nature, the intellectualized animal, selfish, vain, always looking for pleasure and gratification at others' expense if necessary, is the cause of all our troubles, and that nothing but a complete reversal of attitude, the recognition of the divine, impersonal, the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, the true self and redeemer, can bring peace and content. The final victory is certain, but it is not to be won without great effort for self-conquest.

How long it takes utterly to eradicate one small fault! How much longer it will take to realize the inferiority and imperfectness of the ordinary personal self with which we unwisely identify ourselves!

Reincarnation is not a metaphor; it is nature's method of leading us onward to find our greatness; when one considers the problems of human

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life from the Reincarnation aspect, a reassurance as to the existence of justice takes the place of despair, and the meaning of the brotherhood of humanity becomes startlingly clear. Nothing else can bring home to us how close the tie of brotherhood binds the human race, and how truly the earth is our home for a long time to come. Once the force of the Reincarnation-idea, acting as it does throughout all nature as the method that evolution uses to work its wonders, takes hold of the mind, it puts everything into its proper proportion. Under its magic wand the most discordant elements fall into their rightful places in the world pattern. It is not a dogma to be accepted on faith or rejected from prejudice, it is a scientific fact which can stand the closest scrutiny. A close study of its fundamental principles brings forth very practical results. No longer can a man look upon himself as a single, self-centered individual separate from the rest; when he finds that behind his insignificant personality there stands a greater self, of which he is only a partial reflexion, and that it is in his power to become one with it, he feels more keenly his responsibility for every act and thought.

The limitations of a short magazine article have only permitted the briefest consideration of the objections to Reincarnation sent to the writer; many other arguments could be brought forward, but they do not bear specially upon the points raised. Reincarnation, however, must be studied by every sincere inquirer from the vantage-ground of his own experience of life and the study of history. In the Theosophical literature numerous suggestive lines of thought will be found, and the result of many years observation has led to the conclusion that once intelligent inquiry has been made students can never return to the unjust, illogical, and superficial one-life theory. Reincarnation is not offered as a dogma, nor is the acceptance of it a pre-requisite for membership in the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society.

There is one very important and beautiful essential in the theory of Reincarnation that is offered as the last thought in this article. It is that we all have a glorious Companion, an elder Brother, the Higher Self, one who is "nearer than hands or feet" as the Eastern Wisdom says, who is always there to be called upon in need and all the time. We are not alone, even in our most desolate moments; we can evoke this greater self, if we dare, at times of temptation or trial, but we must awake to the overwhelmingly important fact that this privilege is ours. This is the divine self, the Christos that Paul said he was trying to arouse in the hearts of his followers. Reincarnation helps us to understand how we shall reach the point where we can at last say, in the fullness of realization, "I know that my redeemer liveth." (*Job*, xix, 25)

## THE WRITINGS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY

### STUDENT

"I saw ingathered, bound by Love in a single volume, all that through the universe is scattered: substance, accidents, and their relations, as though fused together in such wise that what I tell of is pure flame."— DANTE: *Il Paradiso*



WHO was this modern Titan, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky? What was this blue-eyed, clear-browed, womanly woman who was strong enough, fearless enough, and close enough to the center of things to set half mankind a-thinking and to sift the world in consciousness by the archaic Doctrine of the Heart? So that you can say: Here are the enemies of Justice and there the friends; here stand those who love and serve and look ahead, and there are the ranks of the self-seeking and those who look behind. It takes a Titan to divide the thinking world into friends and enemies: weak natures cannot do that.

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky stands out in the sunrise light of an opening cycle like a bugler on some high hill, winding her challenge down the slopes, this mighty summons-note of Soul. And those who from whatever pretext arouse themselves to answer the challenge see themselves in no long time unveiled — unveiled to themselves and to the world. For the inmost nature of them wakes and shows itself forth in the truth of what it is. He who is Odysseus is reborn thrice so. The drove pass on.

This is testimony, based on experience and observation both, and herein is the explanation of the unsuspected nobility and power so often disclosed in sincere students of Theosophy. Here, too, the explanation of the passionate selfishness that sometimes leaps into surface-activity in certain others who demand to have 'the doctrine' while refusing to 'live the life.' How could it be otherwise with these latter? They would not have justice: they would throw dice. They would have reward without sacrifice, the life of the soul without giving up the life of sense. How could the result be otherwise? It is the Karma always invoked by the approach of the selfish to the tree of knowledge or of life. The choice of two ways is offered and none can escape this choice: those who choose selfishly reap disappointment; they rage and storm and turn and rend the Teacher whose 'methods' they 'do not approve.' It is the old, old story.

But the others — those who feel the surge of human sorrow and would give their all to ease it; those to whom nothing is "higher than Truth"— those reap, too, as they have sown, but truly in celestial fields.

H. P. Blavatsky brought back to a world that had lost and forgotten it the archaic Wisdom-Religion, once the universal religion of mankind: that primeval body of Truth from which have sprung all that is true in the

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religions and philosophies of humankind, like rivulets from a common fount. "My message is not mine," she said, "but Theirs who sent me," and her task was to preserve this message pure, to give out the truths imparted to her uncontaminated by elements of personality, to defend these truths from assailment and from soil, to fight for them, live for them, drudge for them, suffer for them, and finally to die for them, fighting their battle to the last. And did the world need her message? Does the world need it now? The answer is *the writing on the wall*.

This Teacher passed away almost thirty years ago, but her writings live to speak for her, and their office is supremely a teacher's office. Here they lie before you: *The Secret Doctrine, Isis Unveiled, The Voice of the Silence, The Key to Theosophy*, and the Olympian pronouncements sent forth by her as editor during those twelve hard, crowded years. Take them up, turn the pages, study them — and then reflect. Do you still think Truth has spent her fires? — while these great moral principles flash their signals from height to height: Karma, Reincarnation, the Divinity of Man, the Immortality of the Soul, Brotherhood as a fact in nature, Hierarchies of Compassion extending down from Deity step by step to touch human hearts with their fire, Compassion as the 'Law of Laws,' Love as the link binding all.

The writings of H. P. Blavatsky lead you into a new world of thought and of life. You are on the mountain-tops of consciousness and they flame with holy beacons; the thunders peal and crash and flashes of forked light rend the sky. The Gods are out in arms and they rout the legions of Abaddon, while you — you are a part of it all! Out of the jail of your petty self, for an hour at least, you are free to hurl a lance of your own, you are free to fight and glory with them — these while-mailed hosts of Light and Truth, battling with the powers of the Dark.

Open *The Secret Doctrine*: read on and read again. Test the truth of its pictures of divinity and the mighty cosmic sweep of it by the secret intuitions of your heart. You are carried out of and beyond yourself on the surge and swell of the vast unfathomed ocean of Ancestral Wisdom; the perfume of a dawn-hued prehistory is in the very air; the mighty tides of Being beat in and around your soul. How clear it all is, and how true! Yes, in spite of man's weakness and blindness and sin, the great, wide Waters of Divinity still ebb and flow and drench and shower the heart-life of a world unconscious of its deeper Self. And they rise in an eternal cadence, as though they would sweep all things, all men, all that hath been or shall be, into one rapt, archaic Progress of Purification.

The student who invokes in simple dignity of soul the genius of the writings of 'H. P. B.' enters into another world. For around these writings wrestle and whirl great masterful winds blown down from other worlds,

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winds wet with the sweet mistiness of mountains, cool with the coolness of celestial heights, imperious with the high, wide power of Wonderful Things. And then — only turn a page or two now — the dew of a sunrise-twilight is on your head; you hear the low of kine, the twittering of thrush and linnet, the low scream of the circling gull, the echoing boom of the bittern, the prattle of childish voices over all. You are walking in sunlit valleys where Phoebus Apollo lies asleep on flowered banks and where human tenderness and godlike love hold world and sun and stars in their embrace. The very pages are alive — oh, this is the testimony of many! — and they utter forth the antique, new-old message that will not be denied: *O Man, O Woman! You are more than creatures of a year or of a day; you are more than material for celestial mockery; more than bodies content to be sheltered and fed; more than the minds you so rely on to your shame; more than the passions that make you slip and suffer! Your destiny is no march of failure; you are spiritual warriors, godlike, divine! We will lead you into the Chambers of Antiquity, and we will open before you the ancient doors to that Divinity which is yourself and lead you through to know it. Come — find the holy, celestial part of you! Cease parley with the self that jails you in! Faint-hearted, are you? Is it all too astounding, too much? Then go back to your toiling and moiling, your thankless grubbing, your schemes for the nearest honor, the dearest ambition, the next meal! Only come not back this way later with any whining or complaint! But you — you choose to dare? You desire to be? Your heart does ache with the ache of the drifting world? You will have Truth at any cost? You will stand alone and shelterless, if need be, in the light of that blazing sun — Truth's beacon, the Ancient of Days? Come! The ultimate revelation is for such as you!*

And then — mystical, magical sequence of things! Here you are, just for the daring, in the realm of spiritual forces and possibilities — the world's true faerydom — where every aspiration is an alembic, every experience a crucible, with the hot, bubbling gold of you in it, all curtained and invested as the fire grows hot about it with glory and iridescence and light, its prophecy of the purified life.

One cannot read the writings of H. P. Blavatsky sympathetically — more especially *The Secret Doctrine* and *The Voice of the Silence* — without feeling that one is bathed in the Spirit of the Past. For Divinity is their keynote. Over, beyond, above, below, within, without, pouring into one's soul its mysterious fluidic life, is THAT — the Inscrutable, the Immeasurable, around whose pavilion is the silent dark and whose veil no mortal hand hath ever raised.

*The Secret Doctrine* in particular stands absolutely apart from all contemporary writings, in the sanction, as it were, of a heritage of its own. How big and broad is her handling of theme after theme in this book —

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this Titan of ours, H. P. Blavatsky! How she does lay the colors on that world-canvas of hers! No niggling, no experimentation, no shambling notes and sketches! All is structural, all is sure. There is a confident energy, a superlative grasp, and a constructive power in this book only to be equaled by the creative purpose that surges behind. You are conscious of a background of infinite range, an artistry of infinite truth. You are one with the vast supernal tendencies of the world's ancestral thought.

*The Secret Doctrine* is a book for the student, the altruist, the born philosopher, the sincere lover of mankind who has no taste for sowing dragon's teeth and will have a reason for things. You who live for pleasure or for nothing at all, to whom the world, if not an oyster for your eating is yet but a spectacle before your eyes; you who do not wish set notions disturbed nor the edges of your mental ruts pared down — close the pages quietly and lay the book away: it is not for you at all. But to you in whose veins still pulses the Indomitable, the Ancient of Days, to you whose heart holds still some gleam of an unforgotten Golden Age — to such as you these writings open vistas of primeval glory, whole universes of light, with their throbbing, scintillant hierarchies of gods and genii and demi-gods and heroes and godlike men and women, linking stars and worlds and humankind in one vast golden chain, one endless noble accident of glory. Down, down this chain extends, not a link missing or overlooked, from the Promethean Messengers of all the races that ever were, to the spirit of a wayside flower. And you are part of it — you! for it is the Golden Chain of evolving Spiritual Life.

The writings of H. P. Blavatsky usher you into no hall of disputation, but rather into a temple of royalty, lighted by such "light as never was on sea or land," and from out whose pillared pronaos you look down the aisles of the ages to the very heart of human needs. You may see things as they were — and as they are. "Whether one sets out to the bloom of the east or to the chambers of the west, without moving, O holder of the bow, is the traveling on this road." This is written over the portal.

When you can harness the sun, then you can hold in leash by argument the spirit of exaltation that the writings of H. P. Blavatsky quicken into life, and which takes you by the hand and leads you dare the hitherto Indomitable, bids you brave the hitherto unchallenged, while it rises lambent in your heart of heart like some great gold-pinioned, archaic, Bird of Flame. . . . *Her writings:* they lead you into the treasuries of the gods themselves; you are for the time at least as one of that august company that guard the archives of the ancient world; they press to your lips the Wisdom-cup of the Ages, filled from the Stream Inexhaustible that flows in forgotten abodes; they drench you with Divinity and you, rise reborn, revived and whole, from that celestial bath.

## 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.*

XXIV — FROM JULIAN TO BODHIDHARMA (CONTINUED)

KENNETH MORRIS

S we have seen, since the Hans fell there had been a confusion of ephemeral kingdoms jostling and hustling each other across the stage of time: there had been too much history altogether; too many wars, heroes, adventures and wild escapades. Life was too riotous and whirling an affair: China seemed to have sunk into a mere Europe, a kind of Kilkenny Christendom. Not that culture ever became extinct; indeed, through this whole period the super-refinement that had grown up under the Hans persisted side by side with the barbarian excursions and alarms. It was not, as in Rome, a case of major pralaya; men did not revert to savagery; literary production seems never to have run quite so sterile. But things were in the melting-pot; centripetalism had gone; little dynasties flared up quickly and expired; and amidst all those lightning changes there was no time for progress, or deep concerns, or for the Soul of the Black-haired People to be stirring to manifestation.

You will, I dare say, have learned to look for a rise in China at any falling-time in Europe; so would consider something should have happened there in 365, the year of the great earthquake and tidal wave, when the fifty thousand Alexandrians were drowned,—the second year after Julian's death. Well; in that 365 Tao Yuan-ming was born, who later became known as Tao Chien: in Japanese, Toemmei. There had been poets all along. During the last thirty years of the Hans, 190 to 220, there had been the Seven Scholars of the Chien An Period: among them that jolly K'ung Jung who, because he was a descendant of Confucius, claimed blood-relationship with the descendants of Laotse. Ts'ao Ts'ao himself wrote songs: he was that bold bad adventurer and highly successful general who turned out the last Han and set his own son on the throne as Wei Wenti; who also was a poet, as was his brother Ts'ao Chih. Of Ts'ao Chih a contemporary said: "If all the talent in the world were divided into ten parts, Ts'ao Chih would have eight of them." — "Who, then, would have the other two?" asked somebody. — "I should have one of them myself," was the answer, "and the rest of the world the other."

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Ts'ao Chih enriched the language with one of its most familiar and delicious quotations:

“The Superior Man takes precautions,  
And avoids giving rise to suspicion:  
He does not pull up his shoes in a melon patch,  
Nor adjust his cap while passing through an orchard of plums.”

It is indicative of his own position at court.

Later in the third century came the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove, a “club of rather bibulous singers”; and there are names of many scholars besides to say that the time was not too barren; yet on the whole it was, I suppose, a period of slump in literary production, as it was of confusion in politics. But when Julian had been dead two years in the west of the world, Tao Yuan-ming was born in the east: I do not say the creator of a new time; but certainly a sign of its coming.

A large amount of his poetry survives; and it is filled with a new spirit. Like Wordsworth, he went back to nature. Ambition, of course, had been a great mark of the age: men raced after office, and scrambled for the spoils. Tao Yuan-ming was called to fill an official post, and went up reluctantly to the capital; but very soon escaped back to the things he loved: the mountains, and his chrysanthemum garden, and the country, where he could hear the dogs barking in the far farms, and see the chickens scratching in the lanes. We do not find in him, perhaps, the flood of Natural Magic that came with the poets of the Great Age three or four centuries later; but we do find a heart-felt worship of the great unspoiled world under the sky: he is there to say that China was returning to her real strength, which is Nature-worship. While he pottered about in the front garden, he tells us, his wife pottered about in the back garden; they made an idol of their chrysanthemums, and started or nourished the cult which has flourished so strongly since in Japan. He was I suppose the greatest poet since Ch'ü Yuan, who came some seven centuries earlier; it is from him we get the story some of you may know under the title *Red Peach-Blossom Inlet*.

For about half a cycle (sixty-five years) barbarian dynasties had been holding the north; with the result that the center of gravity of the real Black-haired People had been shifted from the puritan landscapes of North China to the pagan landscapes of the Yangtse Valley,— a region of mountains and forests and lakes and wild waters: Tsu, the land of Laotse and Ch'ü Yüan, and I think Chwangtse too. It is here are the Hills of T'ang, the metropolis of Natural Magic perhaps for all the world; and the mind and imagination of China, centered here, were receiving a new polarization; something richer and more luminous was being born. Contemporary with Tao Yuan-ming was Ku Kaichih, the first supreme

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name in painting. Fenollosa speaks of a "White Lotus Club," organized by Hui Yuan, a Buddhist priest, and consisting of "mountain-climbers and thinkers,"—Tao Yuan-ming being a member.

One would like to get at the heart of what happened in that last quarter of the fourth century. This is what we see on the outside: Canton and the Yangtse ports were being visited more and more by Hindû, Arab, and Sassanian traders, bringing in new things and ideas: the Hindûs, especially, an impetus towards culture from the splendor of the Gupta period, then at its topmost height. Also there were new inventions, such as that of paper, which was an incentive to literary output. The Chinese mind, in the south especially, was quickened on the one hand by the magical wind from the mountains, and on the other by a wind from the great world over-seas: the necessary nationalistic and international quickenings. But deeper quickenings also were taking place. India was fast becoming, under the Gupta reaction towards Brahminism, no place for the Buddhists; and the Hindû ships that put in at Canton and the Yangtse were bringing much to China besides merchandise. A great propaganda of Buddhism was in process; by Indian monks, and now too for the first time by native Chinese. We read of a missionary who went about preaching to an indifferent world; then in sorrow took to the mountains, and proclaimed the Good Law to the mountain boulders; and they "nodded as it were their heads in assent."\* But there is evidence that China was fast becoming the spiritual metropolis of the world: Buddhism was drifting in, and mingling among the mountains with mountain Taoism, that dear and hoary magic of the Eastern World; and the result was an atmosphere in which astounding events were to happen.

In 401, Kumârajîva, the seventeenth Buddhist Patriarch, came from India and took up his residence at the court at Changan, where a Tîbetan family was then reigning over the north; and this, when you think that these Patriarchs were (as I believe) no popes elected by a conclave of churchly dignities, but the Spiritual Successors of the Buddha, each appointed by his predecessor, was an event momentous enough in itself. Still, Kumârajîva came (it would appear) but to prepare the way for the great change that was impending; left behind him a successor in India, or one to fill the office at his death: in India the headquarters of Buddhism remained. Two years before his arrival, Fa Hian, a Chinese Buddhist monk, had set out on foot from Central China, walked across the Gobi Desert, and down through Afghanistan into India, a pilgrim to the sacred places: a sane and saintly man, from whom we learn most of what

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\*Giles's *Dictionary of Chinese Biography*; from which work, and from the same author's *Chinese Literature*, the facts, quotations, and anecdotes given in this lecture are taken.

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we know about the Gupta régime. He returned by sea in 412, landing at Kiao-chao in Shantung,— a place latterly so sadly famous,— bringing with him spiritual and quickening influences. In the south, meanwhile, another Indian teacher, Buddhahadra, had been at work. Before very long, a Renaissance was in full flow.

The political events that led up to it were these: between 304 and 319 a Tatar family by the name of Liu, from Manchuria, succeeded in driving the House of Tsin out of northern China: these Tsins were that effete, ladylike, chess-playing, fan-waving, high-etiquettish dynasty I have spoken of before. In 319 they took up their abode in Nanking, and there ruled corruptly for a hundred years, leaving the north to the barbarians. In 420, a soldier in their employ, Liu-yu by name, deposed the last Tsin emperor, and set himself on the throne as the first sovereign of the Liang Dynasty. He was a capable man, and introduced some vigor and betterment into affairs; he found conditions ripe for a renaissance of civilization; and in his reign we may say that the renaissance took shape. 420 is, so far as a date can be given for what was really a long process, a convenient date to give. We have seen Persia rise in the two-twenties; India in the three-twenties; we shall not go far wrong in giving the four-twenties to China. That decade, too, marks a fresh step downward in the career of Rome: Honorius died in 423. Fenollosa is definite upon 420 for the inception of the great age of the Southern Renaissance of art. That age culminated in the first half of the next century, and ended with the passing of the Liang dynasty in the five-fifties: a matter of thirteen decades again; which, I take it, is further reason for considering our four-twenties epochal.

I fancy we shall grow used to finding the twenties in each century momentous, and marked by great political and spiritual re-shapings of the world. We shall find this in our historical studies; in the next few years we may find it in current events too; and what we shall see may remind us that in these decades the sun generally rises in some new part of the world,— the sun of culture and power. Naturally enough: — in the last quarter of each century you have the influx of spiritual forces; which influx, it is to be supposed, can hardly fail to produce changes inwardly,— a new temperature, new conditions in the world of mind. So there must be readjustments: there is a disharmony between outer and inner things, between the world of causes and the world of effects; and one commonly finds the first two decades of the new century filled with the noise and confusion of readjustment. New wine has been poured into the old skin-bottles of the world; and ferments, explodes, rends them. Then, in the twenties or so, things calm down, and it is seen that readjustments have been made. By 'readjustments,' one does not mean the treaties of states-

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men and the like; brain-mind affairs for the most part, that amount to nothing. One means a new direction taken by the tide of incarnating souls. As if the readjusting cataclysms had blocked their old channels of these, and opened new ones. . . .

A new *arpeggio* chord, but rather a faint and broken one, sounds in the five-twenties, or begins then. At Constantinople the thirteen pralactic and recuperative decades since the death of Theodosius and the split with the West have ended. Now an emperor dies; and it becomes a question which of several likely candidates can lay out his money to best advantage and secure the succession. There is an official of some sort at court there, one Justin, a Balkan peasant by birth; you will do well to bribe him heavily, for he, probably, can manage the affair for you. — One of the candidates does so; hands him a large sum, on the assurance from Justin that he shall be the man. But the old fellow has peasant shrewdness, shall we say; and the money is *used* most thriftily; but not as its donor intended. Justin duly ascends the throne.

Nothing very promising in that, to insure manvantaric times coming in. But the old man remembers a nephew of his back there in Bulgaria or Jugoslavia or where it may have been; and sends for him, and very wisely lets him do most of the running of things. In 527, this nephew succeeds to the purple on his uncle's death: as Justinian; and, for Europe and the Byzantine empire, and for the times,— that is to say, 'considering,'— manvantaric doings do begin. A man of hugely sanguine temperament, inquisitive and enterprising and impulsive, he had the fortune to be served by some great men: Tribonian, who drew up the Pandects; Belisarius and Narses, who thrashed the barbarians; the architect who built Saint Sophia. Against these assets to his reign of thirty-eight years you must set the factions of the circus, at Constantinople itself; and bloody battles over the merits of the Greens, the Blues, the Whites, etc. But certainly Justinian contrived to strike into history as no other Byzantine emperor did; with his law code, and with his church. So now enough of him.

Four years after the accession of this greatest of the Byzantines, the greatest of the Sassanids came to the throne in Persia: Chosroes Anushirvan: a wise and victorious reign until 579. There was an 'Endless Peace' sworn with Rome in 533; and not peace merely, but friendship and alliance; it was to last for all time, and did last for seven years. Then Chosroes, jealous of the western victories of Justinian, listened to the pleadings of the Ostrogoths, and declared war; peace came again in 563, on the basis of a yearly tribute from Rome to Persia,— but with compensations, such as toleration for the Christians in Persia. — There were reforms in the army and in taxation; improvements in irrigation;

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encouragement of learning; revision of the laws; some little outburst in literature and culture generally: the culmination, in all but extent of territory, of the whole Sassanian period. — We may throw in one item from the future,— that is from 620: in that year Sassanian Persia had flowed out to the full limits of the empire of Darius Hystaspes: held Egypt, Syria, all West Asia to within a mile of the walls of Constantinople. Within three years the fall had begun; within twenty it was completed.

As to India, this (520) is among the hidden times: the Ephthalites had overturned the Guptas; they were Huns of the Hunniest; they had overturned the Guptas and all else (in the north). Tales come down of the fiendishness of their kings: of a man that for his sport would have elephants hurled from the top of precipices: it may be that the Indian manvantara closed with the Gupta fall; — though we get the finical dandiacal 'great' reign of Harsha in 700. The light certainly was dying from India now: the Crest-Wave had been there, in all its splendor; they had made good use of it in all but the spiritual sense, and very bad use of it in that. The year in which you may say (as nearly as history will tell you) the light died there, was precisely this year of 520; and that effected a change in the spiritual center of gravity of the world of the most momentous kind: so much so that we may think of a new order of ages as beginning then; and looking at world-history as a whole, we may say, Here endeth the lesson that began where we took things up in the time of the Six Great Teachers; and here beginneth a new chapter,— with which these lectures will hardly concern themselves. But we may glance at the event that opens it.

It made very little stir at the time. It was merely the landing at Canton of an old man from India: a 'Blue-eyed Brahmin,'— but a Buddhist, and the head of all the Buddhists at that; — and his preaching there until Liang Wuti, the emperor at Nanking, had heard of his fame, and invited him to court; and his retirement thence to a cave-temple in the north. Beyond this there is very little to tell you. He was a king's son from southern India; his name Bodhidharma; and one would like to know what the records of the Great Lodge have to say about him. For he stands in history as the founder of the Dhyâna or Zen School, another form of the name of which is *Dzyan*; when one reads *The Voice of the Silence*, or the Stanzas in *The Secret Doctrine*, one might remember this. Outwardly,— I think this is true,— he refused to cut into history at all: was a grand Esoteric figure, whose campaigns, (super-Napoleonic, more mirific than those of Genghiz Khan), were all fought on spiritual planes whence no noise of the cannonading could be heard in this outer world. He was the twenty-eighth Successor of the Buddha; of a line of Masters that included such great names as those of Vasubandhu, and of Nâgârjuna, founder of

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the Mahâyâna,— “one of the four suns that illumine the world.” We have seen that he had been preceded: Kumârajîva had come to China a century before; but experimentally, leaving the Center of the Movement in India: there must have been thousands of disciples in the Middle Kingdom in 520 when Bodhidharma came, bringing with him the Buddha’s alms-bowl, the symbol of the Patriarchate, to make in China his headquarters and that of his successors. For a thousand years the Buddha’s Movement had been in India a living link with the Lodge; — in that land of esoteric history which hides from us what it means to be so linked and connected. Now India had failed. The Guptas had reigned in great splendor; but they had flourished upon a reaction away from the Light. I suppose it means this: that the burden of fighting upward had been too much for this people, now wearied with old age; they had dropped the burden and the struggle, and found in the relief a phantom of renewed youth to last them a little day.

Whatever may be true of Buddhism now,— however the long cycles may have wasted its vitality, and to whatever depths it may have fallen,— we should remember this: that certainly for about fourteen centuries there was contained within it a living link with the Masters’ Lodge. It was not like any other existing religion (so far as one knows): like none of the dominant religions of today, at any rate. At its head, apparently, through all those long centuries, was a line of Adepts, men of spiritual genius, members of the Lodge. So what Bodhidharma’s coming meant, I take it, was that in China that was established actually which in the West first Pythagoras, and then Plotinus had tried to establish, and tried in vain. It was, as you may say, the transplanting of the Tree of Life from a soil that had grown outworn to one in which it could flourish; and the result was, it appears to me, a new impulse given to the ages, to all history.

Hitherto, in the main, we have seen (except in China) a downward trend of cycles; from this point an upward trend began. We have been dealing, latterly, with dullish centuries, and history in a febrile and flickering mood; — but give this wonderful change time to take effect, and the centuries begin to flame up, and history to become a roaring conflagration. We might here spy out into that time, which will lie beyond the scope of these lectures; and see the glory of the T’angs begin in China in 618; Corea’s one historic age of splendor, in art and also in military prowess, at its highest point about 680; the era of Shotoku Daishi, saint, sage, prince and protagonist of civilization in Japan, from about 580 to 620; the rise of Siam, and of Tibet, into strength and culture and Buddhism, in the first half of the seventh century; — then, looking westward, the wonderful career of Mohammed in Arabia, who gave the impetus that

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rescued civilization first in West Asia and then, when in the thirteenth century a new European manvantara was ready to open, in Europe also: an impetus which worked on the intellectual-cultural plane until it had brought things to the point where H. P. Blavatsky might come to give things a huge twist towards the spiritual,— and where Katherine Tingley might accomplish that which all the ages had been expecting, and the whole creation groaning and travailing to see. Oh, on brain-mind lines you can trace no connexion; but then the plane of causes lies deeper than the brain-mind. We may understand now, I think, what place the Buddha holds in human history: how it was not for nothing that he was *the Buddha*, the central Avatar, the topmost and Master Figure of humanity for these last twenty-five hundred years, with what other sublime men appeared as it were subordinate to him, and the guides of tributary streams: Laotse and Confucius preparing the way for him in China; Pythagoras carrying his doctrine into the West. . . . Well; here is scope for thought; and for much thought that may be true and deep, and illuminative of future ages; and *yet not convenient to write down at this time*. — But to Bodhidharma again.

H. P. Blavatsky affirmed that Buddhism had an esoteric as well as an exoteric side: an affirmation that was of course disputed. But here is this from a Chinese writer quoted by Edkins:

“Tathâgata taught great truths and the causes of things. He became the instructor of men and devas; saved multitudes, and spoke the contents of more than five hundred books. Hence arose the Kiaumen or Exoteric branch of the system, and it was believed to hold the tradition of the words of the Buddha. Bodhidharma brought from the Western Heaven the seal of truth, and opened the Fountain of Dhyâna in the east. He pointed directly to Buddha's heart and nature, swept away the parasitic growth of book instruction, and thus established the Esoteric branch of the system containing the Doctrine of the Heart, the tradition of the Heart of Buddha. Yet the two branches, while presenting of necessity a different aspect, form but one whole.”

Now that Doctrine of the Heart had always been in existence; it does not mean that Bodhidharma invented anything. But in a line of Teachers, each will have his own methods, and, if there is progress, there will be new and deeper revelations. The Buddha gave out so much, as the time permitted him; Nâgârjuna, founding the Mahâyâna, so much further; Bodhidharma, now that with the move to China a new lease of life had come, gave out, or rather taught to his disciples, so much more again of the Doctrine that in its fulness is and always has been the Doctrine of the Lodge.

Liang Wuti, the emperor at Nanking, had been at the end of the fifth century a general in the service of the last scion of a dying dynasty there, and a devout Taoist; in 502 he became the first of a new dynasty, the Liang; and presently, a devout Buddhist. Chinese historians love him

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not; Fenollosa describes him as too generous-minded and other-worldly for success. Yet he held the throne for nearly fifty years; a time in which art was culminating and affairs advancing through splendor and un-wisdom to a downfall. Twice he took the yellow robe and alms-bowl, and went forth through his domains, emperor still, but mendicant missionary preaching the Good Law. — The Truth? the Inner Doctrine? — I learn most about this poor Liang Wuti from the record of an interview held once between him and the 'Blue-eyed Brahmin' Master of Dzyan. Liang Wuti invited Bodhidharma to court, and Bodhidharma came. Said the emperor:

—“Since my accession I have been continually building temples, transcribing sacred books, and admitting new monks to take the vows. How much merit may I be supposed to have accumulated?”

—“None,” said Bodhidharma.

—“And why none?”

—“All this,” said the Master, “is but the insignificant effect of an imperfect cause not complete in itself; it is but the shadow that follows the substance, and without real existence.”

—“Then what,” asked Wuti, “is real merit?”

—“It consists in purity and enlightenment, depth and completeness; in being wrapped in thought while surrounded by vacancy and stillness. Merit such as this cannot be won by worldly means.”

Wuti, I suppose, found this kind of conversation difficult, and changed the subject,— with an exotericist's question. Said he:

—“Which is the most important of the holy doctrines?”

—“Where all is emptiness,” said Bodhidharma, “nothing can be called holy.”

A neat compliment, thinks good externalist Wuti, may improve things. —“If nothing can be called holy,” says he, “who is it then that replies to me?”—holiness being a well-known characteristic of Bodhidharma himself. Who answered merely:

—“I do not know”; and went his ways. The final comment on the interview is given by a Japanese writer thus: “Can an elephant associate with rabbits?”

For the rest, he spent the remaining years of his life in a cave-temple near Honanfu; and died after appointing a Chinaman his successor. Besides this small stock of facts there is a mort of legend; as for example:

After leaving the court of Liang, he crossed the Yangtse on a reed,— a theme in sacred art for thousands ever since,— and because of this miraculous crossing, is worshiped still by the Yangtse boatmen as their patron saint,— on the 28th of February in each year. — Once, as he sat in meditation, sleep overcame him; and on waking, that it might never

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happen again, he cut off his eyelids. But they fell on the earth, took root, and sprouted; and the plant that grew from them was the first of all tea-plants,— the symbol (and cause!) of eternal wakefulness. He is represented in the pictures as being footless: in his missionary travels, it is said, he wore away his feet. Thus where there is no known life-story, but all hidden away beneath a veil of esotericism and a Master's seclusion, myths have grown, and a story has been made. — He sat there in his cave silent through the years, they say; his face to the wall. Chih Kuang came to him, asking to be taught the doctrine; and for seven days stood in the snow at the cave-mouth, pleading and unnoticed. Then, to show that he was in earnest, he drew his sword and sliced off his left arm; and the Master called him in, and taught him. — Legend again, no doubt.

I imagine we can only judge of the man and of his astounding greatness by the greatness of the ages he illumined. It was as if he gave, in East Asia, the signal for nation after nation to leap into brilliant being. As for China, she became something new. The Age of Han had been golden: strong, manly, splendid. But Han was like other empires here and there about the world. Henceforth during her cycle China was to be as a light-giving body, a luminary wondrous in the firmament with a shining array of satellite kingdoms circling about her. Her own Teachers of a thousand years before had prepared the way for it: Confucius when he gave her stability; Laotse when he dropped the Blue Pearl into her fields. That Pearl had shone, heaven knows. Now Ta-mo, this Bodhidharma, breathed on it; and it glowed, and flame shot up from it, and grew, and foamed up beautiful, till it was a steady fountain of wonder-fire spraying the far stars. Heretofore we have had a background of Taoist wizardry: in its highest aspects, Natural Magic,— the Keatsism of the waters and the wild, the wood, the field, and the mountain; henceforth there was to be a sacred something shining through and inmingled with this: the urge of the Divine Soul, the holy purposes of evolution. We may say this: in Art, to take that one field alone, the most perfect, the fullest, the divinest, expression of Natural Magic

“whereof this world holds record”

was to come in the school of the Successors of Bodhidharma, directly the result of his ‘Doctrine of the Heart.’

His school remained esoteric; but it was established, not among the secret mountains, nor in far unvisited regions; but there in the midst of imperial China: an extension of the Lodge, you may say, visible among men. Bodhidharma — are you to call him a *Messenger* at all? He hardly came out into the world. It was known he was there; near by was the northern capital; — he taught disciples, when they had the strength to

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insist on it. Yet he dwelt aloof too, and wrapped about in the seclusion Masters must have, to carry on their spiritual work. One must suppose that Messengers of the Lodge had been very busy in China between 375 and 400, in the days of Tao Yuan-ming and Ku Kai-chih; that they had been very busy again in the last quarter of the fifth century; for it seems as if somehow or other there was such an atmosphere in China in the first half of the sixth century,— when ordinarily speaking the Doors of the Spiritual World would be shut,— that the Lodge was enabled partly to throw off its seclusion, and it was possible for at least one of its Members to take up his abode there, and to be known to the world as doing so.

A Messenger was sent out into the Chinese world from the School of Bodhidharma in 575: Chih-i, the founder of the Tientai School which was the spiritual force underlying the glory of the T'ang age; but he was a Messenger from the Dzyan School of Bodhidharma, not its Head. As far as I have been able to gather the threads of it, the line of those Heads, the Eastern Patriarchs, Bodhidharma's successors, was as follows: He died in or about 536, having appointed Chi Kuang to succeed him. Chi Kuang appointed Hui Ssu, called the "Chief of the Chunglung School of the followers of Bodhidharma." Hui Ssu died in 576, having sent out Chih-i into the world the year before, and having appointed Seng T'san to succeed him as head of Dzyan. Seng T'san died in 606; Tao Hsin, his successor, in 651; Hung Jen, his, in 675. Hung Jen, it appears, left two successors: Lu Hui-neng in the south, and Shen Hsiu in the north. It was the last quarter of the century: I imagine Lu Hui-neng was the Messenger sent out into the world; he spent the rest of his life teaching in the neighborhood of Canton; I imagine Shen Hsiu remained the Head of the Esoteric School. After that the line disappears; but the school attained its greatest influence in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in China, and later still in Japan. — All these were men living not quite in the world,— in a certain seclusion; and yet not quite apart from the world: it was known that they were there, and where they might be found. After Shen Hsiu, the last Northern Chinese Patriarch, the line probably withdrew to Tibet, which had lately come into relations with China, and where civilization had been established through the efforts of T'ang Taitson. And now I will close this lecture with a saying of Shen Hsiu's which, in this modified form, is very familiar to all of you:

"Mind is like a mirror: it gathers dust while it reflects. It needs the gentle breezes of soul wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions."

## EDISON AND BLAVATSKY

MAGISTER ARTIUM



THE LISTENER' in the *Boston Transcript* has received from a correspondent quotations from *The Secret Doctrine*, for comparison with certain views expressed by Edison as to the constitution of man. Madame Blavatsky (*says the Transcript*)

“declares that every physiological change and pathologic phenomenon — nay, even life itself, or rather the objective phenomena of life — is due to unseen ‘creators’ and ‘destroyers,’ classed as a whole by her as ‘fiery lives,’ and known to science in a loose and general way as microbes. She asserts that the preservation and decay of the physical body of man are due to the alternate functions of these ‘fiery lives’ as builders and destroyers. During the first thirty-five years of a man’s life the fiery lives are directly engaged in the process of building up man’s material body. After this period the age of retrogression begins, and the fiery lives, having exhausted their creative strength, decrease, and destruction commences. Further than that, she declares that the same infinitesimal invisible lives compose the atoms of the bodies of the mountain and the daisy, of the man and the ant, of the elephant and of the tree that shelters him from the sun. ‘Each particle,’ she asserts, ‘whether you call it organic or inorganic, is a life. Every atom in the universe is both life-giving and death-giving in the form of which it is a part, inasmuch as it builds by aggregation both universes and ephemeral vehicles ready to receive the transmigrating soul, and as eternally destroys and changes the forms it has built, and expels those souls from their temporary abode.’”

The writer then goes on to say that the analogy between H. P. Blavatsky and Edison ends here, for that the former regards the spirit of man as something entirely different from his material make-up. We gather that Edison’s theory provides for no unitary man, capable of surviving as an individual soul the dissipation of his elements; whereas Occultism regards the Soul as the real and perpetually existing man, the separate elements or ‘lives’ being merely drawn together by the Soul and afterwards discarded.

From what we have seen of Edison’s speculations, we do not regard them as being in any way distinguishable from the kind of views which one often hears from intelligent and thoughtful people in the course of intimate conversation. They are crude and uncorrected by any adequate familiarity with philosophical and metaphysical thought in general; and doubtless they have acquired a fictitious importance from the celebrity of their author — in quite different fields however. It is scarcely necessary to point out that, if man is no more than an assemblage of lives, which fly apart when he dies, then there can be no permanent individuality at all, and the man is reduced to nothing more than a committee, elected for temporary purposes. There is the usual confusion between the meanings of an aggregate and a unit, to which one frequently has occasion to refer; and though man is doubtless compact of myriads of distinct living beings, and is reducible to those elements when he is decomposed, it does

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not follow that he is this and nothing else. A heap of bricks does not constitute a house, nor does a mass of musical notes necessarily make a symphony by Beethoven. The architect in one case and Beethoven in the other are very necessary elements in the problem. It is the Ego, the I, the real unit and individual Man, that is lord of all, and draws together all the elements, mental, material, etc., required for his manifestation as a corporate being. The dissipation of these elements, or some of them, at death, cannot destroy the individuality; it is merely a taking off of old clothes.

The view that everything in the universe, down to the minutest atom, is alive, and moreover is conscious in its own way, is one of those keynotes which H. P. Blavatsky struck, and to which science has ever since been gradually coming round, as it must inevitably do sooner or later. If we deny life to a certain portion of nature or to certain kinds of matter, we have to invent a new category in which to place these so-called dead or unliving materials; and we at once find ourselves face to face with the difficulty of knowing where to draw a line between what we shall call living and what unliving. Moreover we cannot on any reasonable hypothesis explain the activities of so-called inorganic matter, except by supposing it to be endowed or at least inspired by conscious will and mind. For such words as *affinity* and *attraction* denote effects rather than causes. The explorations of science can reach no further than the revelation of minute particles or centers of energy in rapid movement; and even the concept *mass* seems, in the light of recent researches and conclusions, to be reducible to terms of quantity of energy. This *energy*, then, does it not seem likely that it is simply a particular phase of that omnipresent *life* of which the Teacher speaks when she says that everything is alive?

In view of the most informing and suggestive hints of H. P. Blavatsky, in view of the perplexity of science over such problems, and in view of the obvious fact that science has been steadily following the lead of H. P. Blavatsky, it seems strange to find 'The Listener,' in his comments inverting the actual situation and speaking as though it were H. P. Blavatsky that is vague and the scientific theorists certain and sure.

"All of which is pretty deep [he says], as far as the ordinary comprehension is related to it, and also too nebulous for scientific grasp, assertion, or formula. It is the merit of science that it does not go beyond the 'material' understanding."

We are far from blaming those modest souls who find their safety in clinging to the tranquil shores of the ordinary and the material and the commonplace; but the more adventurous spirits also claim our sympathies and such assistance as we may be capable of rendering. Nor do we deny that much, very much, of what professes to transcend the ordinary is mere superstition and mental vertigo. But if man is endowed with

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discrimination and judgment to distinguish the false from the true, and to know that which helps him from that which hinders, he may be expected to use those powers of discernment in discriminating between such teachings as those of H. P. Blavatsky and the mere intellectual mazes to which we have just referred. There is considerable evidence that many people have not found H. P. Blavatsky's teachings too deep to quarry in; and whether such people have copied direct, or by thought-transference, or whether they have honestly and independently arrived at the same conclusions as H. P. Blavatsky, the flattery implied in the resemblance is equally valid.

Science, says the writer, does not go beyond the material understanding. Hence, we suppose, we are justified in assuming that the writer and the simple plain matter-of-fact scientific people for whom he writes, understand all about the Einstein theories and that they would be found on examination to be proficient in all those elaborate mathematics with which science so liberally deals. Thus they would be competent to take the tone which, with the 'Listener' as spokesman, we find them taking. Otherwise — if they fail at the test — why then we would recommend them to turn to and study their own science a little more adequately. One discovery they might make, should their ordinary comprehension and modesty prove equal to the task; and that is that the really competent men of science are not quite so cocksure about the laws of the universe as are some of those who sun themselves in their beams.

"We get into deep water when we go with Blavatsky, but we remain on terra firma as long as we stay with Edison."

So, friend Reader of THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH, you are invited to choose whether you will go into deep water with Blavatsky or remain on terra firma with Edison. As a plain matter-of-fact man myself, I would suggest that, for storage batteries and incandescent lamps, you cannot do better than go to Edison and his terra firma. But I do not recommend Edison for treatises on ancient philosophy, universal symbology, archaeology, and the other important matters dealt with in *The Secret Doctrine*. For that you should go to Blavatsky; and then you will not be like

"Baron Hanwell of Colney Hatch,  
Who went to the butcher to sew on a patch";

though, doubtless, if you should ever become a notable athlete or movie-star, you might become competent to give an opinion on everything from shaving-soap to the latest memory-system.

It has been remarked that there is a dogmatism and cant of skepticism that is more fettering to the intellect and soul than any other kind; and

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the man who slashes blindly around at Pythagoras and the Indian philosophies, and anything else he happens to have heard of, can claim comradeship with the little Bethelite who believes that his own soul is the only article of the kind in the universe that is qualified to achieve salvation.

### REACTIONS OF INJUSTICE

LYDIA ROSS, M. D.



THE *Boston Transcript* recently headed a brief article with: 'Poliomyelitis Gone Again.' It said in part:

"Almost unheralded this year, Poliomyelitis, the disease which caused so much dread in 1916, has run its course and has again practically disappeared. This unusual disease is as little understood today as it was years ago."

Then statistics are given to show how, from the 1916 epidemic, with 1926 cases in Massachusetts, its yearly recurrence has numbered less and less cases, until only sixty-six were reported for 1919. In view of the arbitrary quarantine measures enforced against the possible spread of infantile paralysis in New York and elsewhere, it is interesting to learn that now

"Physicians admit that they know very little about the disease. While the State Department of Health has been handling the situation on the theory that the disease is infectious, it now finds that there are no scientific facts for even that contention. A study of the cases which occurred in 1916 discloses the rather surprising fact that in only 190 instances were there secondary cases in homes in which the disease was reported, which refutes the belief that it is infectious. The germ, if there be one, has not been isolated. Why it came back this year nobody knows, and when it passes in the course of a few weeks, it will still remain a mystery."

Even if the unremitting search for the germ had found one, would that solve the mystery? Accumulating evidence points to the ubiquitous germs, not as the authors of diseases, but as the agents which deliver the malign goods of subtil forces quite beyond the last analyses of microscope and test-tube. Why not take a hint from the ancients and study the man as well as the incidental microbe? Surely the man himself, who is the sum-total of the conscious part of every cell in his animal body, must react powerfully upon his physical make-up, for health or disease. Germ mania is a medical phase of materialism gone to seed. The key to modern pathology is a psychology based upon the composite nature of man.

The increasing racial consciousness must be reckoned with, in analysing the diseases of sensitized organisms, which our so-called civilization keys to an artificial and intense standard of living. Moreover, the individual is constantly affected by the mental and emotional forces that act and react in the highly organized life around him. He may fall a victim to some festering wrong in the body politic, merely from lack of resistance,

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and so suffer with some physical, mental, or moral disorder. Furthermore, in the realm of causes, there is the Karma of past lives. This is the real heredity, which alone accounts for the apparently unjust suffering which often falls upon mere children. Reincarnation changes every aspect of the case, for the soul in the babe's body is old in evolutionary experience.

With the whole industrial, religious, and social structure of the world disorganized today, — not by microbes but by ideas and emotions, — inevitably the highly-organized modern brain and nervous system must react also in keeping with this upheaval. The social organism and the individual body must suffer the penalty of wrongs done, even those done unwittingly and in the sacred name of healing.

Everywhere the malign force of cumulative injustice is overturning the institutions founded upon it. Among many other signs, observe the educators, with intuition blunted by Darwinism and by a pseudo-psychology which overlooks the reincarnating soul in the child of destiny. Now they openly admit that the educational system in vogue is a failure in character-building. The injustice of ignoring the soul as the real source of 'self-directed evolution' has reacted to discredit the inadequate system. From any standpoint, this is a day of reckoning, a time for the balancing of old accounts of injustice.

The analogy of such general reactions suggests that the scourge of infantile paralysis, with its heavy mortality and its blighting touch left upon the survivors, must be the physical expression of some inner wrong. But what evil is so cruel and so overlooked that Nature must call attention to it by letting its effects fall upon our beloved little ones?

It so happens that, adjoining the *Transcript* article quoted above is a notice of a public meeting of the New England Anti-Vivisection Society. What relation, if any, do the two articles bear to each other? Grant the *sincerity* of the vivisector in thinking that those who oppose him are trying to hinder scientific research for causes and cures. Suppose, however, he should leave his microscope, scalpel, and laboratory long enough to analyse the active *qualities* in human life, — beginning with medical circles.

The question arises, why, with ever-increasing hygienic and quarantine measures carried out by Boards of Health, by popular education, and by the profession, and with endless search for agents and avenues of infection and contagion, — why is not a scourge like poliomyelitis wiped out, instead of becoming a baffling mystery? Since the animals are not subject to it, the inference is that it has a human origin, and that it is the penalty of some broken law of body, mind, or morals. Perhaps self-analysis is needed, instead of laboratory-findings, and new light would come with more knowledge of how much pathology 'begins at home.'

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Science teaches that all effects must equal their causes. Therefore, the needless cruelty to innocent and helpless animals, by which experimenters seek to wrest knowledge and vicarious atonement for human errors,— this unmerited suffering inevitably must react, in kind, upon humanity, in the moral world of causes. The equation of health and disease must include all the factors in the case. The weaker, less intelligent, dumb creatures are unable to square their account with man for artificial mutilation and premature death. But the universal law of equilibrium, eternally working to restore the disturbed balance of physical and superphysical forces, notes every 'jot and tittle' of this human injustice to the lower forms of life.

Animal parents have no part or lot in making the disease of infantile paralysis, though they and their young are sacrificed by thousands, at the hands of unreckoning experimenters. How could law-abiding Mother Nature more surely bring home the cruel folly of attacking innocent, helpless, little creatures than to let the unmerited account of suffering, helplessness, and death rebound upon the cherished children of men? It is unlikely that the whole wrong of vivisection rebounds in the form of poliomyelitis. There are other disease-mysteries baffling the researchers. Perhaps infantile paralysis represents only the reaction of experiments carried out under the influence of curare, a drug used to paralyse motion while leaving the tortured nerves responsive to every touch. Possibly the moral replica of curare-action comes in the suffering of the helpless mother, watching her paralysed child. Who knows — that it does not? From the world's vivisectioning laboratories there is emanating into the social atmosphere a human miasma of injustice, suffering, needless disease, and death. In this day of general reckoning, it is a timely question to ask: How much disease and disaster originates in the research-laboratories?

The stock charge that the anti-vivisectionists are sentimentalists who would sacrifice the children rather than the animals has psychologized many minds into accepting the experimenters and their methods. But there is nothing sentimental in the unerring action of the law of cause and effect, the karmic law which perforce returns to responsible humanity the living *quality* which it chooses to express.

Truly the old fear of a Satanic majesty is no more absurd than the modern fetish of microbiophobia. Has not old theologic fear reincarnated in fresh scientific form? Certainly medieval theology and modern science are akin in teaching man to evade responsibility by looking outside of himself for the origin of his suffering and of his salvation as well.

## GLIMPSES OF PREHISTORIC SURGERY

HERBERT CORYN, M. R. C. S. (Eng.)

 HE proceedings of medical societies do not ordinarily command the notice of the lay reader. He is glad to know that these gatherings take place, but the reports of their discussions he is well content to leave to those who can understand and profit by them. He knows, moreover, that if there *should* be anything of general interest and comprehensibility it will probably be digested for his benefit — more or less accurately! — by some smart journalist in the magazine section of his Sunday paper.

The smart journalist seems, however, to have missed a chance in a very interesting paper on prehistoric trephining, read in May of last year by Dr. Frank A. Burton of San Diego before the Medical Society of California and published in the September issue of the *California State Journal of Medicine*. This has been reprinted as a pamphlet, and by Dr. Burton's courteous permission we reproduce therefrom some of the photographs taken by him from skulls in the San Diego 'Museum of Man,' and one which he gives from another source — the Squier's specimen.

Says Dr. Burton:

"To modern minds there is a tendency to forget the wonderful achievements, under great difficulties, of those of ancient days. In reading the history of medicine one should not be content to learn only of modern medicine and surgery or even in going back to and including the wonderful period of the Renaissance; but it should be remembered that prehistoric man, as well as man of antiquity, figure in the accumulated knowledge of today."

Of the medicine and surgery of *antiquity* we know a good deal. Treatises on them remain in some of the old literatures, and there are extant specimens of the often excellent instruments with which the surgery was done. Even what we call plastic or reparative surgery was understood and practised. An ancient Indian surgeon, Sushurta, for instance, twenty-three centuries ago, gives a quite modern-sounding account of the method of replacing a lost or absent ear-lobe.

"A surgeon well versed in the knowledge of surgery should slice off a patch of living flesh from the cheek of a person devoid of ear-lobes in such a manner as to have one of its ends attached to its former seat. Then the part where the artificial lobe is to be joined on should be slightly scarified with a knife, and the living flesh, full of blood and sliced off as previously directed, should be united to it so as to resemble a natural ear-lobe in shape."

A few years ago the Siberian Buddhists petitioned the Russian government to establish among them schools in which the ancient Tibetan

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medical science should be taught. The Russian Academy of Physicians was instructed to look into the matter, and a Swedish account says:

"As material for its study the Academy has used a Tibetan manual on medicine, which was known and in use in Tibet 1200 years ago and was even then considered very ancient knowledge. Much to their surprise they found in this book observations and remedies which European medical science discovered many centuries after."



No. 1

The book contained a great deal of correct anatomy, and instead of an attribution of disease to demons we find a statement of a truth that the modern medical practitioner is not always as well grounded in as he might be:

"Diseases generally come from the wickedness and ignorance of men, and above all from their incapacity to overcome their passions, which disturb the healthy nourishment of the bodily organs. Every evil thought has a reaction on the heart and the liver."

Of *prehistoric* — as distinct from antique — medicine we naturally know very little, almost nothing save the scraps of it that remain in the practice of savages of our own times. Of the surgery, very little more, only so much of it as stands in evidence on the skeletons found in tombs and burying-places. What surgery of the soft parts there may have been we cannot know — unless perhaps some mummy or ice-locked body should some day tell us something.

Prehistoric man everywhere seems to have practised the art of trephining the skull. Sometimes the patient died, just as he sometimes dies today, examination of the skull showing that healing had not begun. Often he recovered; the healing was complete and the edges of the opening are smooth and rounded. Probably the man was thereafter held in high esteem as one who had come through



No. 2

## GLIMPSES OF PREHISTORIC SURGERY

a notable ordeal. If he died, the esteem was concentrated on the skull. Dr. Burton says:

"There is evidence that the rim of the trephined opening was removed and divided into several pieces having healed edges and that each piece was perforated and suspended round the neck as an amulet to defend the wearer against the disease for which the dead was operated upon."

But possibly, as some think, it was often a religious ceremony, and possibly also, sometimes done just before death with the idea of making a convenient exit for the departing soul.

As Dr. Burton remarks, it was a practice common to many peoples and in some of them apparently of frequent performance.

"Of the several hundred specimens now available for study a large per cent. came from Peru, where the art, obviously, had reached considerable popularity and had been fraught with no meager degree of success as testified by the number of cicatrized skull-openings showing recovery from the operation and healing of the bony wound. Specimens have also been found in France, Russia, Austria, Poland, Bohemia, Italy, Portugal, and the Island of Teneriffe as well as in Bolivia and Mexico."



No. 3



No. 4

A prehistoric burial-place at Vendrest in France contained remains of about 120 individuals and of these no fewer than 8 — 1 in 15! — had been trephined. Certainly no such proportion can be accounted for by disease. Professor Arthur Keith in his book *The Antiquity of Man* says:

"How does it come about that in ancient Peru, in Neolithic France, in the New Ireland of today, we find the same daring and difficult operation carried out? Has each people discovered the practice for itself, or — as seems to me more probable — was it not evolved so long ago that it has permeated the whole stock of modern man?"

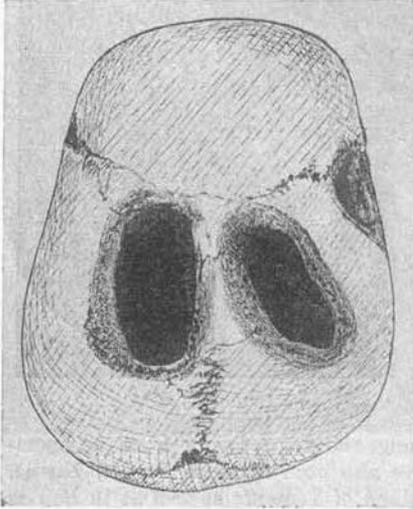
In other words, a bit of primeval Aryan surgery originating in Central Asia — or even *pre*-Aryan?

We have noted one or two possible reasons for its performance. Dr. Burton mentions Parry's and Broca's suggestion — that convulsive fits, epilepsy, or intense pain in the head may have been regarded by early man as evidencing the attempts of an indwelling demon to get out, the opera-

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

tion being done to facilitate his endeavor; and Fletcher's very probable view that it was also done for the relief of depressed fractures of the skull sustained in battle. The demon theory aside, the operation itself is good modern surgery in all these cases. The pamphlet quotes MacCurdy as concluding that

"Trepanation [trephining] was seldom resorted to for the purpose of removing diseased bone. That in 28 per cent. of the cases it was to relieve depressed fracture, while in a large majority of the instances the operation itself obliterated all trace of its cause, or else the cause was not of such a nature as to affect the osseous system."



No. 5

"as the majority of the Peruvian specimens have been found within a narrow radius. So once again 'there is nothing new under the sun' — even including sinus specialists and sinus surgery."

The skulls now on view in the Museum of Man are prehistoric Peruvian, collected from ruins and cemeteries by a special expedition despatched by the School of American Research. Among them there are 63 examples of trephining, of which three were directly over one of the frontal sinuses — two chambers in the substance of the bone above the eyes and opening into the upper part of the nose. Being within the field of Dr. Burton's specialty as a rhinologist they naturally attracted his attention and study. The first of his examples is far from suggesting good surgery, though the victim recovered. Dr. Burton thinks that the opening over the eye into the right sinus was done first, possibly for fracture, possibly disease and pain from retained pus. Subsequently an abscess of the brain occurred and the irregular opening above and to the left of the first was for the relief of this.

The second case — where the opening is into the left sinus — shows much better work. Dr. Burton says:

"Among points of interest in this specimen, suggesting possible knowledge, are well chosen place of entrance of the sinus, and success, despite the depth of the groove necessary to perforate the outer wall."

## WHAT IS A GREETING?

The third specimen, an opening into the right frontal sinus, "is the work of a skilful, conservative surgeon."

The fourth photograph is from Squier's specimen, very ancient, and clearly showing the sawing or scraping method of its performance. A circular instrument, that should take out a neat round disk of bone as is now done, was beyond the skill of the mechanics of those days. But among a set of thirty-seven ancient *Greek* surgical instruments, discovered near Kolophon in Ionia, is a bow, which when fitted in a spring, was actually used to rotate a trephining instrument.

The fifth is taken from Dr. Keith's book and suggests very creditable surgical work, though why the patient should have needed three openings we cannot guess. Anyhow they seem healed and the purpose was therefore gratifyingly attained.

In conclusion we may express a hope that Dr. Burton will go further with his interesting researches. There is a large and little-occupied field in front of him and the shades of his prehistoric professional brethren must be hopefully watching him from wherever they may be.

## WHAT IS A GREETING?

R. MACHELL



HAD sent a greeting to a comrade and he had courteously acknowledged it, thanking me in appropriate language: but the letter had a postscript: "What does your greeting mean, anyway?"

That set me thinking. I had tried to formulate my thought clearly and to express it in simple terms, but it seemed that its meaning had not reached the receiver of the note; and I knew that when that had occurred there was good reason to suspect that the writer did not know how to accomplish his object. But on thinking more closely I saw that it might also mean that the writer had no very clear idea of what it meant to send a greeting. And I asked myself again: "What is a greeting, anyway?"

Apparently it is a call to someone or to something capable of responding to the call; for a greeting is not a mere expression of emotion having reference alone to the one who utters it. It must be addressed to some other person or intelligence, and it can only be intended as an expression of friendliness, approval, or compliment, an encouragement, a congratulation, or a consolation, unless it be a challenge. It is more than a mere

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salutation or simple act of recognition. One may salute a dead body, a monument, or a flag; but such a salutation need not contain a greeting.

A greeting has in it some appeal to an inner consciousness, which may not be outwardly displayed, but which is recognised or divined by the one who pronounces the greeting. In this sense it may be said that a greeting partakes of the nature of an evocation, in that it appeals to an unmanifested spirit supposed to be latent in the person addressed.

Another form of evocation is the expression of what we call good wishes. In this form of greeting some other power is evoked, that can bestow favors and benefits, honors, or health, or joy, upon the recipient of the greeting. It matters little whether the greeter actually invokes the beneficent action of some higher power, or merely expresses a hope that the natural course of events will bring about the desired result. In either case there is the recognition, however involuntary, of some sort of guardian spirit or presiding genius whose favor may be invoked. There is also an implied belief in the power of goodwill to effect an improvement in the circumstances of the person who is greeted.

Of course in our own days it is customary to deny any such belief; but if the denial be sincere then the greeting is not; and can at best be regarded as an empty compliment. The exchange of such empty compliments may be a general custom, but it would have died out entirely, if it were not supported by either faith, fact or experience. In fact, the general skepticism is itself insincere; and while faith may have vanished, superstition unavowed acts as a substitute; so that greetings are still given and received, with a lurking hope that they may carry some sort of a blessing with them, in spite of the insincerity of their utterance.

We wish each other a "Happy New Year" with a certain sincerity of desire for the fulfillment of the wish, that is modified perhaps, but not entirely neutralized, by an avowed skepticism as to the efficacy of prayer on the one hand and the possibility of happiness on the other.

Faith in the efficacy of a good wish may be spasmodic; but it is based upon a natural fact that is known to the soul, if not to the brain-mind that formulates the wish; and that fact is, that the mind is dual. There is a higher mind that can know truth in itself; and there is a lower mind, that can only reason and argue, or can speculate and hope. The higher mind sees the realities of life, where the lower sees only their shadows or images, of which the material world is so largely composed. These shadows are our impressions about the unknown realities and are all that the lower mind can understand. And yet the two minds are not entirely separate. Should they become so the individual would be so unbalanced as to be really insane. It may be a question whether this kind of insanity is not so widespread as to pass notice under favorable circumstances,

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while the disorders of human life are all traceable to the lack of balance in the dual mind.

To attain to happiness, self-mastery is necessary. Self-mastery means the control of the lower mind by the higher: for the higher mind sees 'the fitness of things,' and can understand the spiritual nature of the universe and the meaning of universal law; whereas the lower mind is under the influence of the animal nature in man, and can only argue, reason and speculate about right and wrong. As happiness results from obedience to the higher law, or from an intuitive perception of the fitness of things, and a willing conformity to that fitness, it is necessary that the lower mind be the faithful reflector of the light shed by the higher Self, and that there be a true co-operation between the two.

When one wishes happiness for another, one necessarily invokes the aid of the higher mind to dispel the delusions of the lower; for all unhappiness is due to delusions of the lower mind. A greeting therefore is an invocation. It is an appeal to the higher mind to come down and take control of circumstances, and assert its authority. That is to say, a greeting should be so.

But things are not as they should be; if they were, our evolution would be an accomplished fact. This being as yet but a dream to the ordinary mortal, a greeting may be no better than an appeal to the lower nature to take things into its own hands and to assert its independence of the control or guidance of the higher nature. Such greetings usually take the form of wishes for the success of enterprises aimed at, the attainment of wealth, prosperity, honor, or fame, or such things as tend to the gratification of the passions and desires of the lower mind. They are, in fact, evocations of the subhuman, elemental nature, which constantly tries to get the higher mind enlisted in schemes for self-gratification, which, if successful, reduce the higher to a servant of the lower, as in the case of some specimens of perverted genius which so puzzle the ordinary observer of human nature. A greeting is not always a benediction: but it would be so if people really understood the duality of the human mind and the power of the mind to make or mar the happiness that seems so dependent on circumstances or destiny. And even without this knowledge a kind wish is indeed both a benediction and an evocation; for, however ignorantly expressed, a kind wish comes necessarily from the heart rather than from the brain-mind, and so is a ray from the higher nature; and it awakes a certain sympathetic response which in itself is a recognition, if no more, of the existence of the higher mind.

So intimately blended are the two natures of man in general, that it would be hard to decide in any particular case what might be the source

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of what we call good wishes. But to a student of human nature it should be always possible to make such wishes truly beneficent, for it should be more easy to such a one to distinguish between happiness and the mere gratification of desires, which latter is more generally the cause or the forerunner of unhappiness.

So I conclude that a greeting is an appeal to higher powers than those of the lower nature, an evocation and a benediction, a declaration of faith in the divine nature of man or else it is a dead form of words, used as a blind to hide the absence of the Soul, or a survival of better days, when men were not ashamed to recognise the Soul as a reality that might be evoked in ordinary life.

Perhaps materialism has nearly run its course; and if our civilization can recover from this malady, the day may come when men will greet one another openly as souls, and will not have to ask the meaning of a greeting.

## ORIGINS OF CIVILIZATION

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[NOTE.—While we must admit that our ignorance of the currents and tides of history is great -- largely owing to the limitations of theological misinterpretations of Biblical chronology which even now have their influence — I cannot entirely agree that students of Theosophy are obliged “to flounder without star or compass to guide us” because the infant science of archaeology can carry us only a short distance beyond the horizon of the historically apparent. When H. P. Blavatsky brought the few keys of knowledge that she was permitted to offer this skeptical and materialistic generation, she fixed some landmarks in archaic prehistory which give definite points from which certain historical developments can be traced. As new discoveries are made they confirm these.

In regard to the source of the early civilizations of Mesopotamia and neighborhood, *The Secret Doctrine* contains a sketch of the gradual spread of the remnant of culture saved after the break-up of the immensely ancient world-civilization that we call Atlantean, a break-up which really meant a new world, practically an entirely new start for humanity as a whole. But, while a large part of mankind was beginning afresh and going through the various Stone-Ages, a seed of knowledge was saved which grew through many vicissitudes and ups-and-downs in cyclic progress. Because we do not find Neolithic remains in certain places where traces of higher culture exist, we are not necessarily justified in concluding that there was once a Neolithic culture there which developed into the higher and was then entirely swept

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away. The higher civilization may have originated in some different way. For instance, according to the teachings of the ancient Theosophy, the Sumerian (or Akkadian) was not an evolution *in situ* from a hypothetical Neolithic savagery but was brought from elsewhere. It is a cardinal principle in Theosophy that Nature in all departments makes progress through assistance by the more to the less advanced, by a spark from above, as we may say, lighting up the latent fires when the time comes for the lower to step forward. To quote H. P. Blavatsky:

“It is strongly contested that the Akkad tribes of Chaldaea, Babylonia, and Assyria were in any way cognate with the Brāhmans of Hindūstān; but there are more proofs in favor of this opinion than otherwise. . . . The Akkadians . . . were simply emigrants on their way to Asia Minor from India, the cradle of humanity, [recollect that H. P. Blavatsky specifically states that ‘India’ in ancient times included far more territory than it does today; large portions of Central Asia are covered by that name, as she uses it] and their sacerdotal adepts tarried to civilize and initiate a barbarian people. Halévy proved the fallacy of the Turanian mania in regard to Akkadian people, and other scientists have proved that the Babylonian civilization was neither born nor developed in that country. It was imported from India and the importers were Brāhmanical Hindūs.’ [*Isis Unveiled*, quoted in *The Secret Doctrine*]

“And now, ten years after this was written, we find ourselves corroborated by Professor Sayce, who says in his first Hibbert lecture that the culture of the Babylonian city Eridu was of *foreign importation*. It came from India.

“Much of the theology was borrowed by the Semites from the non-Semitic Akkadians or proto-Chaldaeans, whom they supplanted, and whose local cults they had neither the will nor the power to uproot. Indeed, throughout a long course of ages the two races, Semites and Akkadians, lived side by side, their notions and worship of the gods blending insensibly together.’ [Sayce]

“Here, the Akkadians are called ‘non-Semitic,’ as we had insisted they were in ‘*Isis*,’ which is another corroboration. And we are no less right in always maintaining that the Jewish Biblical history was a compilation of *historical* facts, arranged from other people’s history in Jewish garb — *Genesis* excluded, which is esotericism pure and simple. But it is really from the Euxine to Kashmir and beyond, that science has to search for the cradle — or rather one of the chief cradles — of mankind and the sons of Ad-ah; and especially in after times, when the Garden of Ed-en on the Euphrates became the college of the astrologers and magi, the Aleim.” — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 203

The cradle “of mankind” of course means the cradle of the new humanity that succeeded the Atlantean world and which H. P. Blavatsky calls the “Aryan” for distinction.— C. J. R.]

\* \* \*



THE greatest force in the Universe is MIND. All things are emanations from mind; it is the source from which all material things spring. In other words, objects, artifacts, all handiwork, are the resultants of Mind. Mind is cause; material objects the effect.

In the study of Archaeology, the average scientist is ever prone to consider the object *per se*, and leave untouched the Mind behind it. Conclusions that may be utterly erroneous are drawn from objects. Why? Because the thinker has not been taken into consideration.

There are some things fundamental to the whole human race; some things that must be fundamental in order that we may be rational beings. These principles must be common to all the different races, otherwise

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

there could be no common ground upon which all men could meet. There is such a ground, as every anthropologist knows. If such principles exist, they have done so from the time that man became a sentient being.

Man, then, from the beginning, was endowed with Mind, that intangible something called the *ego*. If he had mind, that entity functioned in such manner as to distinguish between cause and effect, a thing which no other animal can carry to any extent.

Man, possessing this power, has been able to build cities, states, empires and civilizations; each accomplishment a little greater than its predecessor; each a round in the ladder of progress(?). Yes, progress to a certain stage, also a retrogression, but the retrogression of the helix of a screw, retrogression that rises again; the Phoenix that arises from its own ashes.

Civilizations have arisen and fallen for these untold ages; civilizations of whose existence we wit not of; civilizations whose every trace is lost except in the esoteric influences that have been left behind. Civilizations, like individuals, have their birth, youth, old age, and death; this death is merely the passing away of that which is to be discarded, and the re-arrangement of sterling qualities into new forms, thus giving rise to a *new* civilization.

Our perspective of the civilizations that have passed is very limited, very circumscribed. We are like a man standing on the edge of an ocean; we realize that it extends for unmeasured leagues, but our eyes soon meet the horizon. We are standing on the shores of a vast ocean of civilizations extending into the far unnumbered years; we can see only a short distance where our eyes meet the historical horizon beyond which the science of archaeology must guide us. Yet how very limited is the distance which even this science carries us beyond the historical horizon! Here we flounder in the midst of infinite immensity without star or compass to guide us.

Fully conscious of the utter unfeasibility and hopelessness of attempting to penetrate this vast unknown, yet we shall not despair of tracing the present European civilization to some of its sources. This is the task we here set ourselves. We also realize how boundless and how almost illusive it is; how many lacunae occur, how many pitfalls, how many dark places, yet we hope to be able to throw some light where it is needed, in order to help some bewildered student who is struggling with the average text-book on history or economics.

Three sciences, archaeology, geology and palaeontology, have conspired to place the artifacts and appliances contemporaneous with the Quaternary Period on a much higher level than scientists had previously sus-

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CHRONOLOGY				
CRETE	(according to Petrie) EGYPT	BABYLONIA	PALESTINE	GREECE
10000-3000 B. C. Neolithic Age	10000-5510 B. C. Neolithic Age	10000-5000 Neolithic Big City States	Neolithic	Neolithic
3000-2600 Early Minoan I	5510-4206 I-Vth Dynasties	Dynasty of Kish	....	....
2600-2400 Early Minoan II	4206-4003 Dynasty VI	Dynasty of Akkad	....	....
2400-2200 Early Minoan III	4003-3502 VII-X Dynasties	Dynasty of Ur	....	....
2200-2000 Middle Minoan I	3502-3459 XI Dynasty	Hammurabi (Khammurabi)	Abraham	....
2000-1850 Middle Minoan II	3459-3246 XII Dynasty	....	....	....
1850-1600 Middle Minoan III	1346-1580 XIII-XVII Dynasties Hyksos Kings	....	....	....
1600-1500 Late Minoan I	1580-1322 XVIII Dynasty	....	....	....
1500-1400 Late Minoan II	1322-1202 XIX Dynasty	....	....	....
1400 Fall of Knossos	....	....	Rise of Philistines	Mycenae & Tiryns
1200— Homeric Age	XIX Dynasty Rameses III	....	....	....
1000-900	....	....	David and Solomon	Dorian in- vasion; coloniza- tion of AsiaMinor

pected. So far back do these sciences carry us that we may be said to be contemplating an older world.

European civilization as it exists today seems, in the present status of knowledge, to have two sources: (1) Indigenous: (2) Extraneous. In its indigenous phases we can pause only to mention its stratigraphic order of

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development, viz: the Aurignacian, the Solutrean, the Magdalenian, and the latter's decadent offshoot, the Azilian. These stratigraphic phases may be said to present us with a continuous story --- provided we do not examine it too closely.

The two worlds of Palaeolithic and Neolithic man seemed to have a yawning gulf fixed between them, which it was impossible to bridge; but the later phase of the Magdalenian, the decadent Azilian, seems partially to be such a bridge, yet the complete juncture between Palaeolithic and Neolithic man has not yet been made. There still exists a break; there is not any real continuity between them. Between the two there is evidence of great climatic and geologic changes that imply a vast interval of time. Northern, central, and western Europe have a Neolithic culture that is Eurasiatic in type; southern Greece and the Aegean basin have a culture that is an extension of the Asia Minor type. It is upon this Neolithic foundation that our later civilization stands.

The extraneous sources lie in two directions: the valley of the Nile, on the one hand, and the Euphrates on the other. Just what the action and reaction of these sources was upon each other is difficult to tell.

We owe our first real knowledge of the early culture of the Euphrates to De Sarzec, due to his excavations at the mounds of Tell and Lagash. But back of this culture which we know as Babylonian, is still an older one now known as Sumerian.

As we said above, in the Mediterranean basin, in the valley of the Nile, the history of culture can be traced to the Neolithic period. This achievement cannot be placed to the credit of any excavator on the Babylonian sites; this is not due to any defects in methods, but to the character of the country. Babylonia is composed of an alluvial deposit, subject to ever recurring inundations, so that the traces of Neolithic man have been swept away or destroyed. With the advent of the race that has been called Sumerian began the practice of building platforms or artificial mounds upon which were erected buildings far above the reach of the flood and devastating inundation, and which at the same time rendered them easier of defense against any foe. It is through excavation in these mounds that the earliest traces of the Sumerian culture has been brought to light; but the traces of earlier Neolithic man have been utterly swept away.

These early Sumerians must have been far advanced in culture when they began to occupy the valley, for we find them building houses for themselves and temples for their gods from burnt and unburnt brick. They were rich in cattle and sheep; they constructed a regular system of irrigation and had means of controlling the waters of the great rivers. Where did they get their preliminary training, and how many thousands

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of years old was their culture when they wandered into this rich alluvial plain? It is true that their sculpture and pottery were crude, but they had invented a system of writing that had long departed from picture-writing; so far was the system removed from picture-writing that the earliest form that has been recovered uses ideograms phonetically for syllables. All this presupposes a long period of development in some other place than the Babylonian plain; it also indicates that they were probably settled on the Persian Gulf some centuries prior to the earliest remains yet recovered.

It is of interest to recall that only a few years ago the existence of such a culture or race as the Sumerian was seriously questioned, in fact there was a 'Sumerian Question' which divided the scholastic world into two hostile camps. The late Sir Henry Rawlinson rightly concluded that there was an earlier race back of the Semitic, that the language of this vanished culture was to the Assyrian what Latin is [to Italian] today. He christened this early race "AKKADIAN"—a term that is now more properly applied to the later Semite. Sir Henry's view was shared by others, among them Professors Sayce, Schrader, Oppert, and others. It is not our purpose to write the history of the Sumerian Controversy; suffice to say that Rawlinson's conclusions were correct in the main, and that there no longer exists a 'Sumerian Question,' the only difference of opinion now being the date at which Sumerian and Semite came into contact; there is no longer a dispute *in re* the Babylonian civilization being derived from the Sumerian.

In regard to the names, Sumer and Akkad, it is probable that neither name was used in earliest historical times. The ideogram Ki-en-gi (Sumer, or Shumer) occurs in early texts. Shumeru is the Semitic form of the word. Ki-en-gi or Ki-en-gi-ra is translated into Semitic by the word Matu which simply means 'land.' Then like the word Kalam it comes to be used for the general designation, 'The Land.'

Akkad or Akkadu was the Semitic pronunciation of Agade, the older name of the town Akkad. The application of the name to the whole of the northern part of the country dates from the reign of Naram-Sin. The kings of Ur united the halves into one kingdom and called themselves the Kings of Sumer and Akkad.

### WHENCE CAME THE SUMERIANS?

UNTIL very recently this question was problematical, but due to the two expeditions conducted by Mr. Raphael Pumpelly in 1903-1904 the problematical side of the question is disappearing. Further light was thrown upon the subject by Dr. Stein in 1906-1908.

Long have anthropologists been puzzled regarding the cause of the

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migratory movement of tribes from east to west, but the question now seems on the point of solution.

For untold ages the deserts of Asia have been growing in size, extending their borders, ever encroaching upon the more fertile and favored land, due to desiccation since the Glacial epoch. Great glaciers extended down the mountains surrounding the central Asian basin. These glacial expansions reacted upon the climate, causing general desolation. The dried silts of dried-up inland seas and rivers were blown about by the winds. The lightest material was carried farthest and when obstruction of vegetation was sufficient, it was deposited as 'loess,' that fine fertile soil covering northern China, Turkestan, and from the north of the Caspian Sea to Central Europe. The heavier material moved more slowly, forming great deserts of sand-dunes, heaping to more than a hundred feet high in places. It is to the forming or shifting of such deserts that we owe the burial of the cities in the Khotan region.

It is probable that these regions were not always so arid as today. Periods of extreme aridity were followed by periods of greater humidity, while certain other portions may have been more arid than at present. If this be true, then the population of these regions must, of necessity, have fluctuated, for traces of habitations now utterly deserted and desert were found by the Pumpelly Expedition. Evidence points to a change in climatic conditions which have reacted upon the character of the country in such manner as to cause racial migrations. These migrations, in turn, reacted upon the outside world.

There is no use, in our present state of knowledge, trying to put our finger upon the spot of central Asia or Iran from whence the Sumerians came. But the Pumpelly Expeditions tend to indicate from what region we may expect future excavations to furnish us with more conclusive evidence. We may with some confidence picture the Sumerians before arrival in the Tigris-Euphrates valley as inhabitants of some district east of the Euphrates, where they developed the elements of their culture is found in a very advanced stage on the earliest sites in south Babylonia.

Likewise the Arabian peninsula and surrounding territory were subject to similar periods of aridity, thus giving rise to the Semitic invasions of both the Euphrates and the Nile Valleys. Thus both races, the Sumerians and Semites, were brought together in Mesopotamia by the same cause, though coming from opposite directions. The Semites, on their way north from Arabia, colonized the Syrian coast, while the Sumerians doing the same from the east probably left traces of themselves in the valleys and oases of Iran, which it will be the good fortune of some future excavator to bring to light, and perhaps reveal for us the original picture-writing from which the early cuneiform characters were derived.

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According to all available evidence the Sumerian came from the east. He was not, apparently, indigenous to the region, and his are the traces of the earliest civilization in what is later known as Babylonia. Neolithic man was probably there, but as we have said before, all traces of him have disappeared.

### THE CHRONOLOGY OF SUMER

WHEN did the Sumerian come into Babylonia? When did he lay the foundations of his first cities? These questions are fascinating, extremely interesting, but defy definite answer, yet allow of a tentative solution.

Formerly, scholars were inclined to give great antiquity to the Sumerian civilization; but archaeological facts tend to reduce this time. This tendency was fostered through two sources: Berosus, and the first archaeologist of whom we have any written account, Nabonidus, the last king of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. He dug for the foundation-memorial of the temple of the sun-god at Sippar, and he states on a clay cylinder that this foundation was laid by Naram-Sin, and that 3200 years had elapsed between the burial of the memorial and its excavation.

Naram-Sin was an early king of Akkad, and tradition states him as the son of Sargon I. If Nabonidus' statement be true, then Naram-Sin reigned about 3750 B. C., while Sargon ruled *circa* 3800 B. C. Upon this basis Sumerian history has been set back as far as 7000 B. C. or even possibly beyond that. But the high date of Nabonidus for the date of Naram-Sin has long been under the fire of criticism. In the first place it is an isolated statement without any supplementary evidence so far discovered: second, it leaves immense gaps in chronological schemes. These gaps cannot be filled in our present state of knowledge, and third, archaeological and epigraphic evidence tends to disprove the extreme date.

The materials employed in setting the order of the Kings and the periods fall into three classes. The first and most important consists of contemporaneous inscriptions of the early kings themselves on the site of the ancient cities.

The second consists of chronological documents drawn by the scribes relating the history of their own times and that of their predecessors. This system was not very convenient, but very useful to us in so much that it furnishes us with a summary of the principal events for long periods of time.

The third class of material resides in votive inscriptions, deeds of sale, tablets of accounts, etc.

Without entering into the details of the process of arriving at accuracy in dates, it is sufficient to say that the earliest upon which we can place

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any reliance is about the middle of the fourth millennium. The archaeologist does not say that this marks the beginning of Sumerian culture, but probably marks approximately the date of arrival of the Sumerians in the Tigris-Euphrates valley. Their culture had already reached a high standard, for cuneiform writing had been developed. How many millenniums did it take them to reach that stage? The writer will not attempt to answer. The reader is just as good a guesser as anyone.

These facts before us almost take away the glamor of romance with which most of us surround the home of Abraham. But in the final analysis they do not detract from history; they merely make the rise and fall of Sumer and Akkad a matter of yesterday, so to speak. Five thousand years is as a day when compared with the time that man has been upon this planet, compared with the immense age of relics whose origin we know not, and yet we are getting closer to the sources of our present form of civilization. If civilization revolves in cycles, a theory that most scientists now hold, we are getting close to the beginning of this cycle. More than that, is not our present objective.

If Sumerian civilization had its beginning *circa* 4000 years B. C., developed and waxed strong, the question naturally arises as to what influence it exerted upon other cultures, especially that of Egypt. The theory was formerly held that Sumer influenced Egyptian culture extensively, and was based upon the following facts:

First, the use of cylinder-seals. The cylinder-seal was peculiarly characteristic of Babylonia during all periods. The use of like seals in Egypt formed a very cogent argument in favor of early Babylonian influence in Egypt. The cylinder-seal, as stated, persisted through all stages of Babylonian culture, while in Egypt it died out and was early discontinued. From this fact the inference was made that the seal was introduced into Egypt in late predynastic or early dynastic times.

Second, the use of brick instead of stone as building material was regarded as due to Babylonian influence; the crenelated walls of early Egyptian buildings, the existence of which has been proven by actual remains, such as the Mastaba-tomb of King Aha at Nakada, and the ancient fortress at Abydos; these were treated as borrowed *in toto* from Sumerian types. Further, irrigation was practised in both countries, and wheat was grown in both valleys. This seemed to necessitate the theory of a cultural influence upon Egypt from the Euphrates.

Third, it has been generally held that the hieroglyphics of Egypt were derived from the cuneiform of Babylonia. But it has been proven, so far as present knowledge goes, that the hieroglyphics were NOT derived from the cuneiform. Just as far back as the Babylonian writing can be traced, the earliest period yet obtainable, the cuneiform is conventionalized, and

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only the initiated or educated could read it, a condition not true in case of the hieroglyphics of the earliest period. In the earliest form the hieroglyphs are pictures pure and simple; later they take the form of ideographs, and it is many centuries before they become entirely conventionalized. Each system was indigenous and developed independently. True it is that they had common characteristics, a coincidence that can be most naturally explained. For illustration, a circle would be the symbol for the sun in Egypt, as well as in Babylonia; a horned head the symbol for the ox, etc. It would seem that the Babylonian system is much older, for when the curtain of history goes up in both valleys, the cuneiform system has already become conventionalized, while the hieroglyphs are still ideographs. That the hieroglyphs were originally picture-writing and ideographs is shown by the monuments of the First Dynasty.

In Babylonia all traces of Neolithic man have been swept away, while in Egypt there have been found many artifacts assignable to man of that period.

Dr. Reisner has proven that there was no sudden break between Neolithic and early dynastic cultures. In fact the Neolithic or predynastic culture persists long into the dynastic period, even to the Sixth Dynasty. There was no sudden departure from burial customs long established. Neolithic man buried in a flexed position; this continued far into the dynastic times. Extended burial does not mark the end of the predynastic and the beginning of the dynastic period. Neither do the ideas of future life change. During the early dynastic period, implements, arms, foods, etc., were placed in or by the grave just as in Neolithic times. Ideas have long life and are the hardest things in the world to kill. Some of these ideas persist even to our day. Think, gentle reader, think! Why do we place floral offerings upon the graves of our departed? Why do we erect tomb-stones?

Copper was known to the predynastic Egyptians, but the articles made from it were useless or mere ornaments; development into articles of utility and war was gradual but inevitable, until the Egyptians finally became skilled copper-smiths. But in spite of the manufacture of copper implements, stone ones survived even into the Sixth Dynasty. The later use of the stone implements was mainly ceremonial. But let us bear in mind that the first copper implements were modeled after the stone originals. Then improvement followed, also wide deviation from the original, until the improved article had no relation to its stone prototype. In other words, as metal casting improved, flint knapping degenerated and finally died out, and stone implements ceased to be used about the close of the Sixth Dynasty. But predynastic pottery, or at least pottery copied after it, survived and continued to be used as late as the Eighteenth

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Dynasty. In whatever manner we may choose to explain the survivals, the beginning of dynastic times in Egypt does not present any break in cultural continuity. Neither is there any break between Neolithic and dynastic cultures. Changes were much slower and less uniform than formerly considered.

Thanks to the Hearst Expedition and Dr. Elliott Smith, we now know that predynastic and dynastic Egyptians are identical; they represent the same people, and there is no trace of any new racial element or the advent of any foreign strain. Thus the theory of a Semitic Invasion of Egypt towards the close of the predynastic period must be given up.

If the Semitic Invasion must be relegated to the realms of exploded theories, then the last stronghold of the upholders of the theory of Sumerian origin of Egyptian culture must also give way. The hieroglyphics of Egypt were not derived from Sumer. No example of Sumerian writing has been found as yet that could furnish the Egyptian a basis upon which to start his hieroglyphics. Neither country was indebted to the other for the knowledge of writing. In fact Babylonian culture did not begin to spread westward until Shar-Gani-sharri conquered Syria.

Sumer's part in the world's work was in helping to mold the civilization of Babylonia, forming a basis for this later culture. Perhaps its greatest legacy was the invention of the cuneiform system of writing, for it was adopted as the common script throughout the east, and became the parent of other systems of like character. Its sculpture inspired Semitic work of later times. Urukagina's legislative acts furnished the basic principles for Hammurabi's laws, which in turn furnished the mold for the Mosaic legislation. The literature of Babylon is based throughout upon Sumerian originals, and even the rituals were Sumerian in origin. Sumer was the source of later Babylonian civilization. The inscriptions give us the political evolution of Sumer from the village community and city-state to a great Empire that held under its sway extensive foreign provinces.

Egypt, in many respects, paralleled Sumer; in fact, in a general way, we may say that the two civilizations did have a parallel course of development, but each indigenous to the region in which it is found. In Egypt, we have the tribe or nome, the city-state, in part, and finally the Empire formed by Mena or Menes.

It is not our purpose to enter into the archaeology of Egypt — it is too well known for us to use space in recounting what is already understood — but we shall seek to find its points of contact with other civilizations that formed the basis of European civilization as we have it today.

### CRETE

Of all the accomplishments of the archaeologist, none surpass those

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that brought to light the prehistoric age of Greece, and disclosed the marvelous civilization that had been attained on both the mainland and the isles of the Aegean, and carried us back so far in time as to make us gasp with astonishment; the truth revealed transcends the wildest imagination of the novelist, leaving us stupefied with the vastness and immensity of the thing, the unmeasured sweeping ages that lie uncovered.

The generation now living has seen the wondrous discoveries in the valleys of the Nile and Euphrates, but neither Nippur nor Abydos has revealed anything so new or unexpected as have the labors of Schliemann at Troy, Mycenae, and Tiryns, and those of Sir Walter Evans in Crete.

The discoveries in Sumer and Egypt just pushed our knowledge back a few centuries; we were acquainted with the characteristics of these civilizations, but the above-named explorers revealed to our astonished gaze a vista and REALITY which heretofore had been considered to exist only in the midst of misty and unreal legends. It was acknowledged that great and mighty men must have lived before Agamemnon, Menelaus, and Achilles, but what manner of men they were and in what sort of world they lived and moved was utterly unknown. Legend told of mighty armies, kings, palaces, heroes, princes, treasures, and all the paraphernalia of a great civilization, yea, also of gods who walked and talked with men, of demi-gods and monsters, all mingled together in a promiscuous profusion and confusion — all patently imaginative to such degree that all scholars despaired of ever reaching the solid ground of truth, if any such ground existed as a basis for the legends.

The First Olympiad, 776 B. C., was the starting-point of Grecian history for the historians of the last half of the nineteenth century. All before that was legend and myth as far as the historian was concerned. Even the Dorian Conquest was considered a myth when the writer was first wrestling with the introduction to those classic times. The Homeric poems were considered only as literature of poetic form embodying the imagery and license permissible to such form, and it was the opinion of scholars and teachers of that day that Homer, or rather the school of rhapsodists who constituted the 'Homeric School,' merely projected into the different *lays* the culture of their own period or periods. There are none so bigoted as the really ignorant who are laboring under the illusion that they know all there is to be known relative to their special subject!

Beyond and behind the Homeric poems, there lay that great mass of legends dealing with Minos, the Labyrinth, the Minotaur; Theseus and Ariadne; Daedalus and his son; Aegeus and Androgeus, etc.

Philologists and historians despaired of ever being able to disentangle the golden thread of fact from the mass of fiction and imagination that clustered round about it. They became very dogmatic and proclaimed

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there existed no fact or historic ground in the legends. Grote's attitude is typical of all scholars. The myths were beautiful, but they contained not one grain of historical value.

But what havoc the spade of the archaeologist in the field has played with these easy-chair dogmatists! Now these old legends are beginning to give up their golden treasures of truth; the thread of gold is beginning to be disentangled, and the historical settings are becoming more and more apparent. It is even possible that we may be able to identify the heroes of Greece that lie far behind the Dorian Conquest, provided some new Rosetta Stone can be found for the Cretan script which no one yet has been able to decipher. There can be no reasonable doubt that men and women of the Greek stock played the roles in fascinating romances that afterwards became legend and myth; but that the stories of their deeds and misdeeds are, in part, the actual records of their achievements.

The most important role in the revelation of the facts underlying these legends has been played by the evidence from Crete. Schliemann's and Dörpfeld's work at Troy, Mycenae, Tiryns, and Orchomenos and Ithaca, convinced us of a civilization that was brilliant, and, in all probabilities, the original of that described in the Homeric poems, but it did not answer the question: Whence this culture?

The year 1900, by the excavations at Knossos and Paestos, began to reveal the fact that the Homeric or Mycenaean civilization, as it was called, was only the decadence of a civilization far richer and far more diversified, whose fountain-head had been in Crete. These explorations in Crete have led to the vindication of many of the statements in the legends and traditions, and have shown that they contain a vast amount of historical truth.

Greece has many legends concerning Crete, its inhabitants, and their relation to the other peoples of the Mediterranean basin. The very geographical position of Crete, situated between three great continents, connected by island stepping-stones to the Peloponnesus, designed it as the home for the development of a culture that should spread and influence the surrounding areas. As a matter of fact, all ancient traditions point, without deviation, to the isle of Crete as the cradle of Greek civilization.

Even the great Zeus was born and reared on the island of Crete, in the fastnesses of its mountains, in the depths of its caves. When Chronos wished to swallow Zeus, as he had his other children, Rhea substituted a stone for the infant, then fled to Crete to bear and rear her son. The Dictaeon and Ideon caves vie with each other for the honor of being the birth-place of the god. In the Dictaeon cave Zeus grew to manhood, and here he was united in marriage to Europa. From this union sprang Minos the great legendary King of Crete. When the span of life was run by the

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god, he returned to Crete to close his career. Ancient legend has it that his tomb was on Mount Juktos.

It is around this son of Zeus and Europa that the great mass of legend clusters. As to the actual personage who bore the title or name of Minos there is some dispute, but there must have been one man who bore this name, and like Abraham he was the 'friend of God.' He received from the hands of God the code that formed the basis of his legislation; he also held direct communication with God, and once in every nine years he went up to the Dictæan cave to converse with God and to receive new commandments, also to render account of his conduct during those nine years. At death he became the judge and lawgiver of the underworld.

There is no doubt that Minos became a title after the first great Minos just as Pharaoh and Caesar were titles. This is borne out by the fact that after we leave the oldest form of the legend, Minos becomes a many-sided character, in fact the compositum of many men. The Minos of the Greek story is not primarily the friend of God, or the priest, or the lawgiver, but the great lord of the Mediterranean basin, the great sea-king with a great navy and merchant-marine. This is the king that Theseus thwarted. He is the one who first established a sea-power according to Thucydides. He ruled all the Hellenic sea; did his best to suppress piracy, thus rendering his own revenues safe. Herodotus mentions the fact that Minos was the first sea-king. His merchant-marine reached far for the commerce of foreign countries; this is attested by the many Minoas scattered along the coasts of the Mediterranean. These were either trading-posts or garrisons or both.

"Uneasy rests the head that wears a crown." The rattling skeleton in the king's closet was the Minotaur, that monster half human, half bull. Daedalus built the Labyrinth as a place of confinement for the monster, and was himself locked in the confines of his own creation by Minos. Daedalus escaped from his prison by means of a pair of wings, thus being the first aeronaut of whom we have any account.\*

Minos came to be the arch-enemy of Aegeus, king of Athens, from the fact that Androgeos, the son of Minos, conquered all competitors in the Panathenaic games. This so angered Aegeus that he had the victor murdered in some manner. Minos angered, and justly so, levied war against Athens, laying waste Attica to such a degree that the Athenians accepted a hard and humiliating peace; a part of the terms being that every nine years the Athenians should deliver to Minos seven youths and an equal number of maidens as an offering to the Minotaur.

King Aegeus had an unacknowledged son, Theseus, by the princess

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\*See Dr. Chas. Hallock, *The American Antiquarian*, May, 1911.

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Aithra of Troezen. The mother reared her child at Troezen, the boy having never beheld his father. But it was the ambition of Theseus to compel his father to acknowledge him as son. Upon reaching manhood, Theseus made his way to Athens, performing on the way several remarkable feats becoming a king's son. He arrived at Athens just before time for the third departure of youths and maidens for Crete. Theseus offered himself as one of the victims, believing that he could slay the Minotaur and thus end that dreadful ordeal. With many misgivings, Aegeus finally gave his consent. It was agreed that in case the purpose was successful, the black sails of the vessel should be changed to white upon the return journey.

Theseus sailed to Knossos, was thrown into confinement to await the day he should enter the abode of the Minotaur. He stood noble and defiant before the powerful king, unflinching and unafraid. When the 'fair-haired' Ariadne beheld him, she lost her heart, and all thought of duty vanished except that involved in her new-found love. She set up communication with Theseus in his prison, gave him a sword with which to slay the Minotaur, and a thread as a clue to lead him back through the intricacies of the Labyrinth. He was successful in slaying the monster and in escaping with Ariadne. She did not reach Greece for some reason, though Theseus did; but in his joy he forgot to change the sails, and Aegeus, who was watching for the return of the vessel, seeing the glint of the sunlight afar upon the black sails, fell or threw himself into the sea.

This is the one great legend of Minos in connexion with Greece. What ground was there in fact for the tale? There must be historical fact as the basis, for until the third century B. C. the Athenians sent annually the vessel of Theseus to Delos. This vessel was held to be the very one in which Theseus sailed, though many times repaired. This annual event delayed the death of Socrates thirty days, since it was unlawful to put anyone to death while the ship was on its pilgrimage. Great was the reverence in which the vessel was held by the Athenians, and for them to persist in this annual event is strong evidence that some historic ground lay behind a tradition so deeply imbued in the minds of the people.

The story of the Labyrinth lived through the ages and would not die. Scholars reveled in erudition as to what it really was, but again it took the spade of the archaeologist to settle the question. The spade can do more in a month than logic and the imagination of savants can do in a thousand years.

As Dr. Schliemann had faith in the Iliad, so Dr. Evans had faith in the legends relating to Crete. So strong was his faith that he was willing to stake a large amount of money upon the venture. All tradition in regard to Minos clustered around Knossos, the ancient capitol. A mound

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existed near Mt. Juktos, the traditional burying-place of Zeus. Drs. Schliemann and Stillman were attracted to the place, but obstacles were thrown in their way and explorations were never made by them. In 1895 Dr. Evans bought part of the site known as Kephala; political disturbances retarded his efforts until in 1900 he was able to purchase the entire site. On March 23rd, 1900, Dr. Evans began excavations with a force of from eighty to one hundred and fifty men and continued until June.

In nine weeks he uncovered about two acres of a vast prehistoric palace, and it soon became apparent that this area was only a very small portion of the original palace. The story of the excavation of the palace of Minos reads like a romance. The excavations were carried to the Neolithic stratum, this stratum being in places 24 feet deep. To give in detail the results of even the first season's work would require the writing of a book. First there came to light a great court on the southwest of the site, and at the southern corner of the court was the great portico that gave entrance to that side of the palace. The wall flanking the entrance was decorated with the fresco of a great bull, the favorite subject in the Minoan and Mycenaean art.

As the excavations proceeded, marvels began to reveal themselves to the astounded eyes of the excavator. Two small rooms connected with each other were found; in the center of each is a single column composed of four gypsum blocks, each block having upon it the double axe. Now the name for the double axe is *labrys*. Tradition links the names of Minos and Knossos with a wonderful structure built by Daedalus, which was called the Labyrinth. The pillars, the marks of the *labrys*, the palace, all suggest that here we have the source of the tradition.

But let us go on down the central court, and by means of a flight of four steps enter a small antechamber. Passing through this small room we stand in the throne room of Minos; not only are we in the throne room, but we are looking upon his very throne, the oldest of its kind in the world. It is of gypsum, has a high back, and was originally covered with decorations. Its lower part is an extraordinary anticipation of Gothic architecture. Opposite the throne was a tank of gypsum slabs, reached by a flight of descending steps; this tank or pool suggests connexion with Egypt, and an anticipation of the impluvium. The room was splendid, yea rich, in its appointments, for in it were found green porcelain, gold-foil, crystals, and plaques with painting on the back.

On the northern side of the palace was another portico, and in this part of the building was found a series of frescoes of inestimable value, for here before our eyes we have the appearance, dress, and environment of these mysterious people. Here we look upon the faces of the women with their white complexions, their costumes resembling very closely the modern

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evening dress, with the very low neck, slender waist, flounced skirt, and an occasional puffed sleeve. Their hair is curled and elaborately dressed. So modern in appearance are they that a French savant, upon looking at the fresco, exclaimed: "*Mais ce sont des Parisiennes!*"

The men have reddish-brown complexions, and are guiltless as to clothes except for loin-cloths and puttees half way up the leg. Their hair is done up in a crest upon the crown of the head. The subjects of this fresco are many, and suggest the episodes of the shield of Achilles. Do we have here the source of the episodes or do we have a continuous historic piece? This is the finest piece of fresco art that has come down from antiquity.

The curious fact about Knossos was that it had no fortifications, no walls of any kind. It lies three and one-half miles back from the harbor with a paved road leading to the very doors of the palace. What a contrast to the palaces of the Mycenaean Age on the mainland of Greece! Tiryns and Mycenae are vast with fortifications. The walls at Tiryns are still 57 feet thick and 24½ feet high; the wall at Mycenae is 46 feet thick and still 56 feet high. Note also the strong fortifications at Troy, the Constantinople of the ancient world.

Knossos, far richer than any of the above-named cities, was utterly unprotected by fortifications of any sort. Truly, peace was the rule in this land! No enemy was expected to be able to interrupt that peace by any rude or unexpected descent upon the palace. Where was the protection for Knossos? Not far to seek, is the answer. The Minoan fleet was the fortifications of Knossos. The Cretan had builded his fleet long before Tiryns had 'learned the way of a ship on the sea.' So long as the fleet of Minos ruled the waves, Knossos had no need for fortifications of stone. But the fleet was both the strength and weakness of the national defense, for it provided no 'second line of defense.' Apparently, at last, the fleet did fail, for the palace was sacked and burned, perhaps more than once, thoroughly sacked the last time, for there is scarcely a trace of metal except some gold-foil. Everything portable was carried away. Did the Minoan fleet decay from internal sloth or did it finally meet a stronger fleet? At any rate, the sea-power was lost, and with it Knossos sank into oblivion, its very existence fading into vague and misty tradition to be handed down through the ages.

We reach at this point the place where history in its course of making is quite well understood. About the seventh century Greece took its place as intellectual leader of the world, and for many centuries really made the history of the world.

## THE BURIED CIVILIZATIONS OF PREHISTORIC ASIA

H. TRAVERS, M. A.

**F**OR many years Mr. M. A. Stein has been making extensive travels and archaeological explorations in Central Asia and Western China, and has just published\* the record in two volumes with maps and illustrations. His discoveries are of importance as confirming so much that was said by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine* (published 1888). When we consider the explanation and import of these discoveries, we can contrast the explorer's conjectures and those of other archaeologists with H. P. Blavatsky's explanation, and see how much more reasonable the latter is. For instance, when Mr. Stein discovers the remains of a civilization which resembled many different nations known to us, he infers that the said civilization was a *conglomerate* of the others; whereas the theory that the others were offshoots of a once *homogeneous* culture not only suits these facts better but is in conformity with the general plan of history outlined in H. P. Blavatsky's writings. To quote from Mr. Stein:

"How could I have expected, by the desolate shores of Lop-nor, in the very heart of innermost Asia, to come upon such classical representations of cherubim? And what had these graceful heads, recalling cherished scenes of Christian imagery, to do here on the walls of a Buddhist sanctuary?"

The writer's bewilderment about Christianity and Buddhism is not peculiar to himself but is met with in the case of other explorers. When they find a Cross, they think Christianity must have brought it there; and a figure seated in the attitude of meditation is called a statue of Gautama the Buddha. But the true explanation is simple. All religions have their origin in the one universal Wisdom-Religion, also known as the Secret Doctrine, which may be defined as a body of knowledge constituting the accumulated wisdom of Sages from time immemorial and carefully preserved in esoteric schools. As this Doctrine pertains to the deeper mysteries of life, and is consequently beyond the reach of the totality of mankind, it has always had its esoteric and its exoteric side, the former taught privately in the Schools to advanced students or aspirants, ready to undertake the necessary conditions, and the latter for the instruction of the public who are not yet ready to take that step. Our present religions are what remains of the exoteric teachings of the Wisdom-Religion, assuming diverse manifestations according to local and racial genius. Hence the similarity in religions, especially in the matter of

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\*This article was written some years ago.

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symbolism. The explorer has therefore unearthed, not a sign of mingled Christianity, Buddhism, etc., but a sign of that religious culture from which these various religions afterwards diverged. He has in fact found a source, not a confluence.

In the cave-temples of the 'Thousand Buddhas' he found great piles of old manuscript rolls and silk paintings guarded by a pious priest, who by dint of persevering diplomacy was induced to permit their examination and finally to allow some of them to be taken away to the British Museum.

The clue to such puzzles is to be found in *The Secret Doctrine*, from which we quote the following:

"The traces of an immense civilization, even in Central Asia, are still to be found. This civilization is undeniably *prehistoric*. And how can there be civilization without a literature, in some form, without annals or chronicles? . . . The gigantic, unbroken wall of the mountains that hem in the whole table-land of Tibet, from the upper course of the river Khuan-Khé down to the Karakorum hills, witnessed a civilization during millenniums of years, and would have strange secrets to tell mankind. The Eastern and Central portions of those regions — the Nan-Shan and the Altyn-Tagh — were once upon a time covered with cities that could well vie with Babylon. A whole geological period has swept over the land since those cities breathed their last, as the mounds of shifting sand, and the sterile and now dead soil of the immense central plains of the basin of Tarim testify. The borderlands alone are superficially known to the traveler. Within those table-lands of sand there is water, and fresh oases are found blooming there, wherein no European foot has ever yet ventured, or trodden the now treacherous soil. Among these verdant oases there are some which are entirely inaccessible even to the native profane traveler. Hurricanes may 'tear up the sands and sweep whole plains away,' they are powerless to destroy that which is beyond their reach. Built deep in the bowels of the earth, the subterranean stores are secure; and as their entrances are concealed in such oases, there is little fear that anyone should discover them."— Vol. I, p. xxxii

Was this civilization the "joint product of Indian, Chinese, and Hellenic influences," or were *they* the product of *it*? And did Buddhism and Christianity contribute their symbolism to this ancient culture or derive it therefrom? It looks a good deal more as though a vast and homogeneous culture had *broken up* into many scattered fragments, when the land became uninhabitable, sending out offshoots to India, China, Greece, etc., each with a portion of the original culture, which we now call severally 'Hellenic,' 'classical,' 'Buddhist,' etc., according to where we find them. And notice the confirmation of H. P. Blavatsky's statement about hidden records. In connexion with this, the following remark, made by a newspaper in 1910, is pertinent:

"Of his explorations we do not propose to speak, nor of the importance of his archaeological finds, but of his amazing luck in coming upon them."

Instances of such 'luck' have been known before in the history of archaeology and go far to confirm the opinion held by some people that there are many secrets regarding ancient history that are carefully guarded and only let out bit by bit upon suitable occasions.

With regard to the discoveries in the Buddhist monastery, we read in

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an account dated March 1909 that these had been hermetically walled up towards the tenth century of our era and dated as far back as the first century. The manuscripts were done up in bundles and were practically as fresh as when deposited. Their number exceeded 4,000. They were, "as far as can be approximately told, in about seven different languages." In *Five Years of Theosophy* we find the following germane to this part of the subject:

"It is extremely difficult to show whether the Tibetans derived their doctrine from the ancient Rishis of India, or the ancient Brâhmans learned their occult science from the adepts of Tibet; or, again, whether the adepts of both countries professed originally the same doctrine and derived it from a common source."— p. 154.

This was written prior to 1885, and to it is appended the following note signed by H. P. Blavatsky:

"To ascertain such disputed questions, one has to look into and study well the Chinese sacred and historical records."

Which is exactly what is now being done. This so-called Chinese Buddhist mission, with its coy but tractable guardian, is clearly an important link in the unraveling of the history of Central Asia.

In 1907 a Boston archaeologist, Ellsworth Huntington, reported the results of his investigations in some of these desert regions of Asia, and said that:

"The history of Central Asia shows that there has been on the whole a diminution of prosperity since the beginning of recorded history. . . . The whole of a vast region, about 3,000 miles in extent from east to west, is made up of enclosed basins with no outlets. The rivers run northwards from the mountains, and now lose themselves in the sand or flow into small salt lakes. . . . Far out in the desert, fifty or sixty miles from the fringe of life that now exists, are the remains of the ancient oases, indicative of a large population that was once supported there. . . . Modern Niya has a population of perhaps 3,000 today. Fifty-five miles below the present town and four miles below the present flow of the river are ruins covering about 28 square miles, a tract which in olden times was under irrigation."

White-skinned races in unexpected regions is a topic that is frequently mentioned; and the explanations provided are usually adapted to various special cases: the blond Eskimo, for instance, are supposed by some to have immigrated into America from the Icelandic colony in Greenland. But to cover all cases we need a more general explanation. Take the following, for example. A Russian explorer in Eastern Turkestan declares that in the great Tarim Desert, north of Kashmir, he has discovered a "mixed Caucasian and Mongolian race" ruled over by a family of purely European appearance and customs. He describes a town like a medieval European town, in an oasis near the Khotan river, with 3,000 population, of European features. They spoke a Turkish dialect. They said their ancestors came from the West. (*Century Path*, May 14, 1905)

In 1905 we read of an expedition from Berlin to explore Chinese

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

Turkestan, a region mostly desert, where ancient civilizations have been buried. It brought back a collection of statues, paintings, and manuscripts, said to be from ancient monasteries known to have flourished in the fifth century. Chinese Turkestan is a vast depression in the great plateau of Eastern Asia, bordered by the Pamirs on the west, the Kuen-Lun mountains on the south, the Desert of Gobi on the east, and the Tian Shan Mountains on the north. Its only river, the Tarim, is now lost in the marshes of Lob-Nor. Kashgar, the chief town in the west, has a floating population of about 50,000. The whole region is composed of the friable and supposedly wind-accumulated dust known as *loess*. There are other similar towns, situated on oases, and occupied by mixed Aryan and Turanian populations. It has been in turn under the sway of Chinese, Huns, Turks, and other races; and most religions seem to have flourished there.

About December 1910 a British expedition returned from Asia, where it had been defining part of the boundary between Persia and Afghanistan. This region is as vast in reality as it is insignificant on most maps. What, for instance, will an ordinary map tell us of the Persian province of Seistan, which is about 100 miles long and from 70 to 100 wide? The expedition had to endure terrible hardships from weather and desolation, but it was a well-equipped military and engineering party and the men were brave and determined throughout the whole two-and-a-half years. "*From end to end Seistan was found to be one mass of ancient ruins, and even where ruins do not exist the ground was covered with brick and pottery.*" "Many of the ruins are of imposing dimensions, covering very large areas of ground, marking the existence of what must have been a very wealthy and populous country . . . the bulk of the deserted cities had probably not been occupied for the last 500 years."

What better proof could be had of the truth of H. P. Blavatsky's statements? For it is evident that the chief reason why so comparatively few vestiges have yet been found is simply that they have not been sought. Here was an almost inaccessible region, never visited before, and scarcely even suggested on our maps; how many more such regions are there? Look at your map and see the large empty spaces, partially filled in with sprawling names with letters each as big as a whole country. Our conceptions of the human race, both of the historical and the biological kind, if criticized from a strictly scientific standpoint, or a strictly legal standpoint, must appear as dogmatic systems erected on a very slender and insecure base. For within reach are piles of evidence that bid fair to undermine the whole structure. If we could keep our theories more fluid, pending the accumulation of more facts, we should not need to recast them so often in order to accommodate new facts as they come.

## CONCERNING SOKRATES

### STUDENT

KRISHNA: "Such a man, O son of Prithâ, doth not perish here or hereafter. For never to an evil place goeth one who doeth good."— *The Bhagavad-Gîtâ*

“**B**UT you too, O judges, it behooves to be of good hope about death, and to believe that this at least is true,— there can no evil befall a good man whether he be alive or dead, nor are his affairs uncared for by the gods.”— From Sokrates’ closing address to his judges as reported by Plato

“Sokrates took only as much food as he could eat with a keen relish. He advised men against taking that which would stimulate; not to eat when they were not hungry, nor drink when they were not thirsty, for these things disordered body and mind. He used to say in jest that Circe transformed men into swine by entertaining them with abundance of luxury, but that Odysseus, through his temperance, was not changed into a swine.”— *Xenophon on Sokrates*

Of his fearlessness and calmness in moments of danger, Alkibiades, one of his pupils, testifies in one of Plato’s dialogs as follows:

“At the battle of Potidaea . . . I, who knew the real state of the case, insisted that if any man had distinguished himself in the fight, it was Sokrates, to whom on that occasion I should willingly resign the intended laurels. . . . When we retreated to Delium after the defeat, I was riding off on horseback while Sokrates and Laches followed on foot as hoplites, and coming up to them I cried, ‘Fear not, good friends, I will keep alongside of you and defend you from the pursuit.’ On that occasion I admired even more than at Potidaea the conduct of this man. For while both were in danger of being overtaken, it was manifest that Sokrates during the whole retreat displayed far more coolness than Laches, who was by profession a soldier. . . . Instead of hurry and trepidation we saw in him only the large full eye that with wise wariness turned to this side and to that in a fashion that seemed to say to all comers that they would find a steady nerve if they came within a sword’s length of him. And thus he got out of the rush safely. I have always observed that in a retreat the men who are most afraid fare the worst. Many other things I might relate which would show clearly what a strange and truly admirable creature this Sokrates is.”

Grote the historian says:

“To Sokrates the precept inscribed on the Delphian temple ‘Know thyself,’ was the holiest of all texts.”

Speaking of his own approaching death, (before drinking the hemlock) and referring to Krito who is lamenting it, Sokrates says:

“Thus will Krito bear it more easily, and, when he sees my body burned or buried, will not grieve over me as if I had suffered some dreadful thing, nor say at the funeral that it is Sokrates who is laid out on the bier or carried forth to the grave or buried. For you must know, dearest Krito, that this false way of speaking not only is wrong in itself, but also does harm to the soul. Rather you should be of good courage, and say that it is my body you are burying; and this you may do as you please, and in the way which you think most conformable to custom here.”

— From Plato’s *Phaedo*

The early Christian Fathers canonized Sokrates as a Christian saint, one of them adding to the rosary the prayer “Sancte Sokrates, ora pro

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nobis," ("Holy Sokrates, pray for us.") Professor John Stuart Blackie in the following quaintly rugged and forceful lines revives this prayer amidst the religious bigotries of more recent times:

"Dear God, by wrathful routs  
How is thy church divided,  
And how may he that doubts  
In such turmoil be guided!  
When weeping I behold  
How Christian people quarrel,  
Ofttimes from Heathens old  
I fetch a saintly moral;  
And while they fret with rage  
The sore-distraught community,  
I look for some Greek sage  
Who preaches peace and unity.  
And thus I pray:  
O Sancte Socrates, ora pro nobis!  
Let faith and love and joy increase,  
And reason rule and wrangling cease  
Good saint, we pray thee!

"They pile a priestly fence  
Of vain scholastic babble,  
To keep out common sense  
With the unlearned rabble.  
A curious creed they weave,  
And, for the church commands it,  
All men must needs believe,  
Though no man understands it;  
Thus while they rudely ban  
All honest thought as treason,  
I, from the Heathen clan  
Seek solace to my reason.  
And thus I pray:  
O Sancte Socrates, ora pro nobis!  
From creeds that men believe because  
They fear a damnatory clause,  
Good saint, deliver us!

"Some preach a God so grim  
That, when his anger swelleth,  
They couch and cower to him  
When sacred fear compelleth;  
God loves his few pet lambs  
And saves his one pet nation,  
The rest he largely damns  
With swinging reprobation.  
Thus banished from the fold,  
I wisely choose to follow  
Some sunny preacher old  
Who worshipped bright Apollo.  
And thus I pray:  
O Sancte Socrates, ora pro nobis!  
From silly flocks of petted lambs,  
And from a faith that largely damns,  
Good saint, deliver us!

"Such eager fancies vain  
Shape forth the rival churches;  
And each man's fuming brain  
God's holy light besmirches;  
And thus they all conspire  
The primal truth to smother,  
And think they praise their sire  
By hating well their brother.  
Such wrangling when I see,  
Such storms of godly rancor,  
To Heathendom I flee  
To cast a peaceful anchor.  
And thus I pray:  
O Sancte Socrates, ora pro nobis!  
Let love and faith and joy increase,  
And reason rule and wrangling cease,  
Good saint, we pray thee."



"THE present crime-wave is like a horrible disease. It seems to be a reaction from the abnormal conditions of the war. These criminals receive heavy sentences, for the public must be protected against those afflicted with the crime-disease. Yet how many who are morally responsible for these conditions get off free from the human law? If it were not for the Theosophical teaching that they shall not escape the Divine Law the outlook would be gloomy indeed."— *W. W. H.*

## THE SUPERSTITIOUS ORIENTAL!

PERCY LEONARD

**I**N Lane's *Modern Egyptians* occurs the following passage:  
"They show a great respect for bread, as the staff of life, and on no account suffer the smallest portion of it to be wasted if they can avoid it. I have often observed an Egyptian take up a small piece of bread, which had by accident fallen in the street or road, and after putting it before his lips and forehead three times, place it on one side, in order that a dog might eat it, rather than let it remain to be trodden underfoot."

To the western mind this may appear as a shocking example of time and labor expended without any compensating return, and from the practical, profit-and-loss point of view, it must be admitted that the results hardly justify the effort involved. But it certainly gives evidence of a noble, altruistic feeling and tends to develop a moral quality which is sadly lacking in our calculating, self-regarding, strenuous lives.

To recognise the latent, life-sustaining power — the hidden Deity in fact — in a discarded piece of food; to spend one's time and labor in order to oblige a homeless, unknown animal; to undergo a personal inconvenience in order to promote an impersonal end; are so many proofs of true, practical Theosophy which must affect a sympathetic observer like finding lilies and roses in "a waste and howling wilderness."

The practical, efficient West has doubtless much to teach the dreamy, oriental world which sometimes seems to take material life only half seriously; but if our pride would allow us to assimilate their more spiritual views of the Universe, and emulate their power of recognition of the presence of Divinity in common things, we should enrich our dull and sordid lives by the acquirement of a quality which those lives sorely need.

### ONE NIGHT

By "A"

**I**T was so still, the moon hung pale,  
One of those Magic midnight hours,  
That draw from mortal sight the veil  
And show the strength of other powers.

And in the calm of that great night  
I held communion with my soul,  
And like expanded on that height  
And blended with the greater Whole.

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And all the incidents of life  
Lay bare as on an open scroll;  
Its toil and song, its joy and strife  
I saw like one large screen unroll.

On it a snow-white hand did write  
In letters strong of burnished gold;  
They were too mighty for my sight,  
A few I caught, and this they told:

“Men dream of great things to achieve,  
Fame smiles on high their steel to test,  
Ambition strives. But I believe  
Life's little things are oft the best.

For there are moments, when one touch,  
One simple vision stirs the heart,  
A ray through weary labors, such  
As are of daily life a part.

And one who sought and could not find  
The Godhead in the pulpit Creed,  
May hear His whisper in the wind  
That moves a swaying water-reed.

And one who all the script did scorn  
And priests and Doctors would defy,  
May have his mortal vision torn,  
By one black cloud that sweeps the sky,

And he whom all the books have failed  
Who in despair gave up the quest,  
May find the mystery unveiled  
Within a songbird's downy nest.”

Thus saw I written that deep night  
While swift the flickering vision fled  
On the still air from mortal sight,  
And thus I give it as I read.

—*The Vedic Magazine* for January 1921