



O my Divinity! thou dost blend with the earth and fashion for thyself Temples of mighty power.
 O my Divinity! thou livest in the heart-life of all things and dost radiate a Golden Light that shineth
 for ever and doth illumine even the darkest corners of the earth.

O my Divinity! blend thou with me that from the corruptible I may become Incorruptible; that from
 imperfection I may become Perfection; that from darkness I may go forth in Light. — *Katherine Tingley*

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THE SECRET DOCTRINE

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THIS term is one of several used by Mme H. P. Blavatsky, the Founder of the Theosophical Society, and after her by Theosophists, to denote the universal basis of all religions. Another of such terms is the Wisdom-Religion, by which is signified that this universal basis includes not only ethics and morals but also knowledge and wisdom. Sometimes we find the term Esoteric Philosophy used, the word esoteric meaning that there is an inner side to every outer or exoteric system. We thus see that this universal basis of knowledge embraces Religion, Philosophy, and Science in one; knowledge, in its essence, is one and single, not divided into separate compartments.

The doctrine is called secret because in this age of the world's history it is not public; and not in any sense that it is withheld from anyone entitled to access thereto. Real knowledge, knowledge of the mysteries of nature, confers power; power in unfit or unworthy hands

is dangerous; hence the knowledge which confers power that might be dangerous to the welfare of humanity is held sacred and secret, being communicated to those alone who can prove themselves qualified to make a right and safe use of it. In contrast to this, we may note the policy of our day in matters of scientific discovery; the discovery and inventions of science are broadcast, with the result that they are often used for frivolous purposes, or to minister to luxury, or are suffered to fall into the hands of criminals, or to be turned into weapons of destruction which threaten the very existence of civilization. Such a policy, disastrous as it is in some ways, may possibly be our only course; for we have no qualified body of guardians of knowledge; but fortunately for the welfare of humanity, those who possess a knowledge of the more recondite mysteries of nature do not broadcast this knowledge to all and sundry, but guard it by tests so that it may be attained only by those fitted to have it. In this sense then the doctrine is called secret and regarded as sacred — not to be profaned.

H. P. Blavatsky's most important work, *The Secret Doctrine*, was written for the purpose of demonstrating that there is such a system, and of expounding its principal tenets, so far as it was possible and permissible to do so in a public work. As stated, knowledge is here treated under three main heads of religion, philosophy, and science; but it will be convenient to treat these separately, and we may begin by speaking of the relation of the Secret Doctrine to religion.

The intermingling of humanity caused by our progress in knowledge and increased facilities of travel has caused people to recognise the rights of alien religions, to regret the fact that people who have so many sublime objects in common should be divided into a multitude of differing faiths and sects, and to seek means for bringing about harmony and co-operation between the devotees of different religions. Excellent as these movements are, they do not achieve all the success which we could wish them, for certain reasons which will now be explained* They proceed on exoteric instead of esoteric lines, striving to bring about a sort of confederation or mutual alliance. They begin with the assumption that the religions are actually separate and need to be artificially united. The method of union proposed consists in eliminating from each religion whatever is not common to all, and uniting on the basis of what is left.

*This topic is more fully developed in our January number, pp. 293 sqq.

But this plan, as shown in the previous article just referred to, leaves a vague and insufficient common basis; the ground of union is negative rather than positive. A few ethical principles, such as the Golden Rule, the brotherhood of man, the fatherhood of God, the importance of truthfulness, justice, and charity, and plans for a co-ordination of philanthropic undertakings, excellent though they may be, are not adequate by themselves to stem the powerful contrary forces at work in the world. Again, there is a notable lack of the intellectual element. Man is not moved by emotional aspirations alone; he has an eager inquiring mind, and desires knowledge. The absence of knowledge means ignorance, and ignorance misleads, turning even good intentions to disastrous results. It is because religions have failed to give men this knowledge, to minister to their desire to know, that science has grown up as a realm apart, and has taken a direction which in many respects has not conduced to the welfare of humanity.

The desire to promote unity of effort among religions is most praiseworthy, but the unification must be carried further. There is no lack of efforts for the amelioration of mankind, but a sad lack of co-ordination, when we find religion, science, philosophy, all pursuing separate paths, and added to these a number of speculative enterprises such as those called biology, bio-chemistry, psychology, and kindred names.

The Secret Doctrine is the great unifier needed, and for which we are all seeking, more or less consciously to ourselves. But it must not be thought that this master-key is an artificial synthesis put together by some ingenious intellect. It is more of the character of a revelation; and how this is so can be understood if we say something about the history of mankind.

Archaeology and anthropology are making great and continuous progress, but the facts ascertained do not in general confirm earlier theories. Those theories were framed on too narrow a basis of observation. This expression however is somewhat inaccurate, since it is impossible to frame any theory at all on facts alone: we must have an idea of some sort in the mind by which to adjust those facts. In this case the facts were adapted to a preconceived idea that human civilization is a very recent growth, and that man himself, as a species and apart from questions of civilization, is quite recent by comparison with the extent of geological time. But what reason was there for such a view of human history? It must have been largely inherited from theology with its

story of creation, and supported by the merely negative evidence that so few records of the past had been unraveled.

Yet, as time goes on, archaeology uncovers more facts that do not agree with the preconceived view, but on the contrary support the view taken by Theosophy; and not merely archaeology but other branches of investigation are tending in the same direction. Attempts are still made to effect an accommodation between the old and the new, but with increasing difficulty; and it cannot be long ere younger generations of scholars, less hampered by inherited bias, will be willing to accept the real clue, thus enabling themselves to receive the scientific evidence on its merits and without attempting to distort it.

It will be helpful to those living in a Christian civilization if we consider our subject in its relation to the Christian religion. It will be our purpose to show that Christianity had its origin in the ancient and universal Wisdom-Religion, as this was taught by a Teacher, one initiated in the Sacred Mysteries and sent forth as a Messenger to proclaim anew the age-old teachings. We shall then briefly indicate the steps by which this original gospel became gradually transformed until through successive stages it reached the form or forms so familiar to us.

About one hundred years before the Christian era the Jews were ruled by Alexander Jannaeus, and the Jewish version of the birth of Jesus states that, in this reign, a child was born to one Jehoshuah ben Perachiah, and one Mary, the child also being named Jehoshuah. Rabbi Jehoshuah initiated his son into the secret knowledge; but the king, Alexander, having given orders that all initiates should be slain, the family fled to Alexandria. The word here written Jehoshuah, being Hebrew, is susceptible of various spellings in English, such as Joshua, Iassou, Jesus; and is the name which in Greek became Iêsous and in English Jesus. This initiated Teacher, returning to Palestine, gathered around him disciples, among whom were those called the Ebionites and the Nazarenes. The fundamentals of Christianity have not been sufficiently studied by Christians in general; but, if they once set themselves to the task of acquainting themselves with the origins of their religion, they can find abundant documentary proof that this religion was gradually evolved out of certain teachings easily recognisable as being those of the ancient Wisdom-Religion now called Theosophy.

The best known exponents of these teachings were the various schools of Gnostics. These Gnostics, many of whom styled themselves Chris-

tian Gnostics, taught the real essence of Christianity; but it has suited the convenience of later ecclesiastical authorities to stigmatize them as heretics who sought to introduce Greek and certain Asiatic elements into Christianity. The fact is that it was the Church authorities themselves who should properly be called heretics, inasmuch as it was they who converted these ancient and universal teachings into the ecclesiastical creed and system with which we are so familiar. The pages of history supply us with a multitude of names of men of great capacity and high moral character, who taught a purer and more enlightened Christianity, but were successively expelled from the Church as heretics, and their teachings condemned.

These Gnostic Christians taught the fundamental unity of God, the Universe, and Man; which have become three different things in later Christianity. The notion of a single God, external to the universe, was foreign to them; as was the idea of man as a helpless creature, doomed to perish unless rescued by a propitiatory sacrifice. The essential divinity of man was everywhere taught in the Mysteries, and is always inculcated by the founders of religions, but afterwards becomes transformed into quite other doctrines. We may find it in the sayings of Jesus and in those of Paul. Jesus holds himself up as a type for men to copy; he is a Teacher, a pointer of the Way; and he insists that the light and the power are innate in all men. He taught of the Son, which is the Divine Self in man, the intermediary between the Father (the Universal Spirit), and earthly man. The Son is considered to have performed a sacrifice by descending into the flesh for the salvation of man. Paul teaches the same doctrine; but ecclesiasticism has transmuted it into the doctrine that Christ was the *only* son of God; that he is essentially different from all other men; and that men cannot be saved by their own innate divinity, but need the special aid of this Savior.

It might be asked, Where are to be found the teachings of the Secret Doctrine? The answer to this enigma is to be found in another enigma awaiting solution: the two enigmas solve each other. The vast mythologies of antiquity, of all times and all races, ranging from the totemism and tribal rites of simple races, through the folk-lore of nations, the symbolism of Oriental religions, the vast sacred literature of Hindûsthân, China, Persia, the classical mythology of Greece and Rome, contain the answer. No land, no time, has been without it. All this lore has remained a sealed book to scholarship, because scholars have sought to

interpret it in accordance with their views as to the history of the human race, and to square it with modern materialistic thought and ecclesiastical sectarianism. But is it possible for a reflecting person to persuade himself that the whole of humanity, throughout history, has amused itself and applied the vast resources of intellect and imagination in inventing fables to express the phenomena of Nature and the motions of the heavenly bodies? Anyone who prefers to believe this is throwing away his chances of finding out the records of the Secret Doctrine and learning its teachings. For the whole of the period which we call historical is but a brief episode in the real history of humanity; and it represents an age of unbelief and materiality, when the Secret Doctrine could no longer be taught openly, and was therefore preserved in symbolic and allegoric language, which at once concealed it from the profane and revealed it to him who had the keys to its interpretation.

To give an instance — the stories of Creation and Deluge are found to be universal, existing on every continent, and to be remarkably uniform, not merely in essentials but even in particulars. Scholars have diligently collected the Creation and Flood stories of ancient American tribes, north, central, and southern; and have found not only the Ark and its animals, but even such details as the sending forth of birds by their Noah. The theory that these stories were diffused by migration cannot be strained to a sufficient point to explain such universality; and, even could this explanation suffice in the case of the Bible myths, we should need to know why uniformity was secured in this case and not in many other cases, where we find, not uniformity, but great differences. Equally impossible is the theory that men in all places and times will, under similar circumstances, invent the same myths; an explanation which at best could explain broad outlines but not such intimate details as we find. Were these numerous peoples preserving traditions of the latest glacial flood? Undoubtedly there was an actual historical and geological deluge; but that will not account for everything. The Ark with its few saved people, its animals, its birds sent forth, its settling on a sacred mountain, are not historical but symbolic. Herein is preserved, in the symbolic language mentioned above, the ancient teaching that successive great races of humanity people the Earth. At a remote, and to us prehistoric epoch, a geological cataclysm took place, which submerged the continent of Atlantis, and brought up new lands; whereby the remains of the Fourth Root-Race of humanity were brought to

an end, and a few saved to form the seed for the next Root-Race. The Flood story records this event, and also symbolizes the death and rebirth of races in general; while the Ark is the sacred vessel by which seed is propagated from death to rebirth.

In the creation stories, man is always shown as being at first an innocent being, living in a state of unprogressive bliss; and as afterwards being quickened by the fire of *mind*, whereby he becomes an intelligent and self-conscious being, knowing good and evil, learning by experiences, losing his way by abuse of free will, but destined to salvation through the right use of this same prerogative. We find the same story in the Greek mythology, where Prometheus, in defiance of Zeus, brings down fire from heaven in order to vivify man with intelligence; just as the 'Serpent' in *Genesis* (whom theology has turned into the Devil) similarly endows man in defiance of the will of Jehovah. This teaching as to the divine inspiration of man is very important, because it has been so disfigured by theological perversion. The self-conscious mind in man is the bridge between heaven and earth. The gods who communicated to him this gift (or rather who awakened to life man's own innate but dormant mind) were simply the highly evolved human beings of a former cycle of evolution, who had now become Teachers, as we in our turn shall one day become Teachers of a nascent humanity in the future. The same idea is seen in the Latin Lucifer, which means the Light-Bringer, but has been turned by theology into a devil. Thus has man been taught to regard his own innate divine intelligence as a tempting devil, and to place his reliance instead upon certain formulas of vicarious salvation. Religion and science are at odds, when they should be one and single.

And so, when asked where are the proofs and the records of the Secret Doctrine, we have only to point to the Vedas and Pûraṇas of India, the Greek and Roman mythology, the Eddas of Scandinavia, the Nibelungenlied of Germany, the Zend Avesta of Persia, the Hebrew Kabala, the *Popol Vuh* of Guatemala (to mention only a few) in support of our claim. On ordinary lines this is an insoluble puzzle, second only in marvelousness to the theories invented in the attempt to explain it. But the Secret Doctrine gives the explanation simply and at once.

Humanity has never been left forlorn to find its way through the darkness by mysterious powers of chance; but has always had Teachers, Protectors, Guides. For all knowledge is communicated by passing on

from mind to mind, whether by word or through books or subtler means of communication. But as long as man has free will he has the power to abuse knowledge to his own destruction; and therefore, whenever a cycle of materialism sets in, it becomes either impossible or dangerous to impart the more vital tenets of the Secret Doctrine. Such knowledge now becomes 'secret'; it remains in the protection of its guardians, who are more highly evolved men, living only for the benefit of mankind and all creatures, raised by their evolution beyond the wish to abuse such knowledge. The teachings remain disguised under myth and symbol in the mythologies and sacred scriptures. Some of the keys to the interpretation of these have been given by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*; and a study of that work will prove that the Secret Doctrine is a uniform system, and that uniformity may be seen beneath the various external forms of the allegories.

The history of ancient Greece has familiarized us with esoteric teachers, such as Pythagoras, who had schools and who initiated candidates after subjecting them to severe probations; and with the schools of the Mysteries, such as those of Samothrace and Eleusis. As the age fell more deeply into materialism these Mysteries degenerated, lost their influence, and finally were swept away by the alliance between political and religious intolerance. But the path to esoteric knowledge is always open, and is still open. Those who have understood the real purpose of the Theosophical Society, and are earnestly devoted to the furtherance of its objects, will by their devotion open for themselves the doors by which they can enter the path of enlightenment. The Secret Doctrine teaches, as we have shown, the divinity of man; and if a man is to attain to a fuller consciousness of that divinity, and to achieve in himself a measure of realization of his innate powers, he must make himself worthy — make himself a worthy shrine of the God. Our own Bible says: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" It is therefore a matter of conduct. Knowledge which ministers to vanity or ambition or curiosity is not worthy the name of knowledge and cannot profit its devotee or anyone else. The only true knowledge is that which expresses itself in action, and perhaps it should be called 'wisdom.' The aspirant to the ancient wisdom should have no thought of benefit to self, regardless of the common interest; for such a motive would bar the doors to him; he would not have the key. The Secret Doctrine teaches man how to

transcend the self-interested self-seeking life which people in general are leading, and rise to a higher brighter life, where personal motives no longer mislead and torture. For, so long as man acts from motives of self-aggrandizement, he is not following the true law of his nature; and this is the reason of the woes he experiences. This makes it easier to understand why the Secret Doctrine cannot flourish openly in such a world as ours has been throughout the period known to us as 'history.'

In considering our subject, the Secret Doctrine, we have to bear in mind that it is a Theosophical teaching, and that Theosophy is one whole; so that it is difficult to study it piecemeal. In other words, how are we to fit the teachings as to the Secret Doctrine into our customary and conventional picture of human life, human history, and the universe? The embracing of Theosophy involves what may be called a mental revolution, an entire change in our view of life; but this revolution fits appropriately enough into the scenes in which we live; for nobody can deny that the world is changing rapidly and profoundly. It is needless to elaborate this point; everybody says so. This change of outlook is in accordance with the laws of evolution, and was foreseen and prepared for by those who initiated the Theosophical Society. So we must try to realize that we have been bred up in ideas of science and of religion and of social customs all based on narrow medieval conceptions of man, the universe, and the deity. We view humanity as a recent product of animal evolution, who has ascended through stages inferior in culture to our own. Our science is still quite materialistic, leaving the greater part of life unexplored and unexplained. And religion is hampered by sectarian dogmas and by a lack of the knowledge of the immortality of the real Ego and the periodical transformations undergone in reincarnation. Through Theosophy many of the ancient teachings once secret have now been made public, the mind of man having awakened to a point of being able to appreciate them. Thus has been repeated in our times a periodical historic process — that of the proclamation of the ancient teachings at crucial times. This is the process that started religions; but it is to be hoped that Theosophy may be saved from being perverted into a formal and enslaving creed.

Let us conclude with a few words to those desirous of acquainting themselves with the Secret Doctrine; and we first call to mind the opening passages of *The Ocean of Theosophy*, to the effect that this ocean is shallow enough at its shores to appeal to the simplest mind, yet

profound enough in its depths to engage the utmost powers of a sage. Students will therefore find many things they can understand at once; but no genuine lover of knowledge will be satisfied with what can so easily be attained. To him the vastness and profundity of the whole subject will be a spur to study; he will not be so vain as to imagine that he can grasp all at one clutch; nor will he complain if there are many things known to old students which cannot be made clear to a tyro; this is mere commonsense. But if his desire is for enlightenment he will find it satisfied by the process of gradually unfolding understanding, as he proceeds from point to point; nor will it be long ere he finds out for himself how Theosophy interprets life and clears up its problems.

OUR UNIVERSAL HOME

G. DE PURUCKER

I WONDER how many of you realize that you are in search of a permanent Home: that each one of you by your own will, by your own choice, has become homeless; and, furthermore, you are like a man who is wilfully blind, who will not see the path stretching forwards which lies at his feet, but turns into some bypath, following will-o'-the-wisps, the dancing phantasmagoria of this world, the land of shades and shadows, the land of phantoms and deceits. Yet, strange paradox, even this world of phantasmagoria and shadows is part of our own Homeland, because it is a part of the Universe — of that Boundless All in which we live and move and have our being; from which we sprang, in the very heart of which we live, and towards the divine heart of which we shall one day return on the wings of the experiences that we have been through — wings that will carry us over the valleys to the distant mountain-peaks of the spirit.

Our home is a universal home because it is everywhere. Man is no orphan; he is no abandoned child of great Mother Nature. Man is an intrinsic, inherent, inseparable part of the Boundless All. If he is not, then what is he? Here we are living in the Universe, parts of it: life of its life, bone of its bone, blood of its blood, being of its being, soul of its soul, spirit of its spirit, having the same origin as it, and marching towards that same sublime destiny which all entities and things shall ultimately attain. A glorious destiny lies ahead of us all.

Man himself is essentially a spiritual being, encased in feeble garments of ethereal matter and of flesh, which he has taken to himself as crippling and enshrouding veils of selfishness — selfishness, meaning the appetites and substances of the lower selfhood. Man wilfully, I say wilfully, enshrouds himself in veils of the lower selfhood, veils which are wholly of his own making, so that he has almost, at the present time, lost even the dimmest consciousness of the divine flame burning within his inmost essence.

However, the inmost of you is likewise the inmost of the Universe. Everything that the Universe contains is in you, as individuals and collectively, because you are inseparable parts of the Great Mother from which we all spring, and in which we all live. Therefore everything: every essence, every energy, every power, every faculty, that is in the Boundless All is in each one of you, active or latent; and all the great Sages of all the ages have taught the same fundamental teaching: “Man, know thyself,” which means going inwards in thought and feeling, thus ever in greater measure allying yourself *self-consciously* with the divinity at the core of the core of the heart of each one of you. The divinity is also the very heart of the Universe, having no specific location because of being everywhere. There, indeed, is our Universal Home: Boundless Space, frontierless Space, and beginningless and endless duration in Time.

As doubtless you know, this idea is almost a new one to the Occidental world. Occidentals have lost the true keys of life, and only recently are they coming back to the thought of the Ages. This very fundamental idea and intrinsic part of the primeval wisdom of mankind — that man and the Universe are fundamentally one: this fundamental idea is, so to say, the very key-stone of the Temple of the Ancient Wisdom. Understand it, feel it, and then your whole life is changed, your whole outlook on existence is radically altered. You then feel yourself to be at one with all that is, a partaker, in time, of all that the Universe has and is, journeying towards a destiny so sublime that the utmost imaginative efforts of mankind cannot at present sketch even a fragmentary outline of what the far distant future has in store for us. This destiny is simply the unfolding, as evolution proceeds — and unfolding is what evolution really means — of the inner unto becoming the outer, the bringing forth of what is locked up within, not only in man but in Mother Nature herself. It is Mother Nature and her divine, spiritual,

psychological, ethereal, and physical reaches that is our Universal Home.

Death, that grim and grisly specter, that phantom, which has haunted the imaginations of mankind in the Occident for some two thousand years, death, which has haunted men's hearts as a grisly and uncanny fear: loses all its terrors when we understand primeval verity, for actually there is no death. Death is but change, blessed change, change for the better — always change because change means growth, change means evolution, change means the breaking up of crystallized habits and bodies, which means the changing of misfortune into fortune, of unhappiness into peace, of sorrow into joy, and of limitation into expansion. Death is verily but a change; birth also is but a change; and birth and death are fundamentally one. I mean this statement to be accepted literally: birth and death are fundamentally one, for each of the twain is a change — a change of a state into a succeeding state — a succeeding state which each entity has made for itself and which is the sum-total of all the thoughts that the man thought, of all the feelings that the man felt, of all the aspirations that the man had, likewise of all the evil things that he did, and of all the good deeds that he wrought.

And this change also is obviously within the encompassing bounds of Mother Nature — our Universal Home. We cannot leave this Universal Home. There is no essential difference between man and the Universe in which he is born and of which he is an inseparable part. Oh, that I had a thousand tongues and that I could speak a thousand different languages so that I might reach a thousand different minds in sending home into your hearts this sublime and ever comforting truth!

Do you always want to labor in sorrow? Do you always want to be heavy-laden? Do you desire to continue in fear and sorrow and pain? Why not receive the light? Why not shake off the shackles of your bondage? Why not be free? Why not be great? It all lies with you. I could talk to you until the crack of doom, but if I did not happen to pluck, as it were, a sympathetic chord in your hearts, my words would merely enter your ears and leave them an instant after. Therefore I say that I wish I had a thousand tongues speaking a thousand different languages so that at least a thousand hearing minds, each one different from the others, I could appeal to.

This is no new teaching that I give to you. It is a part of Theosophy, and Theosophy is the ancient Wisdom-Religion of mankind. It is not new; it is as old as thinking man. It has been taught for ages

upon ages in the past by the titanic intellects whose records have flamed through the pages of history and will flame through the years of the future — and these titanic intellects are the great Sages and Seers that the human race has at different times brought forth. These Sages and Seers all teach one fundamental doctrine, one fundamental formulation of teaching, which is an exposition of Nature's innermost structure, of her operations, of her laws, of her processes, of her origin, of her present state and condition and being, and of her future. See now what a changed outlook this vision gives you if you have understood it. Understanding it, you don't much care what happens to you any more — you don't care in the old way, I mean. You can hereafter face misfortune like true men when your karma brings it upon you. No longer is your head bowed in the agony of fear and pain. You lift your head and face the Mystic East and await the spiritual sun rising over those distant horizons, the while feeling your kinship with that rising sun of spiritual splendor. And you say: I am a Son of the Sun; I am a Son of the Universe; I am its child; its destiny is my destiny; out of its heart I came; into its heart, in the distant future, I shall return. Out of it I came an un-self-conscious god-spark, but into it I shall return a self-conscious god.

That is our Universal Home, filled with chambers of life, mystic, wonderful. Into each one of these chambers of life we shall pass, therein to learn something new; and out of each we shall pass into some larger and nobler chamber still, there again to learn something still newer and greater — that is, newer and greater to the pilgrim, but familiar to those who have gone beyond him on the evolutionary pathway.

Man is essentially one with the Universe. It and he are one. That thought is not difficult to understand. It is a new and wonderful idea to men of the Occident, but it is as old as, and indeed, older than, the enduring hills. When man feels that he is at one with the Universe, that its destiny is his destiny, that he is held to a strict accountability for all that he is, which means all that he makes himself to be, and for all that he does; that he holds his destiny in the palm of his hand so to say; that his will is supreme over all the material energies of the physical universe; that he carves his pathway into the future — when man realizes all this, feels it, knows it, then indeed he begins to feel like a god and think like a god, because he is using the godlike powers locked up within himself, powers not yet unwrapped or evolved.

Do you think, after this happens, that a man wilfully can choose

evil-doing? Do you think that when a man realizes that he is wholly responsible for what he does, for what he thinks, for what he feels, and that surrounding Nature, of which he is an inseparable child, will hold him strictly responsible therefor — do you think that he then could be cruel or faithless to another? Do you think that human beings, possessing hearts which beat in sympathy with the suffering of others, could ever then allow that suffering to pass unassuaged? Do you think that thereafter any man wilfully would choose wrong-doing and strife, when the pathway of beauty and peace lies before him — the pathway of beauty and wisdom and knowledge and love? These qualities represent Nature's fundamental energies and processes. Such catastrophes as wars and hatreds, misery and pain, would then vanish like the morning mist.

I tell you that the main lack in the Occidental world today is a sense of moral values. Men are ethically and spiritually ignorant; they have lost the keys to life that formerly they had — and used. When a man knows that Nature will hold him responsible for what he does, he will walk carefully, think carefully, feel wisely, and watch. That, therefore, is what is the matter with the Occident today: people have lost the sense of ethical values and a knowledge of the Inner Vision. You know what the old book of the Hebrews said: "Where there is no vision the people perish." Do you think that a man who has music in his heart can feel its presence without realizing that he also is reflecting the cosmic harmonies, the symmetrical and harmonious relationship existing everywhere, and that therefore he is morally responsible for what he thinks and does that this harmony may not be broken? Thus it is that man has music in his soul as a reflexion from the cosmic harmony.

Do you think that a man who has love in his heart — an impersonal love I mean: kindness, gentleness, tenderness, pity, compassion: do you think, I say, that a man who possesses these divine qualities within him has them by accident? No! No! Verily he has them because he is an inseparable child of the Boundless All which is their origin. He merely reflects within himself as a little world, or microcosm, what the Macrocosm, the Great World, has.

Therefore you see again that the way to peace, the way to knowledge, to wisdom, to beauty, to harmony, is in following universal laws. Here is the key which will open the mystic door in yourself, from the

threshold of which extends the Mystic Path. Become one with Spiritual Nature. Essentially you are one with it already, but become now one with it with self-conscious recognition of the verity. Then "Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance." You then become a master of life, thereafter holding the scepter of power in your right hand and the globe of justice in your left; and out of your mouth will proceed the words of wisdom and peace and love. Exemplify in your individual being what Mother Nature the Vast has in herself. Such is the pathway.

To the left lies the pathway of the weakling, the man who 'cannot make the grade.' To the right lies the pathway of the Sage. The Sage is the Theosophic ideal, the Mahâtman — to use our own technical Theosophic term — meaning a 'Great Self,' in the sense of being an individual who is enlarging his inner constitution towards becoming one with the Self Universal.

Keep this teaching always in your minds: Man is inseparable from the Universe of which he is a part. What the Whole, or Universe, has, therefore man — the portion, the part, the fragment — also has. The Whole cannot contain something which the part lacks. The Sage, the Great Man, the man of lofty soul, of expanded intellectual power, the man who is wise, who follows the pathways of peace and freedom and virtue — and remember that virtue, *virtus*, in the original sense meant manliness — such is the Sage.

I picked up a book this morning that is a favorite of mine. It is the *Tao Te Ching* of Lao-Tse, one of the old Chinese Sages who lived in the sixth century before the Christian era, and who was, therefore, a contemporary of Confucius. This book, the *Tao Te Ching*, is very short; it is a book of paradoxes — you know what a paradox is, of course. Profound study of the *Tao Te Ching* finally became obligatory in the training of the officials of the several ancient Chinese Empires which succeeded each other. No one could become a mandarin, no one could pass to a higher grade, who did not have the paradoxes of Lao-Tse at his tongue's end, clean-cut in his mind. He taught the 'Tao' — but how can you describe 'Tao'? It is really indescribable. It can be understood, but it cannot be explained. It can be felt; but it cannot be communicated. It is all, therefore no thing.

Says Lao-Tse, following the translation of Giles:

All things in Nature work silently. They come into being and possess nothing. They fulfil their functions and make no claim.

When merit has been achieved, do not take it to yourself; for if you do not take it to yourself, it shall never be taken from you.

Goodness strives not, and therefore it is not rebuked.

He that humbles himself shall be preserved entire. He that bends shall be made straight. He that is empty shall be filled. He that is worn out shall be renewed. He who has little shall succeed. He who has much shall go astray.

Ah! Consider life. Is it not just so?

Therefore the Sage embraces Unity, and is a model for all under Heaven. [Obviously!] He is free from self-display, therefore he shines forth; from self-assertion, therefore he is distinguished; from self-glorification, therefore he has merit; from self-exaltation, therefore he rises superior to all. Inasmuch as he does not strive, there is no one in the world who can strive with him.

Do you understand? I wonder how many of the Occidental minds who read this little book seize the profundity of these thoughts. If you don't strive, how can anyone strive with you? The man who gives, gains. The man who strives for gain for himself, constricts himself into a smaller compass than before, and therefore loses.

He who, conscious of being strong, is content to be weak—he shall be the paragon of mankind. Being the paragon of mankind, Virtue will never desert him. He returns to the state of a little child.

This saying reminds one of the Christian New Testament Scripture. You remember the saying about the 'little ones': Become like unto little children for of them is the kingdom of heaven. Do you think that Jesus uttered the absurdity that he is supposed to have uttered and in these words spoke of human babes? No! He was a Sage, an Avatâra indeed, and spoke in the technical terms used in the Mystery-Chambers where the initiand was called 'the little one.' Therefore the saying means, Be like unto the Sages, for such as they are of the 'kingdom of heaven.'

Thus it is that 'Some things are increased by being diminished, others are diminished by being increased.' What others have taught, I also teach; verily, I will make it the root of my teaching.

Lao-Tse simply taught the grand old mystery-doctrines of far antiquity. He taught nothing new. No great Sage and Seer ever taught anything new. If he did, you might as well say that the new that he taught is not true, and the truth that he taught is not new. Truth is one, universal, and exists from age to age, and those great ones of the

human race who come as Teachers to their fellow-men, bathe as it were spiritually and intellectually, in the ocean of truth which, in other words, is Nature's heart. These great ones are the natural-born interpreters and leaders of men. They are the natural-born leaders and guides of men, and they never abuse their power.

Therefore the Sage, wishing to be above the people, must by his words put himself below them; wishing to be before the people, he must put himself behind them. In this way, though he has his place above them, the people do not feel his weight; though he has his place before them, they do not feel it as an injury. Therefore all mankind delight to exalt him, and weary of him not.

The Sage expects no recognition for what he does; he achieves merit but does not take it to himself; he does not wish to display his worth.

Can you imagine a Sage desirous of 'showing-off'? Or what kind of a Sage would he be, pray, if he followed one of the meanest traits of human weaklings — the desire to 'boss'? Therefore, the Sage, to use the language of the Christian New Testament, hides his light under a cover, under a bushel; but nevertheless it is there, and he shows it.

I have three precious things, which I hold fast and prize. The first is gentleness; the second is frugality; the third is humility, which keeps me from putting myself before others. Be gentle, and you can be bold; be frugal, and you can be liberal; avoid putting yourself before others, and you can become a leader among men.

Yes, and you won't have to wait, because other men will come and hunt you out, and will ask you to take the position that in such case rightfully belongs to you. And whether you will, or whether you nill, your fellow-men will recognise you — yea, and place you where you belong. Remember also that giving is nobler than receiving.

But in the present day men cast off gentleness, and are all for being bold; they spurn frugality, and retain only extravagance; they discard humility, and aim only at being first. Therefore they shall surely perish.

Here again I ask: Isn't it always so?

The best soldiers are not warlike; the best fighters do not lose their temper. The greatest conquerors are those who overcome their enemies without strife. The greatest directors of men are those who yield place to others. [Don't you see why? It is because they conquer human hearts.] This is called the Virtue of not striving, the capacity for directing mankind; this is being like unto Tao. It was the highest goal of the ancients.

He was a great man, Lao-Tse, a real Sage. It was related of him that when age came upon him, and his hair became white and his body

feeble, he arose one day in the dewy morning, put on his outer garment, put sandals on his feet, and turning his face towards the West, left his quondam abode. To his disciples word came back from time to time that he had been seen going West, and still farther West, towards the high table-lands of Tibet; and then all reports about him ceased, and he seemed to have vanished. Those of you who have ears to hear, hear!

Lao-Tse taught the Golden Rule, as all other great Sages and Seers have taught it. And why did he teach it? Because it is based upon the fundamental ethical rule of the Universe, the divine-spiritual solidarity of all entities and things. He quaffed of the same fountain of truth, and taught the same fundamentals of truth, that Theosophy holds as part of its doctrinal treasure — among other things, that man and the Universe are essentially one, that man and his Universal Home are fundamentally one. Having this in one's consciousness, one realizes that one's fellows are his other selves.

As Lao-Tse said: "Requite injury with kindness"; and he also taught: "To those not good, I would be good in order to make them good." In other words, Lao-Tse desired self-consciously to ally himself with those cosmic energies which thereafter would flow through all his being as through a channel. In doing so he also grasped the scepter of power, and swayed not only the hearts of his fellow-men but 'inanimate Nature,' so called, itself bowed in obeisance before his mighty will.

The man who can forget his personal, limited, circumscribed, selfish self, and live in the splendor of the cosmic energies within him, can use those cosmic energies for all noble ends. But what do men do instead of doing this? They live in the shadow-world, in the phantasmagoria-world, around us. They look upon things which they call solid and heavy, like the wood of this desk before me, as being 'real.' Yet today our ultra-modern scientific thinkers are beginning to tell us that so-called seeming solid substance, such as wood, lead, gold, platinum, stone, are in their structure mostly holes, so-called 'empty space.' For the atoms which compose these substances are themselves composed of electrons, which are as far separated from each other in any single atom as are the planets from each other and from the sun in our own solar system. So that wood, lead, etc., themselves are composed mostly of holes, of vacuity, of emptiness — of 'ether' as we Theosophists say.

But this so-called seeming hard matter which seems so real is the most unreal thing that human intelligence knows; and the most real thing

that human intelligence recognises is precisely this so-called 'vacancy,' this so-called 'space,' this so-called 'vacuity,' the so-called 'holes,' of which even the physical-chemical atoms are mostly builded. It is the phantasmagoria-world that most men follow today, in the Occident especially, and it is a world of dancing shadows and illusions, a world bringing only pain and sorrow from which there is no surcease as long as man fixes the tendrils of his heart therein. Wrench these tendrils out, and place your heart and mind where truth abides — in the real things, in the spirit within you, in the loftiest and noblest that you are sensible of being. This is the teaching of all the great Sages and Seers.

Consider the Lord Buddha, who was an exemplification of Wisdom and Love incarnate. Consider the Syrian Avatâra, Jesus. Consider all the great Sages and Seers of whom European history knows at least something. Consider the greatest philosophers who have ever lived. Although by many and divers paths of thought, and by paths often apparently diverse, nevertheless they all taught the same fundamental verities; they all sought to lead men to the truth; they taught, or tried to teach, the fundamental realities of the Universe which the Ancient Wisdom, today called Theosophy, now teaches and always has taught. Even Occidental men like Carlyle and Emerson realized that this physical world in which we live is but a dancing shadow-play. For instance, Carlyle says, in *Sartor Resartus*, Book I, chapter viii:

We sit as in a boundless Phantasmagoria and Dream-grotto; boundless, for the faintest star, the remotest century, lies not even nearer the verge thereof; sounds and many-colored visions flit round our sense; but . . . the Unslumbering, whose work both Dream and Dreamer are, we see not; except in rare half-waking moments, suspect not. . . . Then, in that strange Dream, how we clutch at shadows as if they were substances; and sleep deepest while fancying ourselves most awake! . . . This Dreaming, this Somnambulism, is what we on Earth call Life; wherein the most indeed undoubtingly wander. . . .

Nevertheless, has not a deeper meditation taught certain of every climate and age, that the *WHERE* and *WHEN*, so mysteriously inseparable from all our thoughts, are but superficial terrestrial adhesions to thought; that the Seer may discern them where they mount up out of the celestial *EVERYWHERE* and *FOREVER*: have not all nations conceived their God [the Theosophist would have said Divinity] as Omnipresent and Eternal; as existing in a universal *HERE*, an everlasting *NOW*? Think well, thou too wilt find that Space is but a mode of our human Sense, so likewise Time; there *is* no Space and no Time: *WE* are. . . .

So that this so solid-seeming World, after all, were but an air-image, our *ME* the only reality: and Nature, with its thousandfold production and destruction, but the reflex of our own inward Force, the 'phantasy of our Dream.'

Grand words! And indeed we are dreaming! It is precisely to awaken men to the inner worlds of reality, and to the strength and power and wisdom and love and peace that are yet unmanifest in man's inner constitution, that the Theosophical Movement was founded in our age. Don't imagine for a moment that when the Theosophist speaks of Mother Nature, he limits that phrase only to the physical world around us. Not at all. This physical world is but the outer garment, the outer veil, the body, of innumerable indwelling hierarchies — of worlds and spheres of existence — just as man's physical body is the outer physical garment or veil, hiding and crippling, because enclosing, the real man. Man himself builded his physical self. No outside god is responsible for it. Man himself has made himself, just as he is making himself now for what he will be in the future. Aren't you changing your character daily by your feelings and aspirations and by the usings of your will or the misusings of your intellectual and emotional and volitional powers? Think! Live therefore within, where real manhood is — within your true Self in other words.

Emerson, in his brilliant essay, *The Over-Soul*, says:

The Supreme Critic on the errors of the past and the present, and the only prophet of that which must be, is that great nature in which we rest, as the earth lies in the soft arms of the atmosphere; that Unity, that Over-Soul, within which every man's particular being is contained and made one with all other; that common heart, of which all sincere conversation is the worship, to which all right action is submission; that overpowering reality which confutes our tricks and talents, and constrains every one to pass for what he is, and to speak from his character, and not from his tongue, and which evermore tends to pass into our thought and hand, and become wisdom and virtue and power and beauty. We live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles. Meantime within man is the soul of the whole [there you have the gist of the present theme]; the wise silence; the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related; the eternal ONE [which is Boundless Nature in all her parts — divine, spiritual, intellectual, ethereal, astral, and physical]. And this deep power in which we exist, and whose beatitude is all accessible to us, is not only self-sufficing and perfect in every hour, but the act of seeing and the thing seen, the seer and the spectacle, the subject and the object, are one.

Here you have the Sage of Concord teaching the ancient doctrine of the ages, teaching the fundamental identity of man with the Universe, the source of his being and the goal of his future, in which he lives and moves and out of which he never can go; and also that this Universe essentially is man himself, and that man essentially therefore is boundless infinitude and frontierless and endless duration. Pause, grasp the

holy teaching, for it will give you strength in trials and in trouble, peace in sorrow, and surcease of pain. It will awaken you to a wisdom that you can develop from within the fountain of yourself illimitably. It will give you compassion and fellow-feeling with all that is, and a love which is boundless, as the great Buddha said.

Even the ultra-modern physical scientist is, unconsciously to himself perhaps, beginning to teach some of the ancient doctrines of the archaic Wisdom-Religion of mankind. Do you know now what some of these men are teaching about the nature of the electron, supposed to be the ultimate particle of physical substance? They are saying that the electron is not only a 'point of electricity,' but that even the single electron in a certain sense is universal. Do you grasp this thought? Fancy a modern Occidental scientist teaching one of the doctrines of the archaic Mystery-Schools! You doubt my word perhaps? You think I have mistaken their meaning? Read the following from a book recently written, and a very interesting book too as far as it goes, by one of the most eminent modern astronomical scientists, Sir James Jeans, *The Mysterious Universe*:

No matter how far we retreat from an electrified particle, we cannot get outside the range of its repulsions and attractions. *This shows that an electron must, in a certain sense at least, occupy the whole of space.* (Italics mine)

Here is our ancient mystery-doctrine regarding the nature of the spirit of man translated into physical terms and applied to the ultimate physical particle, the electron. So when I tell you that the spirit of man is essentially coextensive with the spirit of the Universe, and in doing so merely repeat the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom, I am telling you something which even the ultra-modern physical scientist is beginning to recognise and proclaim as being a verity, applicable even to the grossest ultimate physical particle which is now called in the jargon of ultra-modern scientific thought a 'point of electricity,' otherwise an 'electron.' Thus it is that even the modern, the ultra-modern, scientists are teaching the universality of the individual and of the ultimate particle of the physical sphere. This seems almost incredible, and yet it is true. They are thus teaching that an entity, although an individual and limited in its physical existence, is nevertheless coextensive with space. The ancient Wisdom-Religion has always set forth the teaching that the spirit of man, or indeed of any other entity — the core of the core of

the heart of the heart of him, or of it — is coextensive with boundless Space. If the modern scientist will predicate so startling and amazing a doctrine of what we Theosophists teach is only transitory substance, can you not understand how the great Sages and Seers of the past gained followers who covered the world in multitudes in former ages, when they taught that the essence of man — call it his 'spirit' if you like — is essentially one with boundless infinitude, and is therefore timeless, deathless, because infinitude knows the sway of neither time nor decay.

THEOSOPHY AND CHRISTIANITY

(THEOSOPHICAL UNIVERSITY LECTURES, 1932-1933)

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III

THIS Lecture begins a fuller consideration of the relations of the oriental mystery-religions, and of the many heresies (so-called) which were continually springing up; and, of course, of Gnosticism, with the Christianity of the third and fourth centuries. This latter was endeavoring to form itself into a Church with definitely defined doctrines which must be believed by all in order to be called Christians, doctrines, too, which the Church declared necessary to salvation.

While preparing this Lecture a copy of the London *Observer* came to hand, reporting the discovery of certain ancient manuscripts in a most remarkable way, so remarkable, indeed, that it struck all, newspaper-critics and scholars alike, and was much commented upon. We are reminded of what H. P. Blavatsky said fifty or sixty years ago, namely, that in this century, the twentieth, many ancient manuscripts would come to light in unexpected ways — and this prophecy is literally coming true.

What follows appeared in the London paper referred to, under date of November 6, 1932:

A number of papyri written in Coptic, recently discovered in Egypt, describe a journey by Mani, a Persian, or Iranean, by water to India, where he found several communities professing his belief. . . .

Like other world-teachers, who appeared shortly before or shortly

after the commencement of the Christian era, such as Apollonius of Tyana, and much earlier, Pythagoras, it is interesting to note that Manî went to India where the ancient Wisdom still flourished in its purity. The papyri contain among other things 230 psalms, some of which are in praise of Jesus, and some of Manî himself, many of them written probably by his disciples. In two chapters Manî defends his religion against the claims of Christianity, Pârsiism, and Buddhism, though he expressly mentions Christ, Zoroaster, Buddha, and Kṛishṇa in the same sentence as world-teachers. The manuscripts are now in London and Berlin, where they are being deciphered. The statement made by the writer of the article in *The Observer*, that the writings of Manî prepared the Roman garrisons to accept Christianity is surely an error. The religion to which the Roman centurions and soldiers inclined was Mithraism. Instead of preparing the way for the acceptance of Christianity Manicheism prevented many from believing in it. Augustine was a Manichean before being converted to Christianity, and inveighs bitterly against their teachings. He does scant justice to Faustus, their representative and teacher, whom he met. Faustus was a controversialist of no mean order.

Manicheism was a formidable rival of Christianity. Roman Emperors sought to repress it by edicts, Popes anathematized it; but in vain. For nearly a thousand years it retained its influence, which was felt even as late as the thirteenth century by the Albigenses in southern France, who professed many of its doctrines; and it was finally suppressed by fire and sword. We shall speak of its teachings later.

How should a Christian live in a Pagan world? The followers of Jesus found it a difficult problem, but one which had to be solved then and there. The result was at first a compromise, later a decided aloofness from all civil affairs. This indifference to the fate of the Empire and the resulting social disorganization is one of the charges which enlightened Pagans brought against the early Christians, as we shall see later in Origen's answer to Celsus. The refusal of the Christians to take part in the national life was not, however, the only cause of the downfall of the Roman Empire. There were others; for instance, many provinces in the Eastern part of the Empire were almost entirely depopulated; famines and plagues were common occurrences; the finances of the Empire were also going from bad to worse. The difficulty was that all the forms of social intercourse were closely connected with,

and pervaded by, Pagan belief and ceremonial, and a Christian who mingled with non-Christians could not help being a marked man. He could not avoid the performance of rites and practices which he regarded as idolatrous and wrong, however much a matter of course they might be to the Pagans themselves, if he took part in any political assembly or social gathering. Libations had to be poured out before the statue of a god or goddess; or a few grains of incense thrown on the altar-fire perpetually kept burning before them; or at least the hand kissed to them before proceeding with the matter in hand. Even the meat eaten at a friendly meal was offered to idols, as the pious Christians termed the statues in every household. It was regarded as a perfunctory act, just as grace before meals is in many Christian families today. And very early, as we know from *Acts*, xv, 29 the Christians were told to "abstain from meats offered to idols." In times of persecution, it was sufficient to spot a Christian. He was simply asked to throw a few grains of incense on the altar-fire burning before the statue of some god or goddess, and if he refused, he ran the risk of being thrown to the wild beasts in the amphitheater, or at least cast into prison; all his property was confiscated, and his family reduced to beggary. Some of the Roman governors were loth to proceed to extreme measures; and we find Pliny, when he was governor of Bithynia and Pontus, writing in 111 A. D. to Trajan, asking for directions how he should treat the Christians

especially as great numbers of them were persons of rank and influence, and would be involved in the danger of these persecutions which had already extended, and were likely to extend still more, to persons of all ranks and ages, and even to both sexes.

Celsus wrote his work, his *True Word*, *λόγος ἀληθῆς* (*Logos Alethes*) some time between 177 and 180. It was widely read, and was considered so damaging to the Christian Faith that Ambrosius, a learned Christian, and a friend of Origen, sent him a copy and asked him to answer it.

Jesus said of himself that he came "to fulfil the Law and the Prophets." It is on the strength of this statement that Bible students who, however, possess some knowledge of pre-Christian ethics, deny that Christian ethical teaching is in any way indebted to either Hindû or Buddhist teaching. They apparently either ignore or know nothing about pre-Vedic teaching which is of much greater antiquity, as H. P. Blavatsky proves in *The Secret Doctrine*.

It is strange that so many students of comparative religions should still persist in denying that early Christianity was in any way influenced by Buddhism. They surely know that Buddhist monks had penetrated into Asia Minor — into Syria, before the advent of Christianity. Of course they were to be found in Alexandria, where Origen and Plotinus were attending the lectures of Ammonius Saccas, whose aim it was to unite all religions under one universal system of ethics. And we may be sure that they heard them eagerly. This does away with the claim that there was no direct contact between Buddhism and Christianity. After this somewhat long but necessary digression we return to the endeavor of Origen to dispose of the attacks of Celsus.

It is not known who Celsus was. Origen's task was rather difficult, for he half agreed with many of the objections of Celsus, which were derived from the Platonic and Stoic Philosophy. The main difference in their point of view was, however, that Celsus advocated, in accordance with the prevailing philosophy, a pantheistic belief, while Origen inclined, as a good Christian, to a theistical conception of Deity.

Celsus maintains that Christianity is of oriental origin; that its ethical teachings are not new; and that many of the ceremonies of Christianity are the same as those in heathen religions. He wants to know why the one God, whom Christians and Pagans alike recognise, cannot be worshiped under various names, such as Zeus, Serapis, etc. There can be, he pointed out, only one Deity known to mankind. Why select the name of Jehovah, and assert that it is the only name by which that Deity must be acknowledged? He also asks why it has been necessary to *rewrite the Gospel stories so often, and give new meanings to Christ's message?* This objection of Celsus shows that the original records of Christ's teaching were already being tampered with, as H. P. Blavatsky observes. Why are the Christians divided in their opinions, "each wishing to belong to his own party"? This remark of Celsus reminds us of Paul's warning to the Corinthians (*1 Cor.*, iii, 2-4), "for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, . . ." "For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; . . ." He also wants to know why Jesus came so late to save mankind; why did not God wish to reform the world sooner, and save those who lived and died *before* Christ's coming? Celsus also objects to the resurrection story as not being unique. When the Christians assert that Jesus was the first who rose from the dead they seem to be ignorant of similar

stories current among Scythians, Egyptians, and Greeks. You see, the objections of Celsus are well founded, and it is no wonder that the Church allowed his work to perish, all we know of it being the fragments contained in Origen's answers. Celsus has other objections of course, but I cannot enumerate them all, and Origen, as I have stated, is often hard pressed how to answer. His exact knowledge of the Old Testament texts, however, and the authoritative creed which the Church was already forming, helped him to give answers of a sort. In his refutation of Celsus, Origen shows himself to be far more a good Christian than a philosopher. It is needless to say that unprejudiced critics, who are not Christians, find Origen's answers generally very inadequate.

Before taking up Origen's great work *De Principiis (On Principles)*, which is the first reasoned statement of Christianity as a philosophical system, and in which Origen expresses his own thoughts more freely — so much so, indeed, that the philosopher occasionally gets the better of the Christian — I must say a few words about Origen himself. He was an Egyptian, a Copt. The name Origen (born of Hor or Horus, the ancient Egyptian god of light) may indicate that his parents were still Pagans at the time of his birth. They soon, however, became ardent converts, and taught their son the Scriptures, which he knew almost by heart. He was given an excellent education; he heard Ammonius Saccas and other renowned lecturers of the various schools of Alexandria, and soon had an intimate knowledge of Platonism, Pythagoreanism, Stoicism, Epicureanism and other philosophical systems. He had *a high regard for the teaching of some of the Gnostics*, particularly Heracleon, Valentinus, and Marcion, though he differed from them radically in some respects. His learning was immense, and he resolved to use it in the interests of the new religion which he believed in and accepted without reserve. Neither the canon, nor the text of the Scriptures was yet settled, and Origen set himself the task to ascertain, as far as possible, the true sense and meaning of the Scriptures, and so to determine what was to be believed and what not. And as he believed that there were four senses to every Scripture passage — the literal, the moral, the allegorical, and the spiritual — he had, without intending it, a means of avoiding many difficulties of interpretation, and generally managed to bring the Scripture-texts into some sort of accord with his philosophy.

Origen divided the Christians of his time into two categories: those who were more simple-minded, who held crude ideas about God, whom

they anthropomorphised more or less, and whose understanding of the Scriptures did not go much beyond the literal meaning. There are more degrees in members of the other class, whom he calls the 'perfect.'

In *1 Corinthians*, ii, 6, Paul says, "we speak wisdom among them that are perfect." The 'perfect' are the initiated into the mysteries of Christ's teaching. The word 'perfect' is a technical term used by all the Mystery-Schools to describe those who have been privileged to be given the hidden (esoteric) teachings. In *Ephesians*, iii, 5, Paul declares that the mystery *kept in silence from aeonian times* "is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." The Greek, properly translated, is "through inspired interpretive writing." The passage of man and his environment through successive phases of evolution was taught by all the ancient religions. *Αἰών* (*aiōn*) usually rendered 'world,' means 'age.' Likewise the adjective *αιώνιος* (*aiōnios*) means 'age-long,' never 'eternal,' as it is translated in the *Gospels* and *Epistles*.*

They studied especially the allegorical and hidden meaning of the Scriptures and conceived God as pure Being, though somehow or other they believed that he had some kind of *personal* relation to them. Origen probably had these latter in mind when he wrote the 'Principles,' as he intended it to be an esoteric work, and it was against his express desire that it became known to the public. This contained his own ideas on the Deity, on Man, and on the Cosmos, which he had learned in the Mystery-Schools in his youth, and they were, as we shall see, more in agreement with the ancient philosophy than with the prevailing views of the dominant and rigid orthodoxy of the Church. These ideas of his concerning an esoteric Christianity, concealed in the Scriptures, were held, Origen asserts, by the more perfect of the Christians, who as he terms it, "philosophize."

In this connexion, it is interesting to note that Marcellus of Ancyra, a devout and learned Christian, quoted by Eusebius, says that Origen began to write too soon after leaving the philosophic schools, and before he had properly assimilated the doctrines peculiar to Christianity, and in consequence he mixed too much of Plato with the Scriptures. So it is evident that there was opposition to Origen's teachings even during his lifetime, and this opposition increased after his death.

Yet, in spite of this general agreement of Origen's teachings with those of Platonism, which was itself undergoing radical changes at this

**Biblical Mistranslations*, by Ray Knight.

time, the gulf between Origen and the newly founded Neo-Platonism grew. Origen, you will remember, was born in 185, Plotinus twenty years later. The Neo-Platonism of Plotinus may be perhaps best described as an idealistic pantheism, according to which everything emanated from the ONE, which is above Mind, and strives, by virtue of its origin, to return to the One; for each individual soul, as Plotinus says, is "a little first cause," and is creative like the Universal Mind or Soul or Spirit, united without being separate; and it is only when souls cease to contemplate spirit, and look outward, that they forget their unity.

To a certain extent Origen agreed with the foregoing, for both he and Plotinus had been pupils of Ammonius Saccas, and Jerome ascribes to Origen the heretical doctrine that all souls are in substantial unity with God, the Church reserving this substantial unity with the Divine for Christ alone, as the "only begotten Son of God," who is "God manifest in the flesh." In *John*, x, 36, Christ does not say "I am the son of God," but "I am son of God," just as all men are sons of God. There is no monopoly of sonship. From the very first, however, Origen conceives of God as "personal Mind," for he was a pronounced Theist, which of course Plotinus was not. Yet we must admit that, in his interpretation of the Christian Scriptures, Origen's philosophy is prior to the texts from which he professes to educe it. Perhaps this is why Origen desired that his teaching should not be known to the ordinary unlearned Christian, but to a kind of spiritual aristocracy of adepts.

Origen's views on the Cosmos differed radically from those taught by the Church in his time. He regarded the visible Cosmos as the manifestation in the world of effects of a higher spiritual causal world. With Plato he believed that the causal world was eternal. It is filled with the thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, of which Paul speaks in *Colossians*, i, 16, and in *Ephesians*, i, 21. Both Paul and Origen, therefore, knew of the esoteric teaching of hierarchies, though neither uses the word. Origen calls the Cosmos "a living being," just as the Stoics did. It is one, and yet it is diverse because its inhabitants are diverse. In speaking of them he calls them by various names: "entities," "essences endowed with reason," "forces or ideas." The term he usually employs in the *Principles* is "intelligences." They all possess free will, though in varying degree. Origen expressly says that some of them refused to obey God, and that the result of this disobedience was the 'Fall,' which is such an important theme in the Christian Scrip-

tures and has been sadly misinterpreted by theologians from the very earliest times to our own. Moreover, he says that the angels who fell were "clothed with bodies" — this is the term Origen uses, doubtless in order to veil teaching which he did not feel at liberty to divulge — and that it was in consequence of the Fall that man has bodies of flesh. Origen says further that the Fall was not a moral one, but that the angels who fell were simply carrying out their functions in the Cosmos as advanced souls, more highly developed than the others. In fact, the Fall was partly voluntary, partly a karmic necessity. The Greek words which Origen uses to denote these heavenly beings, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, were used also, some by Plato, some by Aristotle, and some by the Stoics of his time. So the doctrines of Origen, which can be read in his great work, the *Principles*, were more or less common property of all thinkers of the epoch we are considering.

The Cosmos, Origen teaches, had a beginning; consequently it will have an end; but it will be succeeded by others like it, yet different. In one passage, speaking of this world of ours, he expressly says that it will be followed by another, "its child." So you see Origen was acquainted with the idea of Karman, which he regarded as the determining, or regulating, power in the Kosmos. The Stoics also taught this doctrine, though of course in their own way. Plutarch alludes to it in his *De Oraculis (Concerning Oracles)*.

It must be noted, however, that Origen, being a Christian, and writing for Christians, sometimes lapses from these views. He endeavors to show that they are not inconsistent with the orthodox teaching, and he several times speaks of the world as created by God in the usual sense of the word; evidently he found it difficult to be a Christian and a philosopher at the same time.

To return to the controversy between Celsus and Origen, Celsus could not understand that a man who had only recently died a shameful death could have been worshiped as a god by the Christians, and even as God himself.

He returns to the charge, common at that time, that the Christians were, generally speaking, hostile not only to the ancient philosophy but even to knowledge. Had not Tertullian asked what relation there was between Jerusalem and Athens? And had said that now that we have the Gospel we have no need of philosophy. While this was true of a large number of Christians, we must remember that Origen, as

we have seen, was at this very time engaged in bringing the ancient philosophy into agreement with Christianity — as we shall see more in detail in our next Lecture. He had many followers, especially among those who, before being converted, had been instructed in the ancient philosophy, and who were, in consequence, quite as much philosophers as Christians.

Celsus, as we have seen, had a very high conception of deity. It was his belief that “God made all things, in order that the world should become complete, including all that is in it. God, as providence, cares for the whole; he never becomes angry with men, neither does he threaten them.” Celsus also says that “God is the Reason of all beings, and cannot do anything contrary to reason”* — a view diametrically opposed to the personal, vindictive God of the Christians, who condemns the unbeliever to a hell of endless torment, while those who believe in him go to a heaven of eternal bliss and happiness.

It is important to note that in Origen’s time, the middle of the second century, it was becoming more and more evident that many of the acts and decrees of the Church were for the sake of power and worldly dominion. Celsus observes that those who arrogate a divine right of dominion over the world cannot even agree among themselves, so many are the divisions and heresies among the Christians.

Celsus, when asking Origen which among the many differing forms of religion was to be believed, and why, anticipates Pascal’s famous wager: “Stake your eternal happiness on the truth of the creed whose promises and threats are the most transcendent.” Celsus objects that the Christians put faith before reason, which no intelligent man does, and so he asks Origen bluntly and incredulously, “Shall we decide by throwing dice?” Origen is rather puzzled what to answer; he refers Celsus to the Bible where we are told that our faith shall save us, and he repeats what he has said before about the necessity for belief and trust.

In this Lecture I have, *for the facts*, made free use of *The Mystery-Religions and Christianity*, by S. Angus, and of *Celsus and Origen*, by Thomas Whittaker.

*Whittaker: *Celsus and Origen*.

THE SCIENCE OF NATURE

OLUF TYBERG

PART XI — PHYSICS AND METAPHYSICS

WHEN modern scientists become aware of man's kinship with Nature, as some of them are doing already, they must discard the orthodox view of regarding themselves as mere observers in strange and incomprehensible surroundings, whose relation to man must be determined by yardsticks and higher mathematics. Furthermore, as soon as it becomes more generally recognised that man can observe and measure only what his mind permits him to perceive, scientific knowledge will no longer be confined to observations and measurements, whose interpretations are made subservient to established habits of thought.

Physicists observe and take for granted that man can move and change and that he has the capacity to perform work; and when after some centuries of investigation they learned that everything in Nature is moving and changing and that Nature is likewise performing work, they took inertia to be the Keystone of physical science and regarded everything beyond this keystone as teleological and outside the range of scientific research. But as physicists have never presented us with a satisfactory or justifiable reason for this assumption, other than Newton's idea of supernatural intervention, their attitude to Nature is purely dogmatic.

When the physicists are prepared to study the workings of a Nature of which man is the miniature as well as an integral part, they will base their assumption upon self-knowledge, and begin by regarding the moving and changing structures in Nature as integral parts of the composite body of a Cosmic entity, which, like the parts of the composite body of man, have the capacity to act and to be acted upon, and will be prepared also to recognise that physical Nature, like physical man, is a concreted picture of a multitude of organic activities.

Empirical science has been studying physical Nature on the assumption that it existed as an independent reality, but the recent and more searching investigations have convinced many of the scientists themselves that physical Nature is some kind of an illusion. As soon as we recognise that this illusion, this apparent reality, is a concreted picture

of organic activities, this moving picture itself will mirror forth these activities. Thus we shall have evidence with which to confirm the existence of an active principle of causation. However, before the physical senses can observe this principle, the mind must have some definite ideas concerning it, so as to know what to look for and where and how to find it. In other words, we must bring something out of ourselves to experience before we can begin to recognise the existence of a dynamic principle in Nature.

Organic activities are qualitative as contrasted with the quantitative, and metaphysical and causal to everything physical. If therefore the physical world is a concreted representation of an active metaphysical world, it should be possible to establish this scientifically. In considering this question we are reminded of the following statement of Kant:

Metaphysics has been the battlefield of many conflicts. . . . Never has metaphysics been so fortunate as to strike into the sure path of science, but has been groping about among mere ideas. What can be the reason for this failure? Is the science of metaphysics impossible? Then, why should Nature disquiet us with restless longing after it, as if it were one of our most important concerns? Nay more, how can we put any faith in human reason, if in one of the very things that we most desire to know, it not merely forsakes us, but lures us on by false hopes only to cheat us in the end? Or are there any indications that the true path has hitherto been missed, and that by starting afresh we may yet succeed where others have failed?

To these questions Kant himself replied by the following suggestion:

In metaphysical speculation it has always been assumed that all knowledge must conform to objects; the time has come to ask whether better progress may not be made by supposing that objects must conform to our knowledge?

This passage is from one of the prefaces to the *Critique of Pure Reason*, in which Kant formulated a *community of dynamic relations*. It should be noted however that because Kant's formulations were somewhat obscure and, on the whole, inimical to the conceptions of Newtonian physicists, no serious attempt was made to test Kant's *dynamic community* by making objects conform to it. Hence the value of Kant's suggestion is still undetermined, and, in view of their general attitude to Nature it is not likely that any member of the scientific fraternity is prepared to undertake this task himself.

This *dynamic community* we have resurrected by deducing it from the direct evidence of man himself, and have introduced it into this

discussion as representing the energy fundamental to action or to the performance of work, when the term, *work*, is used in its complete sense, as including both *initiative and inertia*, or *cause and effect*. It is this *dynamic community* that we propose to test by making objects conform to it, or in other words by making *energy* or *action* serve as a principle of analogy between the metaphysical and the physical world. As this test necessitates preparing the mind for the kind of evidence which the senses must learn to recognise, we shall begin by considering motion in its functional relation to the continuous movements in Nature.

The very idea of motion implies resistance, for without resistance there would be nothing to move and nothing by which to direct motion. This resistance is what we recognise as weight, and as this resistance cannot be disassociated from motion, weight is the physical magnitude of the force of motion.

Physicists recognise that all bodies, from an electron to a planet and a sun, have *weight* and exist in a ceaseless state of motion; but because they did not connect *weight* with continuous motion, they failed to recognise *weight* as the necessary resistance to motion, and this failure has been traced back to Newton, who attributed *weight* to *attraction*. We have already referred to this in Part VIII and shall point out here that Newton's reason for attributing *weight* to *attraction* was owing not only to deceptive appearances, but to his failure to distinguish between discontinuous local and continuous universal motion. Hence Newton based his conceptions of universal motion on the *prima-facie* evidence of bodies upon the surface of the earth having *weight* whether at rest or in motion, without taking into consideration that these bodies have *weight* because they are integral parts of a continuously rotating planet.

When Newton observed that the *weight* of a body alters with its change of position relative to the earth, he attributed this change of *weight* to the *attraction* of the earth; but when the physicists learned that any change in the *velocity* of a body results in changing its *weight*, they should have recognised that this is just what happens whenever the position of a body on the surface of the earth is altered relative to the earth's center of rotation. While Newton's mistake was the natural result of his belief that God first created objects and afterwards set them in motion, the time has come for physicists to recognise that all

objects are dependent upon motion for their very existence, and to begin to apply this knowledge logically.

When in view of the preponderance of evidence showing that all bodies have *weight* and exist in a continuous state of motion, we now connect *weight* with *motion*, and regard *weight* as functioning as the necessary resistance to *motion*, it follows that there must be something in Nature which has the capacity to overcome *resistance* and make *motion* possible. In order to consider this question we must bear in mind also that as soon as we include *resistance* as an integral part of *motion*, we must recognise *motion* as a force; and, like Galileo, we must refer to motion as the *secondary* force in Nature and begin to consider the existence of a *primary* force.

From experience we learn that if we wish to overcome the resistance of a body for the purpose of moving it, we must apply a force in the direction in which we intend to move that body. When we try to apply this experience to the continuously moving bodies in Nature, we are at a complete loss. We find that all these bodies have circular motions which, so to speak, return into themselves, and which therefore are directed towards every point of the compass. In addition to this we observe the still more significant fact, that *these bodies can and do move in more than one direction at the same time*.

A planet not only revolves about the sun but it also rotates upon its own axis, and, in addition, is subject to the translatory motion of the entire solar system. Something similar is presumably true of an electron. When we consider the motions of man the question becomes still more involved, for not only is man subject to all the motions of the earth, but he can move his arms and legs and other parts of his body in different directions at the same time. When we take such evidence into consideration there appears to be but one thinkable solution to the question of a primary force, and that is an *all-pervading, permanent and immovable* field which as a force is opposite and complementary to motion, and which has the capacity to animate everything in Nature, because *this force is life itself*.

This conception of an initial force, primary to the force of motion, is not new to those acquainted with the writings of Aristotle, from which we learn about a primary, immovable mover (*primum mobile immotum*), which was regarded not as a mechanical but as an indivisible and in-

corporeal force and which "moves the world as the beloved object moves the lover." This allegorical description which bears the earmarks of Plato, we shall consider after we have identified the manifestation of this force in physical Nature. But we must call attention to the fact that the Newtonian physicists, who have been nursing the conceptions of Nature which they inherited from the Christian Church, have been in the habit of rejecting such ancient conceptions as childish superstitions and fantastic speculations. It is also of interest to note that when the early theologians adapted Aristotle's philosophy and made it the basis for a Christian metaphysics, this immovable mover evidently reminded them too much of pagan influences. This accounts for their final disposal of the primary immovable mover, which, when last heard from, had found a resting-place in Dante's tenth heaven, where it so evidently has remained hidden ever since.

The very idea of *universal motion* as it reveals itself in Nature, is inconceivable unless it can be related to something universally immovable; for, as Giordano Bruno expressed it, the mind is incapable of thinking apart from the conception of antitheses. On the other hand, when we try to conceive of a *primary immovable mover* in connexion with the multitude of bodies in Nature, all moving in different directions and with varying velocities, it is evident that this cannot be accounted for by a force existing as an all-pervading and permanent field. The function of such a *primary force* must be confined therefore to that of neutralizing all bodily resistance by animating it. This should justify us in regarding the abstract conception of *universal motion as mobilized resistance*; and, when we think of *motion* in its relation to an *immovable force*, we obtain a more satisfactory explanation of the other much discussed and abstract conception, *inertia*, which is recognised as the keystone of physical science.

When, like Galileo, we eliminate the idea of supernatural intervention, and at the same time recognise that there is no actual rest anywhere in Nature, we are justified in assuming (1) that *inertia* is a force impressed from within by a primary force; (2) that *inertia* manifests itself as a tendency in bodies to retain permanently such direction and velocity as had been imparted to their bodily resistance; and (3) that this *inertial* tendency is a direct reflexion of the opposite tendency in the *primary force*, namely that of remaining permanently immovable.

The fundamental existence of two complementary universal forces, an immovable and a movable, demands the recognition of an additional force capable of linking and co-ordinating these opposite forces, and of determining the direction and *velocity* of each of the continuously moving bodies in Nature, all of which have definite movements of their own. This *directing force*, we are therefore justified in assuming, must reside in each of these bodies and must be recognised in connexion with the technically and much discussed term, *mass*.

As the identification of this *directing force* involves a consideration of the evidence presented by physical science and also the question of the relation between *energy and mass*, this subject must be inquired into separately. However, we shall venture to anticipate this inquiry by stating that this *directing force* was referred to by Bruno, who recognised it as an inner impulse residing in everything, and who regarded this inner impulse as fundamental to the force of a magnet and to the force which makes drops of water and planets assume the shape best suited for their purposes, and, in addition to this, indicated a correspondence between magnetism and will in man and Nature. As we proceed we shall not only attempt to confirm this identification, but in addition shall point out a correspondence between *the immovable mover and electricity* and a similar correspondence between *universal motion and electrified resistance*.

Let us pause to consider what it was that enabled Bruno to identify in magnetism a *directing force* in Nature and to relate this force to the *will* in man. Bruno may be said to have explained this himself by his repeated references to the importance of self-knowledge and the necessity of experience. A noted scholar informs us that "Bruno is one of the first thinkers to realize that great thoughts are due to a long successive series of experiences."* But in order to appreciate the full import of this comment, we must realize that this "long successive series of experiences" was by Bruno not confined to those of the Christian civilization but referred particularly to those of a remote past, of which we are only quite recently beginning to get a real glimpse.

Bruno tried to revive the accumulated knowledge stored up by Pythagorean philosophers, to which he repeatedly referred throughout his writings and of which the world in general possessed only distorted

*Professor Hoffding: *A History of Modern Philosophy*.

conceptions. His aim evidently was to bridge the gap of some two thousand years and to forge a link between the recorded experiences of the remote past, from the knowledge of which the Christian civilization was cut off when, at the instigation of a fanatic Church, the Huns and Vandals burned the valuable libraries containing these ancient records and destroyed every trace of what were then looked upon as dangerous Pagan influences.

This is what lends special importance to a philosophy for the truth of which Bruno certified by making his own life its sponsor. As we proceed we shall take occasion to refer to Bruno's philosophy, which, in spite of repeated assertions by modern commentators that "the condemnation of Bruno's philosophy is written in its neglect," we find mirrored forth by later philosophic writers who, however, failed to acknowledge their source. For the present we shall go directly to the ancient philosophers, and present their metaphysical conception of a dynamic principle, with the object of testing this principle in the light of the experience recorded by physical science.

Both orthodox religion and conventional science have been in the habit of regarding *spirit* and *matter* as something distinct and separate, having independent existence. But from the records of an ancient tradition we learn that *spirit* and *matter* (*purusha* and *prakṛiti*) were terms for designating the opposite poles or aspects of consciousness, and that this dual consciousness is fundamental to the vast multitude of organically constituted activities of which physical Nature is concreted representations.

The inner and subjective pole of consciousness, *spirit*, was recognised as *life*, while the outer or objective pole, *matter*, was recognised as *that which resists life*. From this it follows that *matter* represents the necessary antithesis by which *spirit* reveals itself. Because the ancients knew from experience and self-knowledge that *matter* (resistance) is to be found nowhere except in connexion with *motion*, they regarded *motion* as a universal material force in contradistinction to a universal spiritual force, and postulated a Nature in which everything is the manifestation of life and consciousness.

When we now regard the *force of motion*, or what in physics is known as *matter in motion*, as that which can be perceived by the outer senses, and recognise that only the inner senses can perceive the *spiritual*

life-force which makes the *force of motion* possible, we establish a necessary correspondence between the inner and outer aspects of perception and the inner and outer aspects of the physical objects perceived by the mind. It was upon the strength of such correspondences that the ancients formulated their conceptions of Nature, and it is this method that we propose to employ.

When physical science recently confirmed the ancient conception of universal motion, by tracing *matter* back to something so intangible as the photonic waves out of which electrons are formed, some of the more progressive scientists, recognising the inseparable connexion between life and consciousness, began to consider the possibility of establishing a relation between consciousness and Nature. But before the subject of consciousness can enter the scientific domain, the physicists must assume a correspondence between physical and metaphysical dynamics and recognise in the evidence of the former a representation of the latter, so as to utilize physical evidence as a means for testing the truth concerning a metaphysical nature in and behind the physical.

Hence when the ancient metaphysicians inform us that *spirit* and *matter* are the two inseparable aspects of life and consciousness, and experience tells us that only *matter in motion* can reveal life, and physical evidence shows that *matter* exists nowhere except in a state of motion, we must recognise that consciousness is everywhere, that everything in Nature is alive, and that death, as an antithesis to life, is non-existent. Says Professor Bohr:*

The fact that consciousness, as we know it, is inseparably connected with life, ought to prepare us for finding that the very problem of the distinction between the living and the dead escapes comprehension in the ordinary sense of the word. That a physicist touches upon such questions may perhaps be excused on the ground that the new situation in physics has so forcibly reminded us of the old truth that we are both onlookers and actors in the great drama of existence.

The dilemma upon which the professor has put his finger, can be removed as soon as we recognise death as an antithesis to birth, and that birth and death represent two complementary aspects of life as well as one of the numerous manifestations of a universal periodicity which, according to the ancients, was as necessary to a living nature as it is to living man.

**Atomic Theory.*

The ancients recognised that because of their antinomous relation, *spirit* and *matter* can never meet, but can be intelligently co-ordinated and linked together in action as *cause* and *effect*. Hence they maintained that every action, manifesting itself in Nature as the power to move, necessitates an actor, an entity capable of acting and of being acted upon, and that the work of Nature must be directed by intelligent beings. This was their reason for recognising in and behind all the physical structures of Nature, from atoms to solar systems and universes, a vast assemblage of entities existing in various stages of development, and for referring to this assemblage as a living ladder serving as a bridge between the opposite poles of Nature.

The ancients regarded *Being* as the real, or what in modern philosophy became known as *the thing in itself*. Beings were referred to as monads, and distinguished from the life-atom, a term applied to monads in manifestation or to the conditioned medium through which the monad expresses itself and manifests as a differentiated entity. The term 'monad' was used by the Pythagoreans, who defined a point as "a monad having position and the beginning of things," and when Bruno introduced the Pythagorean monad into Western thought, he referred to it as "the innermost artist seated in the heart of all things." But the doctrine of monads is usually associated with the name of Leibnitz, which must be accounted for by the fact that Leibnitz's contributions to this subject did not mention the sources from which he drew his inspiration.

Since the time of Leibnitz, through the writings of H. P. Blavatsky, we have had the opportunity of learning much more concerning this profound doctrine of monads. In these later writings this doctrine is traced back to a very ancient teaching common to antiquity which filtered into the philosophic and religious systems existent previous to the Christian era. This ancient teaching as presented by H. P. Blavatsky was treated with the same indifference and neglect by modern scholars as was recorded the similar teaching, when presented by Bruno. When this ancient teaching is assimilated by the progressive modern physicists, they will be able to relate the mass of valuable information which they have gathered to a knowledge based upon the experience of the ages and to turn their accumulated information into really progressive and beneficent channels. For this doctrine of monads provides a

valuable key for solving the very problems which are facing physical science. This was indicated by Bruno when he stated:

The monad is the basis of physics and mathematics, for not only the forces and elements, but space and dimensions, testify to the existence of the monad, which as a physical and mathematical unity is metaphysical in essence.

This statement has been regarded as fantastic, as were those of the ancient Pythagoreans who, because they regarded the monad as the fundamental unit in Nature expressed this idea as follows:

Nature is derived from numbers.

Numbers are beings.

Number is the principle and cause of the material existence of things.

In order to show the real significance of such cryptic pronouncements we shall set forth briefly our own understanding of this recondite ancient doctrine, in so far as it pertains directly to metaphysical dynamics.

Monads, according to ancient teaching, are flaming sparks of intelligence from a ray of Divinity itself, each having its own distinguishing characteristics. All monads because of their origin, are endowed with divine possibilities, with the urge to realize them, and with the power to fulfil this urge. To describe the manner in which the monad accomplishes this, let us assume the monad to be a center in a portion of the great ocean of consciousness. Out of this portion the monad conditions for itself a series of bodily mediums, serving as vehicles for a corresponding series of differentiated entities, *life-atoms*. In doing so the monad infills each life-atom with its own monadic essence, including its inherent urge and potential power, which the life-atom must learn to develop and express in a progressive series of experiences, through the efforts to sustain itself as an entity capable of acting and of being acted upon. According to this conception each life-atom is the manifestation of a divine monad, while the entire series of life-atoms must be regarded as monadic offsprings.

Before presenting a technical description of the conditioning process to which a life-atom is subjected, let us consider this process in the light of everyday experience. As every monad must be regarded as an integral part of the source from which it is derived, this source must continue to exert a permanent and unifying influence which by the monad is imparted to its life-atoms. But as each life-atom must function as an

entity in different environments and under changing conditions, whose influences are necessarily transitory and differentiating, it follows that every life-atom, throughout all its progressive stages, is subjected to two opposite influences, one of which reveals itself as an inner spiritual urge while the other manifests as an external material resistance. It is by these two influences that the life-atom is conditioned, and it is these that the life-atom must learn to co-ordinate and link together in action in order to sustain itself in its progress as a differentiated entity; for such progress is determined by its ability to manifest its own potential powers and possibilities and to awaken the latent intelligence with which it is endowed.

During the progress of its life-atoms the unconditioned monad remains unborn and undying, and its function, besides that of infilling the life-atoms with its own monadic essence, is to preserve the accumulated experiences of the life-atoms and to serve as their guide and guardian or 'Silent Watcher.'

While these life-atoms may be likened to the photons recently recognised by physicists, the monad is a purely philosophic conception, which as such can be recognised under different names in a number of philosophic systems of the past; and in order to show that Christianity also rests upon a similar philosophic foundation, we have only to consider what in the Bible is referred to as "the father in secret," a conception which by the early theologians was perverted into an extraneous and anthropomorphic Deity.

It was from the standpoint of this purely mystical conception that the ancients interpreted Nature. As a guide to such an interpretation they formulated, with the aid of symbolical geometry, a metaphysical technique based upon their understanding of the relation between the unmanifested monad and the manifested life-atoms. In order to show how this can be done, and probably was done, we shall return to the ancient symbols already introduced into this discussion.

As the Pythagoreans and other ancient philosophers symbolized a monad by a point, and duality by a line, let us return to the diagram, Fig. 2 (symbolizing an event as the union of an action and its equal and opposite reaction, as described in Parts III and IV), and consider the horizontal (dotted) line $s^{\circ}m^{\bullet}$ symbolic of a portion of dual consciousness whose spiritual and material poles are respectively indicated

by s° and m° and whose center o represents the position of the monad before proceeding to condition a life-atom outside itself.

As the line $s^\circ m^\circ$ is indicative of a state of balanced inactivity, the monad must now condition its two opposite poles of consciousness into a balanced state of activity fundamental to a self-sustaining life-atom. In order to indicate this process let us begin by bending the lines $s^\circ m^\circ$ downwards so as to establish a direct link $m's$ between the two opposite

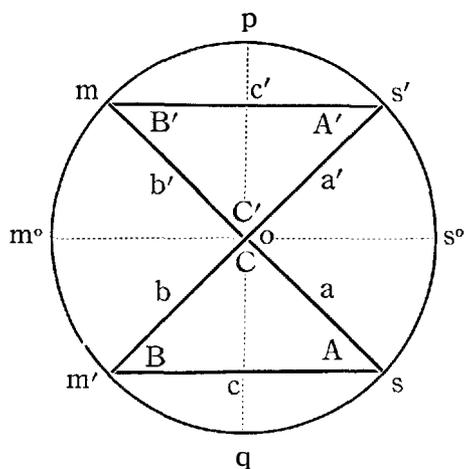


Fig. 2

poles which is separate and apart from the monad itself. This shows how the monad by virtue of its own inherent power and with the aid of its opposite poles of consciousness establishes an isosceles triangle whose three angles A , B , and C are symbolic of a dynamic community of forces fundamental to an action, as has already been pointed out in earlier articles. It furthermore shows how the force C , with its apex in the monad itself represents the intelligent *directing force* capable of co-ordinating the two

equal and opposite *initial* and *inertial forces* having their origin in the spiritual and material poles of Nature, and how the intensity of the directing forces determines the magnitudes of each of the opposite forces, A and B , as both intensity and magnitude are symbolized by the degrees of their angles.

But, when it is understood that the duality symbolized by a straight line is a fundamental necessity in Nature and therefore never can be disturbed, it follows that we must restore to each of the bent poles their corresponding opposite poles, and similarly connect them by the link $m's'$. This establishes an equal and opposite dynamic community which balances the former. When we now regard the latter triangle as symbolic of the actions of the organic body and the former as symbolic of the actions of the mind, the diagram shows that, from the moment that a life-atom has been conditioned, it is endowed with a potential body

and a potential mind whose interactions are necessary to a self-sustaining and progressive entity. From this diagrammatic presentation we learn the reason for the necessary analogy between the forces of the mind and of the body, to which we called attention in the two previous articles.

This diagram shows how the six forces which it symbolizes are derived from the power inherent in the divine monad. This power was by very ancient philosophers called Fohat, while the six forces were referred to allegorically as the Sons of Fohat. It was to these six forces that they attributed every activity and structural formation in Nature.

As we proceed we expect to show that this metaphysical symbol is something more than a fantastic notion: it is a universal symbol applicable to everything in a self-sustaining and self-acting Nature, and represents a geometrically formulated principle of analogy and of relativity necessary to a comprehensive interpretation of Nature and hence applicable as a guide to the multitude of phenomena manifesting themselves alike in both solar and atomic systems. This was what Bruno referred to and also reiterated in the following statements.

"The monad is not only extreme littleness, but is the germ of grandeur, the invisible foundation of things visible, of matter and spirit, and of the maximum."

"Life is the expansion or unfolding of the center. The minimum is the source of life and growth, for all greatness proceeds from the minimum and is resolved again into the minimum."

"The monad is the maximum reduced to its primary condition, the point, and the maximum, Nature, is the monad amplified to infinity. The one touches and resembles the other, for the point is the center from which the circle is generated, . . . the circle and the sphere are expanded centers just as the point is a closed circle or sphere."

In Part IV we pointed out how man sustains himself by work, and how every action of the mind together with its equal and opposite bodily reaction unites in producing a change, a bodily transformation which we defined as an event. When we now consider such an event in the light of the ancient doctrine of monads, it follows that every event records itself in Nature as a conditioned life-atom, a future entity, capable of acting and of being acted upon. For because this event is a child of

an already existing entity it is infilled with monadic potentialities and also endowed with the characteristics dominating its parent.

When, like the ancients, we apply this conception to a Nature in which every thing is changing, and attribute these changes to the work of self-sustaining entities, we should be prepared to consider that it is with the aid of their own progeny that all entities build for themselves more and more complex and composite organic structures in which to function as they proceed on their journey through the different kingdoms of Nature. It was on the strength of this conception that the ancients maintained that man is a creature of his own creation.

To this more recondite subject we can merely allude here. Our immediate task is to apply this ancient metaphysical technique to the evidence presented by modern science, in order to test the doctrine of monads and life-atoms by means of which the ancients formulated a science of Nature based upon analogy and correspondences. Thus, also, they accounted for a continuously evolving Nature, whose history is the record of the eternal pilgrimage of life-atoms, manifesting themselves in and through each and every physical structure in Nature, where, under the guidance of monads, they serve as builders and craftsmen in the work of fulfilling the plan existing in the mind of the Divine Architect — a plan which, in the words of Plato, is that of “establishing the world as a moving image of the Divine.”

When modern progressive physicists are ready to accept the natural consequences which flow from such evidence of a distinctly universal character as they have succeeded in bringing to light recently, they will be able to follow in the footsteps of the ancients and begin to acquire some elementary understanding of the working process in Nature. For this universal evidence shows:

(1) That *matter* exists everywhere, but nowhere except in a state of motion; and that *matter* serves as a necessary resistance to motion and that motion functions as an inertial force.

(2) That because *matter*, as a necessary resistance to motion, cannot move itself, there must be present everywhere an *initial, spiritual force* capable of animating a *material inertial force*. And

(3) That because such opposites as *spirit* and *matter* can never contact each other, they must be linked together in action as *cause* and *effect* by an *intelligent co-ordinating force*.

When men of science are prepared to make objects conform to the knowledge which we have of and from ourselves, and, like the ancients, recognise that 'what knows must be *like* that which it knows,' they will realize that as a result of their own intelligent efforts and laborious researches, they are now in possession of the universal evidence with which to reinterpret the local evidence upon which classical mechanics rests, and to confirm the existence of a universal principle of action fundamental to a living Nature.

H. P. BLAVATSKY — ALONE AGAINST THE WORLD

GERTRUDE W. VAN PELT, M. D.

IN the article, 'Is Theosophy Practical?' in *THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH* (July, 1934), the question was asked whether results have so far justified the claim made for the success of H. P. Blavatsky's heroic effort. The facts warrant a fuller answer than was there possible in the space allowed.

Changes have succeeded each other with such rapidity, and so entangled are we all with the conflicting currents of the present, that the last century has already receded in imagination far enough to be dim with haze. For the rising and even its preceding generation, it is fast becoming the 'buried past.' So it is well for those who were part of that past to pause and endeavor to recall as best they can, the picture life presented when H. P. Blavatsky brought her message, thus approximating an idea of the stupendous nature of her work and, by contrast, of its success. But long as seems the interval, due to the crowding of events, we are still too near that 19th century to see it clearly. It is yet in our blood and we are more or less drugged with its poisons. Fortunately however, somewhere, imperishable records of history are made, and it will remain for some future observer to see, as did H. P. Blavatsky, with the eye of spirit, that hardened, crystallized, material 19th century.

Her clear, penetrating eyes reached far and wide — into every crevice and corner; deep below the surface; over every subject that the human brain was wrestling with, into every joy and sorrow which the human

heart was feeling, and she saw the century as it really was: the last expression, the very acme, of *Separateness*. And to it she held up the mirror, and recorded its follies.

She found the idea of human unity or solidarity quite vanished. Rarely did one believe in it or care for it. The talk about it in the churches was only a collection of words without meaning for the human heart and mind, because sustained by neither creed nor practice. 'The survival of the fittest' was the battle-cry, and it echoed from palace to hovel, from shore to shore of the great Christian civilization.

Did you ever go out in a flat-bottom boat at low tide in some quiet cove leading to the sea, and drift about for hours, watching the little creatures that people the muddy surface below? It is a sight full of interest and fascination, but very depressing, for not one of those little beings seems to have any friend. One after the other, curious shapes come in sight, and if it happens that one bigger than those already in the field of vision appears, then it is a lightning-signal for scattering. Those who find holes or seaweed or stones are lucky and are saved for the moment, but the others, alas! are calmly turned open-side up, their shells become a dainty dish and their bodies a savory meal. Such is the picture under the sea, and very like it was the picture above the sea, when H. P. Blavatsky came to found the Theosophical Society in 1875. For not only had the animal in man run riot under a cover of cultured forms and accepted customs, but the great scientists, finding no explanation from the Church, declared that the 'survival of the fittest' was the law of nature; and the minds of the public followed the drift. Thus, the scientists went to the snail and the hyena to learn from them how man ought to live. But H. P. Blavatsky, when she came, declared that this was *not* the law of nature in the moral or spiritual realms where man's evolution goes forward.

Further, the scientists were teaching that man was directly descended from the apes, and the idea of man as a *soul*, as in essence divine, was getting farther away every day. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that the 'soul' was not discussed in polite society.

The scientists were not even content with robbing man of his soul, but the *very* greatest and the *most* learned were in process of depriving him of his mind also. They said that, after all, thought was only a secretion of the brain, for the very sound reason that when a man's brain was destroyed, he did no more thinking. Common sense halted

at this, but it shows the trend. Some scientists, who did not like to go quite so far, and had some dim, lingering sense of existence apart from the body, bethought themselves of inventing a machine by which they might weigh a soul, if it really did exist, and thus prove its existence without offending the popular scientific taste. All these things were being gravely discussed when H. P. Blavatsky came, but who ever hears of them nowadays?

The scientists, however, had done much. First, to their credit be it said, they had broken the backbone of dogmatic Churchianity. They were indefatigable and thorough. They had classified and tabulated and measured what they could see, or find with the strongest lenses. Truth was their watchword. Religion had failed them, and they had turned to nature to find it. But though they were developing splendid patience, perseverance, and courage; though they had made discoveries in many directions which were enduring monuments to the human mind, and an entire vindication of its supremacy over matter — discoveries which, when shown in their relation to the universe as a whole, would be of lasting benefit to mankind (such as a demonstration that the world was far older than 4004 B. C.), yet by reason of their eternal focussing upon the surface of things, they were getting farther away from Truth every day.

H. P. Blavatsky, when she came, showed them the *Soul* of Nature. She revealed to them the rich, warm, glowing Heart that was in and through everything, enveloping all with its life. And she told them that although they could live without knowing some of the things they were studying, they could *not* live if they continued to deny their own souls.

The Church, which stood for religion to the masses, naturally opposed these scientific pronouncements, and though feeling their errors, while being unable to meet them intelligently, declared war against those who had assumed the position of 'leaders of thought.' And the war went all over Christendom, reaching down from the high dignitaries into all ranks. But no one seemed to see that either the one was not religion, or the other, not science. At least no one said it with sufficient emphasis to command a hearing, until H. P. Blavatsky came.

The truth is, that neither science nor religion, was understood. *She* revealed them. And she showed the impossibility, the absurdity of such a so-called war; the insanity in the idea even that it could exist. How

could two aspects of the same thing be at war? Further, as we all know, not only were science and religion in battle-array, but the Church itself had, during the course of the centuries, broken up into a thousand bits, each one claiming to be the real, the genuine, translator of divine revelation.

Not alone in abstract realms did H. P. Blavatsky find war, but dissensions were the order of the day. In all human relations she found something false; something which, viewed from her atmosphere of clearer vision, of higher ideals, would have to be weeded out and swept away before what she called the "orphan humanity" could come to its own. And for this she was ready to live, to suffer, to be persecuted, and to die. She wrote in 1889:

We live in an age of prejudice, dissimulation and paradox, wherein, like dry leaves caught in a whirlpool some of us are tossed helpless, hither and thither, ever struggling between our honest convictions and fear of that cruellest of tyrants — PUBLIC OPINION. Yea, we move on in life as in a Maelström formed of two conflicting currents, one rushing onward, the other repelling us downward; one making us cling desperately to what we believe to be right and true, and that we would fain carry out on the surface; the other knocking us off our feet, overpowering, and finally drowning us under the fierce, despotic wave of social propriety, and that idiotic, arbitrary and ever wool-gathering public opinion, based on slander and idle rumour.— *Lucifer*, Vol. III, p. 441 (February, 1889)

Then she speaks of the ethics she found, in this way:

As civilization progresses, moral darkness pervades the alleged light of Christianity. The chosen symbol of our boasted civilization ought to be a huge boa constrictor. Like that monstrous ophidian, with its velvety black and brilliant golden-hued spots, and its graceful motions, civilization proceeds insidiously, but as surely, to crush in its deadly coils every high aspiration, every noble feeling, aye, even to the very discrimination of right and wrong.— *Lucifer*, II, 482 (July, 1888)

Everywhere she turned she met something which would have overwhelmed a lesser soul, for it must be remembered that she had within her heart true standards for comparison. The lethal vapors of the age had not entered into her being and blinded her as to the true condition. She could look back — far, far back into the glorious, golden past, before the souls of men had lost their way; and forward into the distant future and see the transcendent glory of the destiny awaiting them. So this age held no delusions for her. She saw it in all its naked horror, in all its unutterable pathos. She looked in vain for absolute purity. Everywhere she found veneer and gilded covers. And her soul cried out:

Oh the unspeakable hypocrisy of our age! the age when everything under the Sun and Moon is for sale and bought. The age when all that is honest, just, noble-minded, is held up to the derision of the public, sneered at, and deprecated; when every truth-loving and fearlessly truth-speaking man is hooted out of polite Society, as a transgressor of cultured traditions which demand that every member of it should accept that in which he does not believe, say what he does not think, and lie to his own soul! The age, when the open pursuit of any of the grand ideals of the Past is treated as almost insane eccentricity or fraud; . . .

— 'The Fall of Ideals,' *Lucifer*, V, 266 (December, 1889)

Earlier in the same article she says,

Of all the beautiful ideals of the Past, that true religious feeling that manifests in the worship of the spiritually beautiful alone, and the love of plain truth, are those that have been the most roughly handled in this age of obligatory dissembling.— *Ibid.*

H. P. Blavatsky saw all this and much more with the perfect clearness of an unfettered mind. She looked upon the age-worn pilgrims, and saw them utterly lost in the labyrinth of matter — despairing or gay, as the case might be, but guided only by goals which crumbled as soon as they were touched, or else wandering aimlessly as in dreams. The real purpose of life was missing. The golden thread which bound men to their shining past and glorious future, was buried too deep in the mire of their ignorance for them to find it unaided. So H. P. Blavatsky came to teach them. That was her mission. And how royally she fulfilled it!

She knew, moreover, that this was a most critical period for the race; that on the safe passing of this crisis depended the weal or woe of humanity for ages to come. Here and there, in the midst of the general gloom, she heard the murmurings of the spirit, like a faint, sweet note of promise. She knew that ere long it would grow stronger, and that then, the great forces of Light and Darkness, of Materiality and Spirituality, would be locked in a death struggle. In 1889 she wrote:

Thus, in every man the mighty battle rages, but the fortune of the fight is not alike in all — in some the animal hosts rage madly in their triumph, in a few the glorious army of the god have gained a silent victory, but in the vast majority, and especially now, at the balance of the race cycle, the battle rages fiercely, the issue still in doubt. Now, therefore, is the time to strike, and show that the battle is not fought in men alone, but in Man, and that the issue of each individual fight is inextricably bound up in that of the great battle in which the issue cannot be doubtful, for the divine is in its nature union and love, the animal discord and hate. Strike, therefore, and strike boldly!

— 'The Struggle for Existence,' *Lucifer*, IV, 106 (March, 1889)

Later in the same year she wrote in her magazine, *Lucifer*:

The great psychic and spiritual change now taking place in the realm of the human Soul, is quite remarkable. It began towards the very commencement of the now slowly vanishing last quarter of our century, and will end—so says a mystic prophecy—either for the weal or the woe of civilized humanity with the present cycle which will close in 1897.

—‘The Tidal Wave,’ *Lucifer*, V, 173 (November, 1889)

Look around you, and behold! Think of what you see and hear, and draw therefrom your conclusions. The age of crass materialism, of Soul insanity and blindness, is swiftly passing away. A death struggle between Mysticism and Materialism is no longer at hand, but is already raging.—*Op. cit.*, V, 174

But woe to the XXth century if the now reigning school of thought prevails, for Spirit would once more be made captive and silenced till the end of the now coming age.—*Op. cit.*, V, 175

Therefore, she further said:

Take advantage of, and profit by, the “tidal wave” which is now happily overpowering half of Humanity.—*Op. cit.*, V, 177

Is it too much to say that the spiritual energy of this courageous fighter for Truth produced results which could not have come without such aid as she gave? The Soul of Humanity was lifted aloft on the incoming tide, and landed safely on the Path of Life.

With all these pictures before us, is it possible to find any words which can suggest the courage, the fortitude, the power, the compassion, of one who came at such a time to do such a work?

How did she begin? Over this hardened, crusted surface of human life there was only one spot where she could find an entering wedge. The Churches were held fast in their crystallized creeds. Matter was the god of the intellectuals, but the Spiritualists had opened a door into the astral realm, which they mistook for spirit. It was something. It had an answer to the hard-shelled materialists. Through this door, H. P. Blavatsky got ‘under the skin,’ so to say, and began her work. Her effort was not, of course, to deny the phenomena, as was common in those days, but to explain them. By giving the ancient teachings regarding post-mortem states, she endeavored to demonstrate to the Spiritualists that they were not entertaining, through their mediums, a spiritual realm but a most dangerous astral region, even more material in a sense than this plane. She explained that after dropping the physi-

cal body, the Real Man, clothed in a body of desire, the *Kâma-rûpa*, passed into this astral realm, known as *Kâma-loka* in Theosophical literature. Here this second body was likewise dropped, but without difficulty in the case of the average good man, who was thereby liberated to enter his well-earned rest and peace, in which fortunately he could not be disturbed. To confirm these explanations she herself, being an occultist, produced many of the phenomena attributed to 'spirits' by the exercise of her will, hoping thereby to clear away errors which could only lead to disappointment and suffering; but though greeted at first as a friend, she was soon regarded as a foe, and had one more class of enemies to meet. The first volume of the Centennial Edition of *The Complete Works of H. P. Blavatsky* deals fully with this early encounter with the Spiritualists. About this time she found William Q. Judge, who was one of her kind, but upon whose shoulders had not fallen the duty of breaking the ice.

Having attracted attention, H. P. Blavatsky worked with as much energy and fire as if the world were begging for the priceless gifts she held, for she knew that without these, this present civilization, like those of the past, was doomed to destruction. So she began to dispense her gifts through every channel. She wrote books; edited periodicals; formed societies; held receptions; and came personally in contact with people from all parts and from all classes. Enemies arose from every quarter; friends here and there. She soon succeeded in attracting the attention of practically the whole world. Every one was talking of that strange woman, Mme. Blavatsky, but very few indeed had the least understanding of her. One sees her, in imagination, in the majesty of her courage, addressing through *Lucifer* the Archbishop of Canterbury, who represented in his person the Church of England, an institution which to its own consciousness was as the Rock of Ages. Her letter, in which she told the Churches through their representative that they were traitors to the MASTER they professed to revere and serve, stands as a masterpiece of penetration, dignity, and fearlessness.

By degrees she was able to launch the Wisdom-Religion of the Ages, a philosophy which meant a reversal of the whole system of modern thought. Those who caught the vision, saw discords, contradictions, irreconcilable seemings, vanish as if by magic, and in their place, a harmony so wonderful, that no words could describe its beauty. When this vision was reflected in even a few hearts, the seeds were planted,

and from that day to this they have grown and spread with ever-increasing strength.

In addition to those who have frankly become students of the Ancient Wisdom, it would not be difficult to prove the molding power of Theosophical thought in the domain of literature, science, art, or in any other direction. The thought-life is absolutely changed since the last century. Scientists are finding their way into the reaches of Space, recognising that only the presence of intelligence and consciousness can explain the harmonious workings throughout Nature. Some even are tentatively suggesting that the Universe is one organism, which is, in substance, one of the three fundamental propositions upon which the Ancient Wisdom-Religion rests. Our Theosophical writers are kept busy showing how scientists are presenting theory after theory similar to or identical with teachings given by H. P. Blavatsky fifty years ago.

The Theosophical Society has for its main object the formation of a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood based on an understanding of the actual facts of existence, and it is this which has been most thought of and worked for by its leaders. In this connexion it must not be forgotten that the atmosphere can be charged with thoughts just as truly as with disease-germs. This ideal did not belong to the last century, but now the feeling of Brotherhood as an active, intelligent force is at work, and it is significant that one hears frequently of associations of one kind or another, formed for the purpose of promoting World Brotherhood. Materialism is dying out. Barriers are breaking down in the religious world. It is difficult to realize how much good there is, what an army of genuinely altruistic workers in all ranks we really have, because there is so much evil — for the spiritual energies poured into human life at this critical era, have stirred things up from the bottom, and we certainly have had an abundance of mental and moral disease to come to the surface.

It is hardly necessary to state that H. P. Blavatsky did not generate the spiritual energies that worked through her. She was strong and true, unfaltering in devotion, wonderful in insight and understanding, a veritable Titan standing out against the world, but she was only the agent of Those far greater. Such stupendous results as we have witnessed during the last fifty years, indicating a dawning recognition of the FACT of Brotherhood working in cosmic proportions, does not come

about fortuitously. Behind the scenes one can feel our Elder Brothers and divine Helpers guiding the wheels of destiny without interfering with man's free will and yet with the objective of preventing a general destruction of this civilization.

A new order of ages is upon us. Disappearance of the old was inevitable because it was not based on eternal verities and because men themselves have been generating the forces of general disaster for thousands of years. Those behind the scenes, we are told, have foreseen the upheaval and for hundreds of years have been preparing to meet it. It was known that at this culmination of several cycles there must be the opening of the psychical nature, a mental awakening, and a new quality of Egos coming into incarnation, and it was understood that there must be preparation to guide these currents into healthy activity, thus avoiding mental and moral diseases in the coming race. The need for such guidance is now but too apparent in the epidemic of psychism which is sweeping over the country, opening channels for more subtil use of selfish power. Inevitably many will be lost in the black stream, but many also will heed the warnings.

For all this and more was the Messenger sent to tell men the truth about themselves, and thus give them strength, courage, and compassion. Before this general break-up of mental molds, minds had become so clouded as to accept the ruling order as more or less inevitable, not seeing clearly that misery and suffering as we know it today is not normal, but a disorder of the present unadvanced stage of evolution and due to disobedience of the Higher Law. An understanding of this Higher Law must clear the air, for who can hate another when he sees him as a very part of himself, having the same origin and the same destiny, struggling with the same temptations that he has to meet within himself, moved by the same longings, hopes or fears? Who can despair when he realizes that he is a potential god?

Out of the struggle and stress we shall emerge, for the spirit is unconquerable. Peace must some day spread over the earth, not a pretended peace, which stands armed to the teeth, but a radiant, irresistible, imperishable peace, under the splendor of which the race will rise to fulfil its destiny.

SPIRITUAL FENCES

A sermon prepared by CLIFTON MEEK, Secretary of the Silvermine Lodge and Director of the Press Service of the American Section of the Theosophical Society (Point Loma), and delivered in the First Congregational Church at Norwalk, Conn., by the pastor, Rev. Ernest McGregor, on Sunday, March 10, 1935.

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?”— *1 Corinthians*, iii, 16

THROUGH the courtesy and kind co-operation of your pastor it is my privilege to present to you, perhaps in a very inadequate and unsermonlike manner, certain aspects of religion which have become more or less obscured with the passing of time and the changed trend of thought over a period of many centuries, but which are very vital from a theosophical viewpoint. It is not my intention to attempt to discourse on technical Theosophy, i. e., those certain doctrinal teachings regarding man and the Universe of which he is the offspring and an integral part, the growing child, so to speak, and which have been preserved by the Great Teachers of the East whom we call Masters or the Elder Brothers of humanity, and at whose behest the Theosophical Movement of modern times had its inception; but rather confine my remarks to the topic of religion in general, its theosophical and basic theme, and attempt to show where Theosophy fits into, and harmoniously blends with, the multi-colored pattern of world religions, and if possible to correct some wrong impressions which have gained more or less current circulation in the public mind.

The subject, ‘Spiritual Fences,’ was prompted by a casual statement made from the pulpit some time ago, which appealed to me very strongly as being worthy of elaboration. During one of his sermons your pastor stated that in the course of his experience as a clergyman he had been called upon to bury Protestant, Catholic, and Jew. The thought occurred to me that he should be given an opportunity to do something for Theosophists also. It further occurred to me that it might be far more effective if a kindly service were rendered while we are still here to enjoy it. We are not ready to be buried; in fact we are just beginning to come to life, and believe that we have something of spiritual value to con-

tribute to the religious thought-atmosphere of the world. My bold suggestion was most graciously accepted, for which I am extremely grateful, and I trust that I may leave with you some worthwhile thought.

There is something more than passing significance in the statement from the pulpit to which I have referred. It is a prophetic indication of the liberal trend of religious thought and feeling which is beginning to stir in the hearts and minds of men, and manifesting itself in different quarters. Can anyone who has glimpsed the greater perspective of life believe that beyond this temporal and passing phase of our existence, this relatively momentary flash in the eternity of time and space — a brief sojourn in but one of the 'mansions' of Universal life which Jesus symbolically described as "my Father's house" — can we believe that beyond this imperfect state of being and in the eyes of Infinitude there is such a thing as a Protestant, a Catholic, a Jew, a Theosophist, a white man or a black one? Something within us which can vision beyond our limited personal opinions and prejudices tells us that these physical and external distinctions vanish when the imperfections of human nature are laid aside.

The real man, the Higher Self, or to use the terminology of the early Christian Gnostics, the 'Christos,' which is the Divine Essence of every human being, is universal in its nature, knowing neither race, color nor creed, nor does it recognise these mortal distinctions which are but the result of our yet imperfect evolution. As we grow in understanding and cultivate a love for collective humanity in spite of the imperfections with which the race is still heavily burdened, we realize more fully how little these things really mean. How quickly and easily they vanish in the presence of that inevitable change! But must we necessarily wait for a solemn cortège to bring to us the realization that humanity is ONE in its essence, spiritually rooted in Universal Being, working out, and toward a common destiny as we slowly and painfully ascend the ladder of life toward the goal of perfection? When this fundamental proposition is more fully realized by the world at large many of the difficulties with which we are faced in our present age, and which are the result of man's indifference to that spiritual Law of Laws, Universal Brotherhood — these differences will automatically vanish. The moment we give mankind a common spiritual background rather than the diversified interpretations which we find today, we realize the necessity for a unity of purpose, without which progress is painfully slow and difficult.

It may have been all very well, or perhaps it was not, for ardent sectarians of other days to proclaim that they alone possessed the truth and the whole truth, but we seldom, if ever, hear that stressed today. If there are those who still dwell in the clouds of that glorified error which for so long has obscured the spiritual vision of men, depriving them of that broader view and charitableness of thought without which spiritual understanding is impossible, we hear very little about it today. In fact, we hear things of quite a different nature. Thinkers in various fields of religious endeavor are stressing a far broader and more liberal keynote.

The Rev. Merrill Fowler Clarke of the New Canaan Congregational Church recently stated that a new vitality was permeating western religion, something akin to the calm, contemplative, and mystical thought of the East; something which is needed in our religious aspirations. I cannot quote verbatim, but that was the essence of his statement. I wonder to what degree the Theosophical teachings, which emanate from the very heart of the East which has ever been the mother of world religions, are responsible for this subtil change in Western thought. A Catholic friend recently called my attention to a statement made by Rev. Father Woods of St. Patrick's cathedral, who stated, according to the New York *Times*, that no one religion was the exclusive repository of truth. For proclaiming the same thing a half-century ago in her attempt to break the crystallized opinions of her day, Madame Blavatsky, founder of the Theosophical Society, was severely criticized. I cite these instances to show you how Theosophical ideas are permeating western religion today.

WHAT THEOSOPHY IS NOT

You know there are those who have some very strange ideas regarding Theosophy, and who sometimes object quite strenuously to their own misconceptions of it. For this they are not wholly to blame, for some very weird and fantastic ideas have been circulated under the label of Theosophy, and no one deplors it more than do sincere students of those teachings, and the best we can do is to correct these wrong impressions as far as possible, and await the time when its doctrines will be better understood.

However, if the good people would investigate for themselves in the same spirit in which Theosophists try to acquaint and familiarize them-

selves with the great world religions in their quest for spiritual values, accepting truth wherever it may be found, in all probability they would think quite differently. There is nothing that will eradicate religious antipathies quicker, or give men a better and more sympathetic understanding of the religious aspirations of their fellow men than will a study of comparative religion, for men invariably fear and dislike that which they do not understand.

Probably one of the most prevalent misconceptions is that Theosophy is more or less what is popularly known as 'mysticism,' and this may mean anything from chasing astral orbs to crystal gazing, or sitting by the hour gazing at the tip of the nose in what is called 'meditation,' after the fashion of a street yogî of India. With all such kindred pastimes which merely serve to distract and mislead the student from the path of real knowledge and genuine wisdom, Theosophy has no concern, with the exception of saying that such dabbling is probably the most efficient manner in which one can fritter away valuable time and get nothing in return. Theosophy makes a definite and clear-cut distinction between the terms 'mystery' and 'mysticism.' We are not interested in isms, but we do aspire to that ineffable mystery of the human soul which links man with the Divine Self. The key to our entire philosophy and the mystery of being is based upon that primordial truth which was reiterated by the Christian founder when he said that the 'Father' and the 'Kingdom of Heaven' were within, and implied by St. Paul when he asked: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

We believe that true meditation consists in ever aspiring to the god within, and in trying to make thought and deed subservient to, and worthy of, the Divine Presence which speaks to man through the still, small voice of conscience. The difference between a man who leads what we call an evil life, and one who leads a good one is merely that and nothing more, but it is a world of difference.

SPIRITUAL FENCES

The Theosophical Movement, like every other religious impulse, has not entirely escaped the nemesis of misinterpretation which has ever dogged, and to a very great degree, defeated the spiritual aspirations of man, with the result that teachings which were no part of the original program, but merely the opinions of individuals who failed to grasp

the basic tenets, were given out and represented as Theosophical. I know of no religious movement, however pure it may have been at its inception, which has escaped this internal infection entirely, and the great religions of both the Occident and the Orient have suffered alike in this respect, with the result that today we find multitudinous groups and sects, all having their origin in the same basic teachings, while at the same time holding and teaching beliefs quite divergent, and in some instances, diametrically opposite. These are the spiritual fences which men have erected, the fruits of human misinterpretation, and which constitute one of the greatest barriers and obstacles in the pathway of religious endeavor, preventing religion from becoming the effective regenerating influence it might be in leading a disillusioned world out of the morass and fogs of social and economic chaos.

What is needed, to use a mathematical term, is a spiritual common denominator. It should be obvious that there can be but one Truth, whatever it is, or wherever it is to be found, in whole or in part, concerning man and his relationship to God, or Life Universal. There cannot be two contradictory truths. Such a thing is utterly unthinkable. But there can be two, or a hundred different interpretations or versions, more or less correct, of the one Truth, and that is exactly what we find in the multitudinous religious beliefs in the world today. Theosophy states that there exists, and always has existed, a universal spiritual solvent in Religion, and that it is to be found in no one particular religion exclusively, but in all; in the sacred scriptures of ancient peoples, whether those of ancient Vedic India; the semi-historical allegories of the Jews as they are found in the Old Testament; or in the highly mystical writings of the Early Christian Gnostics which comprise the canonical books of the New Testament; and it is to be found in a greater or less degree, depending largely upon the knowledge of the authors; the integrity with which their writings have been preserved and translated; and mainly, please mark you, upon our ability to correctly interpret their inner, or esoteric meaning.

THE DIVINITY OF MAN

If there is any one truth which is common to all religions which has been universally proclaimed by every great religious founder in every age; which has been utterly ignored by the world at large, and which humanity has understood the least and tried the hardest to forget, it is the

inherent Divinity of Man. Yet it is the very heart, the *sine qua non* of Religion, the basic theme upon which every great religion has been founded, and around which the highly mystical rituals and allegories of religion in all ages have been woven.

The doctrine voiced by St. Paul as quoted in the text, we likewise find in the sacred scripture of other and older peoples. The same idea is embodied in the words of Kṛishṇa in chapter ten of the *Bhagavad-Gītâ*, an episode from the *Mahâbhârata*, the great epic of India. Who wrote it no one knows. It is so ancient that its authorship is lost in the mists of time. Kṛishṇa tells Arjuna: "I will make thee acquainted with the chief of my divine manifestations, for the extent of my nature is infinite. I am the Ego which is seated in the heart of all beings; I am the beginning, the middle, and the end of all existing things." The phraseology is a little different, but the thought and idea are the same. At the core of every human being is a flame of divinity, of which the external man is but a poor and feeble reflexion. It runs like a golden thread through the multicolored tapestry of religion, but one which has become dull with time and the dust and mold of centuries. Every truly great Teacher — Jesus, Buddha, Kṛishṇa and a host of others all have tried to reawaken in men the realization of their own essential divinity; that 'within,' and not through some external agency lay the mystical 'Path' or 'Way' to Divine Wisdom. Oh yes, we more or less accept our divinity in a vague sort of way and as an abstract ideal, but not as a living reality. We accept it with a barrel of salt, so to speak, with the result that at cyclic periods in human history, such as the one we are now experiencing, we find ourselves crystallized in our own brine. Strange creatures, we mortals, pilgrims of Eternity; divine in our inmost nature; linked in our inmost consciousness with the Universal Spirit which men call God, and which permeates every atom of boundless space and infinitude; possessed of "the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world," yet blindly groping in the shadows of material existence which has slowly woven its web over the spiritual consciousness of man, searching for that which can be found only within.

AN AGE OF MATERIALISM

If there is any one teaching which Theosophy stresses and tries to inculcate to counteract the crass materialism of a selfish age, it is that every human being is the temple of God and Divine Wisdom. Of course

this sounds very paradoxical, and may even provoke a smile when we view the antics of men today and in the light of recorded history, but it appears so only because it is we mortals who are paradoxical, the enigma of time and space. The inner life is as nebulous to the materialists of our own age as it was to the decadent Romans when the Christian founder proclaimed it two thousand years ago. This eternal problem of making the world a better place in which to live depends wholly and exclusively upon bringing out the latent and nobler qualities of human nature, for that alone will correct the causes in which our external difficulties have their origin.

We frequently hear it said: "Well, you can't change human nature." Such a statement is so much mental and verbal rubbish, and reveals a pathetic lack of faith in the eternal fitness of things. Were such a statement true, we might as well give up all trying, and close every institution that tends toward human betterment. But we know that we are changing every moment of our conscious existence, for better or for worse, as we will, for there is no such thing as a stopping-place in evolution. We either progress with the evolutionary life-wave, or we become the laggard Egos of the human race, the creators of discord and strife.

It is wholly a matter of learning to live in our better natures, in aspiring to the god within, which mystical Christians call the Immanent Christ, or as our Oriental brothers would say, the Buddhic Light or Splendor, and which sends its spiritual ray down into matter for the redemption of man.

THE VIEWS OF EMERSON

Probably no modern Christian has interpreted religion more Theosophically than did Ralph Waldo Emerson, who belonged to that remarkable group of American thinkers known as the New England Transcendentalists. In 1833 he declared: "I recognise the distinction of the outer and inner self; the double consciousness that, within this erring, passionate, mortal self, sits a supreme, calm, immortal mind, whose powers I do not know, but it is stronger than I; it never approves me in any wrong; I seek counsel of it in my doubts; I repair to it in my dangers; I pray to it in my undertakings. It seems to me the face which the Creator uncovers to his child. It is the perception of this depth of human nature, this Infinite, belonging to every man that has been

born, which has given a new value to the habits of reflexion and solitude." In this doctrine, as deeply felt by him, is the key by which the words that fell from Christ upon the character of God can alone be well and truly explained: "The Father is in me; I am in the Father, yet the Father is greater than I."

Esoterically interpreted, the mystical Christ or Christos, which is the Greek term signifying one who has been 'anointed,' is the divine portion of every human being. Born of pure spirit, it has been symbolically represented in religious ritual as having been immaculately conceived, in contradistinction to the lower physical man which is born of the flesh, and within which it is crucified and buried in the tomb of matter until its resurrection. Every great teacher has told us that we may attain a closer union with, a greater knowledge of, this Inner Light. Roughly speaking, there are two paths. We can drift with the slow-moving tide of human evolution, suffering the bruises and heartaches from being battered against the rocks of adversity by the whirlpools and cross-currents of human discord and strife. That is one way — the slow and hard way. But the Great Ones, the Elder Brothers of all ages have told us that there is a Path or Way of life which will bring us to the goal more quickly but which all are destined to reach in time. As Theosophists we accept the guidance, teachings and help of those Elder Brothers, living, as well as Those who have shaped the destinies of civilizations in other ages by their sublime teachings, and who have trod that little known but mystical Path that leads to human perfection and toward which the race is slowly and almost imperceptibly evolving through the ages. They are the fine fruits of human evolution whose compassion for mankind knows neither race, color, nor creed.

At cyclic periods of human history when materialism and the selfish propensities of human nature threaten to overwhelm the race, just as has occurred many times when fine civilizations with their culture and learning have gone down in the dust and din of wars and internal disintegration, these Elder Brothers send one of their number, or an envoy, out into the world to again rekindle the smoldering fires of spiritual intuition in the hearts and minds of men. The mottled and tragic history of the human race is resplendent with the names of those Great Teachers who have tried to show mankind the kindlier and happier way to that inevitable goal which is the destiny of every human soul. It is a sad commentary upon human intelligence that their presence is rarely recog-

nised, save by a few disciples and followers whom they attract by the nobility of their teachings. If you are familiar with the legends and traditions which cluster around the lives of every great religious reformer, you know that such is the case. To the multitude they have taught in parables, while to the few are given what was described by the Christian founder as 'mysteries,' or those higher teachings which embody the ancient Wisdom-Religion of mankind.

H. P. Blavatsky was the nineteenth century envoy of the Elder Brothers — that mystic Brotherhood which watches over the spiritual destinies of the race. In describing the entrance to the inner life she said:

I can tell you how to find those who will show you the secret gateway that leads inward only, and closes fast behind the neophyte forevermore. There is no danger that dauntless courage cannot conquer; there is no trial that spotless purity cannot pass through; there is no difficulty that strong intellect cannot surmount. For those who win onward, there is reward past all telling: the power to bless and serve humanity. For those who fail, there are other lives in which success may come.

If there is one theosophical thought I would leave with you it is this: Man is essentially and inherently divine, and the purpose of religion is to assist him in bringing forth those latent qualities which every right thinking person loves to see reflected in his fellow human beings. It is a means to an end, not an end in itself. The reality lies 'within,' just as the words of the Christian founder and other great teachers have told us. In whatever religious soil the flowers of human kindness, compassion, forgiveness, an impersonal love of collective humanity, charity, particularly that charitableness of spirit which is so badly needed in the world today — in whatever soil these will grow and flourish, divinity is beginning to manifest itself in the hearts and minds of men. In that degree will the spiritual fences and rigid lines of religious demarcation which men have created, and which have brought much unhappiness to mankind, vanish.

O my divinity! thou dost blend with the earth and fashion for thyself Temples of mighty power.

O my Divinity! thou livest in the heart-life of all things and dost radiate a Golden Light that shineth for ever and doth illumine even the darkest corners of the earth.

O my Divinity! blend thou with me that from the corruptible I may become Incorruptible; that from imperfection I may become Perfection; that from darkness I may go forth in Light.— *Katherine Tingley*

THEOSOPHY IN DAILY USE

(From a Student's Notebook)

REATA V. H. PEDERSEN

TO make Theosophy a living power in one's life, to use it daily, hourly, momentarily, is to find oneself growing more and more impersonal. To be able to deal with problems which meet us on every hand in an impersonal way, is to conquer them. Hence happiness and progress and well-being are found in impersonality.

Let us consider a hypothetical problem and apply ourselves to its solution. Let us do this for the reason that many construe impersonality as indifference. Therefore it behooves us to show that we do not mean a withdrawing of our sympathies when the problem concerns another, or advocate a 'do nothing' attitude if it concerns ourselves.

We take then, a problem the depression has brought to many of us — that of opening our homes to relatives whose care, if not support, shall be our duty henceforth. First let us view this duty for what it most certainly is — a karmic one — and let us realize our carrying out of it for what it most certainly is, an opportunity to 'make good karma,' as the saying has it.

We find those whom our family circle has expanded to include, to be our companions now for the reason that we have invited them *to share this incarnation* with us. Our past lives have tended to bring about this very close association. We have attracted to ourselves these egos; we have chosen to 'work out' with them certain defects, or mayhap certain virtues, in our character. The depression has been a contributing factor toward the realization of the desire so plainly outlined in other lives.

How often the student is told by the Teacher, "You are what you have made yourself to be." We can therefore easily understand how in the making we have affected, and been affected by, certain others whose lives have touched our own. Such contacts hold us and will continue so to do until there is no further experience, no greater lesson, to be had through them. It is not, of course, that there is one who will decide if we have passed beyond the need of the lessons these contacts afford, but only that we, in making of ourselves something greater, prove ourselves to be beyond the need of them. We can have done with them

because, having become through them worthy of finer contacts, we now have the finer contacts.

If there be a defect of character to be replaced with a virtue, or a shining virtue to be made more radiant still, there yet is no way to work out the problem truly, no way really to have done with it, except the way of spiritual growth. No problem of life is ever conquered on purely materialistic lines, however much it appears to be.

Why, if we were so irked by the presence of a person in our home that we preferred to sacrifice the greater part of our income that a home might be found that person elsewhere, it would not serve us. We should meet the problem presented by this close contact in another life, if not again in this one.

Again, if out of love, we sacrificed our income to the use of that person, thinking thus to provide a better home — even then we should meet the problem again. FOR WE ARE SERVED BY THAT CONTACT — some needed lesson is to be had through it. And it may be the lesson is one which will teach us that even through love we must not concern ourselves with the ‘fruit of action.’

Here then is what is meant by impersonality, and here disclosed the goal sought in the ‘spiritual exercises’ we have undertaken. For Realization that to grow in grace we have but to concern ourselves with right action, and concern ourselves not at all with its fruit, is proof we have reached a great height of knowledge. From the heights mighty streams seem but a thin trickle of water. And so it is that from the heights of impersonality, currents of emotion seem but ripples moved by a surface wind.

Lovingly to serve with our spirit the person who is sharing our home and to appreciate the service of the spirit of that person to us; to find the way back to our divine source through this *wanted* experience, this *desired* contact, seeing to it that the god within us confabulates with the god within that other — it is thus we solve our problem.

We learn after a time that the problem has all along been our own. The other person in our home offers no problem, it is we who offer it to ourselves. We have only to remember that we can never re-form another and that daily we re-shape ourselves. WE ARE WHAT WE MAKE OURSELVES TO BE — this is the whole secret of character, of *Karman*, of control of self, of health-building, of happiness, of power. Each thought of ours aids in that making, and every action.

A helpful thought, which is also a 'spiritual exercise,' is that which gives consideration to the fact that physical man has learned to exist and build himself on the material provided by his environment. Spiritual man is builded and fed if he assimilates that which is offered in his environment, for it must afford him experiences which he can transmute into that which he needs, just as the physical man must exist on food and oxygen, which he transmutes, through assimilation, into bone and blood.

We have said that the problem we have discussed has proven to be our own. As a matter of truth no problem is other. Thus we see that we dare not advocate a 'do nothing' attitude towards a problem once we have knowledge of it. And now let us see what it is that we *can* do about a problem, whether it be the near one of a family of our village in dire distress, or the seemingly far one of a people enslaved by a stronger race. Naturally one cannot go rushing off to the ends of the earth to take active part in the freeing of a people, and sometimes it is impossible to take action on the physical plane to relieve the distress of the village-family. But there never is a time when we can do *nothing* about these things without retarding our spiritual growth. We cannot permit any of whom we have knowledge, to suffer death, unaided, without ourselves dying to some extent. Such is the penalty of inaction.

As to what we may do: this we have come to understand through solving the small problem met within the walls of our home. There, while it has been within our power to right a wrong almost immediately, to bring creature-comforts at once to the ill, we yet have learned that the greatest aid is given through our spiritual nature — through the conscious use of the powers of that spiritual Self, which is most truly our Real Self.

We now understand that in the one case where we could actually serve with our hands, and with time, and money, our serving was not a whole giving until we served with our spirit. Applying this same idea to the need to give help to the enslaved people, we find our only way of serving to be of the spirit. We must give the god within us a clear way in which to reach those in need of strength and solace. We must take right action, which is action in harmony with the Divine Will — wholly in harmony with the Will that works for universal good. (See the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, iii, 19: "without attachment, constantly perform action which is duty.")

The fruit of right action which we perform may be in the hands of another for dispensation. Right action and the fruit of right action complete the whole of the giving. In each of these parts of the whole it may appear, though it may be never are we to know through the usual channels of communication on the physical plane, that the fruit of our action has been eaten by the starving. But even knowledge that our good action has brought result may be considered fruit of action. Knowledge of this would surely fall under the head of performance with attachment.

Right action, said Kṛishṇa, "is acting in harmony with ME." Now what greater way can there be than this, what way more efficacious through which to solve any problem, however distant, however close to us its conflict? Let your thoughts dwell on the harmony which would exist in our homes, even in the whole physical realm, if we were never 'out of step' with the other workers of the Universe, if we claimed our birthright and were consciously one with the divine Will.

Then why not BE? Why not raise the level of our thoughts, why not aspire to impersonality even in the little things? With daily preparation we can make Theosophy a living power in our lives, with determination we can become impersonal, and with knowledge we can remain tranquil in any situation life may bring.

The teachings of Theosophy are deep; but they are also most simple. Some of us may not comprehend the deeper teachings, but within each of us is the ability to 'live the life,' the ability to do our best each day — and the Masters ask no more of us.

The object of any 'system' of exercise is to strengthen. We should miscall it if we were to think of that which has been outlined in these articles as a 'system' as the word has come to be understood. Yet use of this word to express an orderly plan of thought is quite proper. But the readers of these notes of a fellow-student must understand that the thoughts brought out are but suggested ways of approach to the goal. The goal is knowledge and the impersonal use of it. One's thought centered upon any of the teachings will serve. There is no need of mantram, no need of a 'special room in which to think,' such as a friend once told me she was building. You can dwell in thought in any place in the Universe, for such is the power of true meditation. You can as-

cent to the *high planes of being within yourself*, however lowly your tasks.

Determining to live aright, understanding what right action is and the vastness of time and space which such action affects, aspiring to be a pure and radiant channel for the god dwelling within, we are using Theosophy daily. For with determination and understanding and aspiration we are ourselves the wisdom and the philosophy and the religion of BEING! We *are* Theosophists!

CAGLIOSTRO

A Messenger Long Misunderstood

P. A. MALPAS, M. A.

XVI — CAGLIOSTRO IN SWITZERLAND

THE treachery of de Vismes was a heavy blow. He was the Grand-Secretary of the Lodge of *Sagesse Triomphante* at Lyons, the only Lodge that we know of which was really a success from Cagliostro's point of view. It was he who, at the bidding of the Sanhedrin of the French Government, went to London to entice Cagliostro back to France in order to deliver him up, Judas-like, to the authorities. Employed by the French Court to give an account of his minutest action, de Vismes followed him, and was received with the utmost kindness and hospitality by the Count, being lodged in his own house as his familiar friend. Here he had every opportunity to play the traitor to his heart's content. Constantly speaking of the French Court and highly placed personages in disparaging terms, he found no difficulty in extracting from his host all that he needed in the way of incriminating statements and lèse-majesté. Cagliostro knew well that de Vismes had a sister who was employed in the Queen's household, and wonder was expressed, after the event, that he had not been more on his guard against being led into expressions unfavorable to the Court party. In these days it is a little difficult to realize what a dangerous thing it was then to utter the merest commonplaces against such a man for instance, as the Baron de Breteuil, or his subordinate, de Launay, to say nothing of higher dignitaries of Church or State. But there still existed the deadly "*lettre-de-cachet*," by which, in half a dozen words the king could direct the Governor of

the Bastille to receive "his dear cousin," and leave it for the Baron de Breteuil, if he so desired, to arrange for the burial within a certain time, say two weeks or a month, during which impenetrable secrecy hid the "disease" from which the unfortunate cipher was to die. It really mattered very little what accusation was brought up to save the face of the extra-legal judges when they had determined to do their victim to death, if indeed they condescended to enlighten the public with any explanation or justification at all!

All the courage and determination in the world cannot do the impossible. A threat that a host of *soi-disant* creditors were to be availed upon him from abroad as a preliminary to further measures, was a warning scarcely to be despised by Cagliostro, courageous as he was.

Feeling it necessary to leave England, and having grown cautious, Cagliostro took advice as to the safest way of going to Switzerland. Unfortunately his adviser was de Vismes, whose plan was to trap him into entering France. Sacchi was a paid spy of the physicians but de Vismes was a deliberate traitor, a faithless disciple. His was the Judas kiss. The plot was patent to all but Cagliostro, who could not credit it, though informed by letter from a real friend. However he decided to make a simple test.

Having received invitations from his friends in Switzerland, he showed the letters to de Vismes, and said he intended to accept the invitations, and asked casually what route de Vismes would advise for the journey?

"Through France, without doubt," said de Vismes; "it is much the shortest and best way."

"But do you think I can with safety venture through France?"

"Oh! I am confident of it," replied de Vismes. "I will accompany you, and I am certain we may pass together unnoticed."

It was enough. Cagliostro declared he would not sleep another night under the same roof with such a Judas, left the house, and went to his friend de Louthembourg at Hammersmith, staying there in secret until he left for Switzerland.

De Vismes, enraged at losing his prey and at being unmasked, left at once for Boulogne. But, as so many traitors and enemies seem to do at the last, he put the seal of proof upon his treachery by communicating to Morande the list of the jewelry which Cagliostro had brought

with him to England and of which de Vismes alone had a copy. There would seem to be little harm in this, but Morande's devilish ingenuity succeeded in making capital of it. He published the list in the *Courrier de l'Europe*, and, declaring that Cagliostro had fled the country with the jewels, leaving his wife to charity, gave his enemies in England the opportunity for more shameful calumnies.

On March 30, 1787, Cagliostro acted quickly in leaving for the continent. Leaving the Countess behind, he went so quietly that he attracted no attention. A Miss Howard, a friend of theirs, undertook to look after the Countess for a few days, during which the latter arranged for an auction at Christie's of their furniture and effects, which duly took place on April 13 at the sale-rooms in Pall Mall. The de Loutherbours received the Countess as a guest until she could rejoin her husband. She remained there till the beginning of June, when, having received letters from the Count informing her that he was settled in a house, she purchased a genteel carriage and set off with the de Loutherbours for Switzerland. Before she left England she paid every just demand on the Count's estate.

To those not behind the scenes — and we must not forget that Cagliostro's "true story has never been told" (H. P. B.) — it certainly appears strange that the tremendous governmental machinery of France should have been set in motion against a man said to be nothing but a quack and a mountebank. It is curious that the powers should devote so much attention to the ruin of an individual, a Freemason, and should avail themselves to that end of every means, dignified and undignified. But that they were in deadly earnest we can gather from the fate of a young French gentleman, son of the Queen's chamberlain, M. de la Fête. This unfortunate young man had the indiscretion to write a political pamphlet called 'The Devil in Holy Water.' In order to avoid the attentions of the French Ministers he had to escape to England where he made a living by writing. The French Government tried various means of kidnaping him, but without success until they hit upon a very French expedient. They put an agreeable French woman in his path, and she, well instructed in her duties, did the rest. The Delilah wiles succeeded admirably — for the police. M. de la Fête went with her to Boulogne, was promptly imprisoned, and that was the end of the little love story!

From the circumstances surrounding the two cases we can judge

that M. de la Fête was very small game compared to Cagliostro, who always seems to have been, in spite of himself, a problem of Continental proportions, but a problem whose very solution seemed to depend on casting a veil of impenetrable secrecy over the real issues at stake. No historian seems to have the least inkling of what these were, but we may suspect that they are well known to *those whom they most concern*.

Sophie Laroche had been to visit the Cagliostros in England in December, 1786, to convey to them the devotion of their true friends the Sarrasins. She reminded them that in Switzerland Cagliostro's friends were always eager for his return. So he decided to take refuge with the Sarrasins, and, on leaving England, went through Belgium straight to his friends. Sarrasin rented a house at Bienne, not far from Basle. On the Count's arrival on April 5th, 1787, all was ready for his occupation.

During the three months before his wife arrived, Cagliostro spent his time in systematic organization of the Egyptian Rite in Switzerland. On May 2, 1787, the Swiss Mother Lodge was inaugurated, consisting of many disciples who remained from 1781, as well as of new members. Owing to his experiences of rough and unbrotherly conduct in the Espérance Lodge, London — though he never despised anyone of lower social standing as other Masons did — he had doubts of the purity of ordinary Masonry. He therefore devoted himself more attentively to the Egyptian Rite, purifying it from the crude exotericism of the ordinary Lodges. Lavater, the famous physiognomist, was attracted by this and now worked harmoniously with Cagliostro, though formerly he had been inclined to criticize.

All seemed to be going well, and Cagliostro at last seemed to have attained the peace and rest he sought. But a mysterious storm had been brewing. On the 10th of December, 1787, Cagliostro discovered that de Louthembourg's servant, Abraham Ritter, had bought powder and bullets with the intention of shooting Cagliostro! The Count appealed to the magistrates for protection the next day and demanded the expulsion of his one-time friend de Louthembourg.

Immediately the customary two camps formed around Cagliostro. On the one hand were de Louthembourg and the Maire. The latter was much attracted by the wife of de Louthembourg, but whether she was at one with them against Cagliostro does not appear quite clear. The sons of the Maire, young and irresponsible, were bound by the state of things to the side of the de Louthembourgs. Opposed to these were the

Count de Cagliostro and his wife, de Gingin, Sarrasin (who had hastened to Bienne to snatch Cagliostro from the talons of his enemies), the Burgomaster, and the Banneret Sigismund Wildermett.

What was the trouble? A few hints enable one to obtain some slight suggestion of the state of affairs, but nothing definite and detailed is available to throw light on the matter. For example, as early as July 5th, 1787, M. Sarrasin wrote to M. d'Épresmenil, from Bienne:

It is in vain that the people with whom M. Thilorier* is connected, as he himself confesses, flatter themselves that they are going to profit by the insinuations which they have made to the Countess. All is discovered, proved, and set down in a legal declaration voluntarily made in the most regular way.

Please inform the Count at once of the success of his action, and have your relative, Thilorier, understand that it is neither M. Rey de Morande, nor M. de Vismes, nor M. Lansègre, but M. le Comte de Cagliostro, whose cause he has to plead and to attend to, and that it is not for the husband's lawyer to invite a wife to separate her interests from his.

Much had been made of the fact that Cagliostro had left his wife behind him in London, as we are aware. Can she have been the tool of those who were crucifying Cagliostro? Exactly as at Rome in later days, it was seen that any statement she could be persuaded or tricked into making, or even agreeing to, would be useful to them. The legal declaration formally made and referred to on July 5th, 1787, about one month after her arrival in Switzerland, was a free and willing declaration denying all the imputations and implications which had been spread broadcast by Morande and the rest of his associates. But the lies had done their work. As soon as the declaration was made it was promptly described as a further cruelty on the part of the Count who 'forced' her to do it. Put in vulgar language, it was the old game of "heads I win, tails you lose." This may seem trivial, perhaps, but in a year or two the Holy Inquisition made it a big strand in their rope to hang Cagliostro with.

Thilorier ought to have known better. The splendid defenses he had made before the courts in defense of Cagliostro had been justly applauded as masterpieces of moderate and incisive pleading. He received the credit of their composition, though probably Cagliostro himself was mainly responsible for them. Now we find him, while still Cagliostro's lawyer, being dragged into personal issues against his client by

*Cagliostro's lawyer at the famous Diamond Necklace Trial.

the enemies of the Count. Few or none surrounding such men as Cagliostro can long remain neutral. The better side of man's nature, challenged as never before to assert its existence, arrives at the end of its tether, and withdraws. What is left, following the analogy of any dead organism, no longer synthesized by the departed spiritual entity, enters upon a period of swift disintegration. So now Thilorier was tested and, allowing his better judgment to desert him, was easily 'got at.'

From the Vatican 'Life of Joseph Balsamo' it seems clear that the mischief emanated from ecclesiastical sources. Somehow or other, admissions had been quickly dragged from the Countess as soon as she was alone, and apparently the de Loutherbours had been secretly poisoned in mind against Cagliostro, though for the time remaining openly faithful to him. Adoring his wife with an almost incomprehensible infatuation, Cagliostro was paying bitterly for the disregard of his duty as a celibate, as hinted by H. P. Blavatsky. As time passed, the situation grew more strained, until the outburst came, and de Louthembourg suddenly became an enemy — like so many others he could not be neutral.

Bienne was no longer congenial to Cagliostro. He visited the Sarrasins at Basle from January 17 to February 1st, 1788. On the 19th of July Sarrasin bade him farewell at Rockhalt, never to see him again. On July 23rd Cagliostro left his Swiss home on his way to meet the doom that was preparing for him. He had escaped the trap de Vismes had planned, yet why did he not suspect the noose into which he was running his head. What drove him to this madness? Was he 'fey' as the Scots call one who is irresistibly impelled by his *karman*?

As this is the farewell of that grand and faithful soul and true disciple, the banker Sarrasin, a few words here in regard to him are due in tribute to his unwavering devotion and loyalty. Cagliostro had, seven years before, at Strasbourg, "snatched Sarrasin's wife from the jaws of death" and had cured her after years of awful suffering, seeking no reward save the knowledge of having rendered others happy. Cagliostro had cured Felix, the son of Sarrasin, when the physicians could do nothing; he had seen Mme. Sarrasin through the trying time when she became a mother, and it was to him that she owed a happy deliverance.

Sarrasin was rich. But all the wealth in the world could not purchase what Cagliostro had done for him. That did not prevent the tongue of

calumny surrounding him and his family with all the torture of evil-speaking, lying, and slandering, such as no man cares to suffer, especially when he is wealthy and can easily purchase silence by repudiating his savior. Sarrasin suffered it all willingly and never wavered. He was rewarded for his devotion in seeing farther than most into the depths of that being known as Cagliostro, and yet he was often puzzled that the latter seemed to choose the road which was bound to bring suffering on himself, when he had the power to take a very different route. In 1790 when Cagliostro was facing his accusers at Rome, Sarrasin wrote to Lavater:

The sufferings of the Count trouble me; but I feel that if things are so, it is because he has wished them to be so; the world understands nothing of it; as for me, I know his *interior value*. [Italics mine — P. A. M.]

It is impossible to do justice to Sarrasin in print. A tribute of silence is best, even though the world may never know what a faithful disciple he was. The great Rosicrucians have ever lived and suffered and struggled and triumphed in silence throughout the ages. Sarrasin is worthy of the same silence.

(To be continued)



“SCIENCE is perhaps regarded too much as a matter of discovery. The business of the man of science, it is said, is to ‘wring her secrets from Nature.’ But before Nature will yield up a secret the searcher must have some sort of inkling of what kind the secret is. Nature is a literalist. She will answer only the question we ask her, and neither the question we ought to ask her nor the question that we think we ask. And if our question is confused her answer will also be confused. Thus the posing of the question is of primary importance, and perhaps the greatest of Aristotle’s services was the posing of particular questions. ‘For those who wish to resolve difficulties,’ he observes, ‘it is a great advance to ask at least the right questions.’”

— From Editorial ‘On Coming Into Being’ (Review of *A History of Embryology*, by Joseph Needham), *Times Literary Supplement*, April 18, 1935