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KABBALAH — *Seth Pancoast*

The Kabbalah was formerly a tradition, as the word implies, and is generally supposed to have originated with the Jewish Rabbins. The word is of Hebrew origin, but the esoteric science it represents did not originate with the Jews; they merely recorded what had previously been traditional.

The Kabbalah is a system of philosophy and theosophy that was obtained at a very remote period of time by the wise men of the east, through the unfoldment of the intuitive perceptions.

Self consciousness forms the basis of mind, and knowledge is acquired through the reception of activities from without, which are recorded in consciousness; there are two sources through which knowledge is received — one subjective, the other objective. The former gives us a knowledge of the causal side of the cosmos, and the latter, the objective or material side, which is the world of effects, on account of being evolved from the former.

"The outward doth from the inward roll,
And the inward dwells in the inmost soul."

If this be true, the great first cause — God — has evolved out of Himself the esoteric or subjective world, in which He is to be found manifested. Out of the subjective, by change of energy and substance through law, He evolved the objective world.

Therefore, the antecedents of the objective are to be found in the unseen or invisible portion of the universe. In a work we are preparing for the press, which has been a study for over thirty years, we will show what spirit is, that it is self-generating and self-sustaining, and from it, through volition, the cosmos was evolved.

Do not understand by the above remark that spirit becomes matter through evolution, and that the universe is a huge *Divine Personality*. We have too high a conception and reverence for Deity, to suppose for an instant that He became a material being through the evolution of the universe. He is not in any manner *personally associated* with either the esoteric or exoteric cosmos. *Spirit is distinct from matter, but not from energy; energy is the source of matter. It is therefore through energy and law that God is associated with the universe. The law is His Providence, and His will the executive.* A miracle is an impossibility, for it requires a suspension of the law upon which the universe is reared. To suspend this law for one moment would disarrange the harmony of the entire universe. Therefore, the suspension of this unique law, which controls energy in the production of substance and matter, would immediately suspend evolution, and the entire universe and all that is associated with it would at once become disintegrated.

The Providential law, being one of harmony, applies to everything outside of the spirit of God, and therefore cannot be violated with impunity. The beauties of nature result from its harmony, and when it is violated, discord ensues. We see this in nationalities, society, individuals, and in fact in all departments of nature. If the violation goes beyond certain limits, revolution is the result, and if it is not corrected, destruction naturally follows. The greater the violation the more difficult it is to overcome the discordancy. Dissipation is sure to be rewarded with sickness, and if carried too far, with death. Luxury and licentiousness, if persisted in, will destroy society as well as nationalities. History affords us ample proof of this. This law, no matter how slightly violated, brings its comparative punishment, and when obeyed, its corresponding reward.

After these preliminary remarks, we turn to our subject, the

Kabbalah, and show how it has been preserved and transmitted or handed down from one generation to another. The study of external nature alone affords us no evidence of a future life, — on the contrary, it tends to disprove it, which accounts for the agnostic belief which has become so prevalent of late years. In the investigation of external phenomena, we recognize matter, energy, and life; the latter we are told is the result of protoplasmic cell action, — the same of mind. The *continuity* observed through all the departments of nature implies that there is a law controlling energy in the production of forms. If energy had nothing to guide it, its movements would be erratic, and nature would become a conglomerate discordant mass. Now the existence of a law implies a law giver, for it is not self-creating or self-sustaining, therefore we logically conclude that there is something back of material nature that is not recognized by the external senses. What proof have we of the existence of an external world, except through consciousness? An unborn child, if it possessed reasoning facilities, would deny the existence of its own mother. A person born blind can have no conception of the beauties of nature, and if the sense of touch be suspended with that of sight, we could form no conception of solidity; if born deaf, of the harmony and discord of sound or of music. *We therefore perceive that we can have no conception of the existence of an external world except through neural activities recorded in consciousness*, and without the unfoldment of the inner consciousness, we can form no opinion of a future life. In fact, logically speaking, we have the same grounds for denying its existence as we would have of the external world, providing objective consciousness was closed.

This accounts for the doubt, uncertainty, and fear respecting the future, which is intensified by the present system of religious teachings. The spiritual world is as much a reality as this, in fact

more so, for it undergoes no change, as this one does.

The study of Theosophy has demonstrated to the writer that there is another source of knowledge which can only be acquired through the cultivation of a plane of consciousness which is not reached by objective neural activities, but can be by unfoldment of inner consciousness.

It is the development of this state of consciousness that brings us *en rapport* with the esoteric world. The question now arises, How are we to develop this much desired condition? It can only be accomplished through the harmony of the moral attributes of the spirit. Harmony is the only passport to Heaven, and the absence of harmony, which is discord, is the only passport to what Christianity terms Hell. Therefore, heaven and hell are only conditions of the spirit, which are beautifully illustrated in the 20th chapter of the Apocalypse, where it describes the angel descending from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a chain. With the key he unlocked hell, and with the chain he bound the devil for a thousand years. The angel is the representative of holiness and purity, which is only attained through the harmony of the spirit; the key is a symbol of light, and the chain that of truth; hell is supposed to be the abode of darkness, and the devil a spirit of falsehood and error. We will now ask the question, Is there anything to banish darkness but light? Anything to disperse falsehood and error but truth?

Christ was an Essene, and this secret order was a branch of the Kabbalah. St. John was his favorite disciple, whom he fully initiated into the mysteries. During this disciple's exile on the Isle of Patmos or Patmo, he wrote the Apocalypse, which is a profound Kabbalistic production, describing the unity, duality, ternary, and septenary of the Kabbalah. The ancient adepts found from experience that, in order to develop the interior or

subjective consciousness, it was necessary allegorically speaking) to "wear the cloak of Apollonius;" that is, to withdraw from the outer world, practice to the fullest extent self-denial, and spend their wakeful moments in esoteric meditation. In order to isolate themselves from society, they established secret sanctuaries, in which they met for mutual communion and religious exercises.

As they advanced in spiritual knowledge they found that there were various grades of harmony in the subjective or spiritual world, and each individual on leaving this life gravitated, as it were, to the sphere with which he was in harmony. They divided their sanctuaries into seven degrees to correspond with the harmonies in esoteric nature, and to each degree there were three years of spiritual probation. As harmony results from the analogy of contraries, there were as many degrees of discord as there were of harmonies. The former they designated hell. The material cosmos, that is, what we call the external world, was, as it were, middle ground between the two, which they called Hades, into which the soul passed at death, and the spirit was made cognizant of its record while on earth. Physical death, they claimed, was merely a change from a physical to a spiritual condition; the soul or spiritual body being formed at the same time that the physical was, but in a very different manner. After death, the soul either ascended or descended, depending not upon gravity, but upon harmony.

It will thus be perceived that each degree in the sanctuary required a separate or distinct initiation for each one, which was intended to represent a higher state of moral and intellectual advancement. The last or seventh degree was the one of perfection which brought about illumination, when the subjective world was as much a reality to the inward or subjective consciousness as the outward world is to the objective. When this condition of moral and intellectual unfoldment was obtained, all

interest in this life was gone and the spirit longed for separation from its physical casket. The neophyte seeking spiritual knowledge could only attain to the wisdom of the different degrees by advancing morally, so as to be in harmony with the degrees. The knowledge thus obtained was never recorded, but communicated verbally in symbolic language. By this means it was kept a profound secret, and handed down traditionally. The first record we have of the Kabbalah was made by Rabbi Akiba and Rabbi Simeon Ben Jochai; the former compiled *The Sepher Jetzirah*, "Book of Creation," and the latter, *The Sepherhaz Sohar*, "Book of Light." The first is regarded by the Kabbalist as the key of the second. The Sohar has never been translated, and, as a late Bishop of the Church of England justly states, never will be by a Christian. This is owing to its symbolic character, which can only be interpreted by a Kabbalist. It is in three volumes, in unpointed Hebrew, and consists of a mixture of Armenic and Semetic languages. The Sepher Jetzirah maybe procured in three languages, the Hebrew, Latin, and German.



Fig. A:



Fig. B:

We now come to the most interesting part of our subject. The key to the Kabbalah is the "Word," consisting of four Hebrew letters, which may be arranged in a cross inclosed in a circle, Fig. A. The Christian Kabbalist inserted the Hebrew letter Sin, as a representative of Christ in the ineffable name, Fig. B. The four-lettered name was the one given to Moses on the Mount, with the understanding that it represented his (Jehovah) verbalization in the universe. The Word was held in profound reverence by all, Kabbalists as well as the Jews, and all ancient secret orders, and was never spoken audibly, in fact never mentioned, except in the

last initiation, when it was whispered in the initiate's ear by the Grand Master of Ceremonies. The knowledge and power the Word confers upon the recipient of its meaning is given in a fragment of a clavicle of Solomon: "I, Solomon, King of Israel and Palmyra, have sought and obtained in part the Holy Chocmah, which is the wisdom of Adonai. I have become King of the spirit of heaven and of earth, master of the inhabitants of the air and the souls of the sea, because I procured the key of the occult gate of light. I have accomplished great things by the virtue of *Schema Hamphorasch*, and by the thirty-two paths of the *Sepher Jetzirah*. Number, weight, and measure determine the form of all things, substance is one, and God created it eternally. Happy is he who knows the letters and numbers; numbers are ideas, and ideas are forces, and forces Elohim. The synthesis of Elohim is Schema. Schema is one, and its pillars are two, its power is three, its form four. Its reflection gives eight, and eight multiplied by three gives the twenty-four thrones of wisdom. On each throne rests a crown of three jewels, each jewel bears a name, each name an absolute idea. There are seventy-two names on the twenty-four crowns of Schema. Thou shall write these names on thirty-six talismans, two on each talisman — one on each side. Thou shalt divide these talismans into four series of nine each, according to the number of the letters of the Schema. On the first series engrave the letter Jod, figure of the blooming rod of Aaron; on the second series the letter He, figure of the cup of Joseph; on the third series the letter Vau, the figure of the source of David, my Father; on the fourth series the letter He, the figure of the Jewish shekel. The thirty-six talismans will be a book that will contain all the secrets of nature, and by their divers combinations thou wilt make the Genii and Angels speak."

The Schema represents the four-lettered name; when mathematically constructed into seventy-two different forms, it is

called Schema-hamphorasch, and represents seventy-two paths of wisdom, which constitute the keys of universal science.

The history of the Kabbalah is yet to be written, which can only be accomplished by one versed in its secrets. Historians have not done it justice; they have debased it by associating it with necromancy or the black art, which is to the Kabbalah what false religion is to pure Christianity. The kernel lies hidden in the rubbish of the past, where it has been preserved for future generations. When it is disrobed of its vile and obnoxious covering it will be found to have lost none of its beauty and brilliancy. The light of the Orient has been preserved by the wise men of the east, in symbols and allegorical language, and when the time arrives, which is not far distant, someone possessing the key, which is the *Word*, will unlock its mysteries and bring it forth in its divine purity, to enlighten the present and future generations.

The cycle of Tritheme, which commenced in 1878, will prepare some one to bring it forth from its oblivion, and through its teachings a new train of thought will be instituted and an impetus given to the moral and emotional development which will be the harbinger of a bright future. Science will take new strides, religion will throw aside her thread-bare garment and assume a new dress, which will accord with the teachings and example of Christ. When this occurs, the conflict between religion and science will cease and harmony be established. The two then will be like brother and sister, aiding each other in the development of the intellectual and moral attributes of the spirit. It is no fault of science that a difference between them has occurred; it has advanced, while religion has been carrying on a warfare about creeds and dogmas which has retarded her progress.

Christianity of to-day is as different from what it was in the first

and second centuries of the Christian era, as modern masonry is different from what it was in ancient times. Religion has attempted to control humanity through fear, having created a devil to keep man in subjection, and force the belief that God, who is the quintessence of purity and holiness, is a vindictive and angry being, who takes delight in chastising those who through ignorance violate the Divine Law. While this religious conflict has been progressing, Christianity has gradually lost its hold on the public mind. At the same time humanity longs to know something of the future which science cannot give.

How is this emotional or moral want to be supplied? for humanity cannot progress intellectually beyond objective knowledge, without the development of the moral attributes. We venture the assertion that if the same advancement had been made in the development of the emotional attributes of the spirit as has been in the intellectual, there would have been no agnosticism, and science would be far in advance of what it is. Science has about reached the limit of objective knowledge, and cannot advance until it acquires a knowledge of this world's antecedents, which will enable it to correct numerous errors and give an impetus to further development. This cannot be done so long as they ignore the existence of a subjective consciousness.

The Kabbalah embodies both philosophy and theosophy. The former gives us a knowledge of the universe, and the latter teaches man how to know himself and his God. It will also elevate masonry and all secret organizations having their rise from it, by showing that ancient masonry was not merely a social and beneficial order like modern masonry, but an organization for the unfolding of the moral and intellectual attributes.

The Kabbalah has shown its fruits in philosophy through such minds as Thales, Solon, Plato, Pythagoras, Goethe, and many

others. In religion through Zoroaster, Confucius, Christ, Old and New Testament, and the Early Christians, and later through the United Brethren, to which Jacob Behmen belonged, and other theosophic sects. If the views we have advanced be correct, that it is through the development of the inner consciousness that man attains to a knowledge of the subjective or causal world, and that the knowledge of the Kabbalah will enable us to unfold these faculties, how urgent we all should be to have its secrets revealed.

The Path

SEERSHIP — *Murdhna Joti*

The following remarks are not intended to be a critique upon the literary merits or demerits of the poem which is taken as the subject of criticism. In 1882, *The Theosophist* (1) published a review of "The Seer, a Prophetic Poem," by Mr. H. G. Hellon, and as clairvoyance is much talked of in the West, it seemed advisable to use the verses of this poet for the purpose of inquiring, to some extent, into the western views of Seership, and of laying before my fellow seekers the views of one brought up in a totally different school.

I have not yet been able to understand with the slightest degree of distinctness what state is known as "Seership" in the language of western mysticism. After trying to analyze the states of many a "seer," I am as far as ever from any probability of becoming wiser on the subject, as understood here, because it appears to me that no classification whatever exists of the different states as exhibited on this side of the globe, but all the different states are heterogeneously mixed. We see the state of merely catching glimpses in the astral light denominated *seership*, at the same time that the very highest illustrations of that state are called *trances*.

As far as I have yet been able to discover, "Seership," as thus understood here, does not come up to the level of *Sushupti*, which is the dreamless state in which the mystic's highest consciousness — composed of his highest intellectual and ethical faculties — hunts for and seizes any knowledge he may be in need of. In this state the mystic's lower nature is at rest (paralyzed); only his highest nature roams into the ideal world in quest of food. By *lower nature*, I mean his physical, astral or psychic, lower

emotional and intellectual principles, including the lower fifth. (2) Yet even the knowledge obtained during the Sushupti state must be regarded, from this plane, as theoretical and liable to be mixed, upon resuming the application of the body, with falsehood and with the preconception of the mystic's ordinary waking state, as compared with the true knowledge acquired during the several initiations. There is no guarantee held out for any mystic that any experience, researches, or knowledge that may come within his reach in any other state whatever, is accurate, except in the mysteries of initiation.

But all these different states are necessary to growth. *Yagrata* — our waking state, in which all our physical and vital organs, senses, and faculties find their necessary exercise and development, is needed to prevent the physical organization from collapsing. *Swapna* — dream state, in which are included all the various states of consciousness between *Yagrata* and *Sushupti*, such as somnambulism, trance, dreams, visions, &c. — is necessary for the physical faculties to enjoy rest, and for the lower emotional and astral faculties to live, become active, and develop; and *Sushupti* state comes about in order that the consciousnesses of both *Yagrata* and *Swapna* states may enjoy rest, and for the fifth principle, which is the one active in *Sushupti*, to develop itself by appropriate exercise. In the equilibrium of these three states lies true progress.

The knowledge acquired during *Sushupti* state might or might not be brought back to one's physical consciousness; all depends upon his desires, and according as his lower consciousnesses are or are not prepared to receive and retain that knowledge.

The avenues of the ideal world are carefully guarded by elementals from the trespass of the profane.

Lytton makes Mejnour say: (3) "We place our tests in ordeals that

purify the passions and elevate the desires. And nature in this controls and assists us, for it places awful guardians and unsurmountable barriers between the ambitions of vice and the heaven of loftier science."

The desire for physical enjoyment, if rightly directed, becomes elevated, as a desire for something higher, gradually becoming converted into a desire to do good to others, and thus ascending, ceases to be a desire, and is transformed into an element of the sixth principle.

The control by nature to which Mejnour refers is found in the natural maximum and minimum limits; there cannot be too much ascension, nor can the descent be too quick or too low. The assistance of nature is found in the Turya state, in which the adept takes one step and nature helps for another.

In the Sushupti state, one might or might not find the object of his earnest search, and as soon as it is found, the moment the desire to bring it back to normal consciousness arises, that moment Sushupti state is at an end for the time being. But one might often find himself in an awkward position when he has left that state. The doors for the descent of the truth into the lower nature are closed. Then his position is beautifully described in an Indian proverb: "The bran in the mouth and the fire are both lost." This is an allusion to a poor girl who is eating bran, and at the same time wants to kindle the fire just going out before her. She blows it with the bran in her mouth; the bran falls on the dying ashes, extinguishing them completely; she is thus a double loser. In the Sushupti state, the anxiety which is felt to bring back the experience to consciousness acts as the bran with the fire. Anxiety to have or to do, instead of being a help as some imagine, is a direct injury, and if permitted to grow in our waking moments, will act with all the greater force on the plane of

Sushupti. The result of these failures is clearly set forth by Patanjali. (4)

Even where the doors to the lower consciousness are open, the knowledge brought back from Sushupti state might, owing to the distractions and difficulties of the direct and indirect routes of ascent and descent, be lost on the way either partially or wholly, or become mixed up with misconceptions and falsehood.

But in this search for knowledge in Sushupti, there must not remain a spark of indifference or idle inquisitiveness in the higher consciousness. Not even a jot of lurking hesitation about entering into the state, nor doubt about its desirability, nor about the usefulness or accuracy of the knowledge gleaned on former occasions, or to be presently gleaned. If there is any such doubt or hesitancy, his progress is retarded. Nor can there be any cheating or hypocrisy, nor any laughing in the sleeve. In our normal wakeful state it always happens that when we believe we are earnestly aspiring, some one or more of the elements of one or more of our lower consciousness belie us, make us feel deluded and laugh at us, for such is the self-inconsistent nature of desire.

In this state which we are considering, there are subjective and objective states, or classes of knowledge and experience, even as there are the same in Yagrata. So, therefore, great care should be taken to make your aims and aspirations *as high as possible* while in your normal condition. Woe to him who would dare to trifle with the means placed at his disposal in the shape of Sushupti. One of the most effectual ways in which western mystics could trifle with this is to seek for the missing links of evolution, so as to bring that knowledge to the normal consciousness, and then with it to extend the domain of "scientific" knowledge. Of course, from the moment such a desire is entertained, the one who has it is shut out from Sushupti. (5)

The mystic might be interested in analyzing the real nature of the objective world, or in soaring up to the feet of *Manus*, (6) to the spheres where Manava intellect is busy shaping the mould for a future religion, or had been shaping that of a past religion. But here the maximum and minimum limits by which nature controls are again to be taken account of. One essential feature of Sushupti is, as far as can now be understood, that the mystic must get at all truths through but one source, or path, viz: through the divine world pertaining to his own lodge (or teacher), and through this path he might soar as high as he can, though how much knowledge he can get is an open question.

Let us now inquire what state is the seership of the author of our poem "The Seer," and try to discover the "hare's horns" in it. Later on we may try to peep into the states of Swedenborg, P. B. Randolph, and a few of the "trained, untrained, natural-born, self-taught, crystal, and magic mirror seers."

I look at this poem solely to point out mistakes so as to obtain materials for our study. There are beauties and truths in it which all can enjoy.

In ancient days it was all very well for mystics to write figuratively so as to keep sacred things from the profane. Then symbolism was rife in the air with mysticism, and all the allegories were understood at once by those for whom they were intended. But times have changed. In this materialistic age it is known that the wildest misconceptions exist in the minds of many who are mystically and spiritually inclined. The generality of mystics and their followers are not free from the superstitions and prejudices which have in church and science their counterpart. Therefore in my humble opinion there can be no justification for writing allegorically on mysticism, and, by publication, placing such writings within reach of all. To do so is

positively mischievous. If allegorical writings and misleading novels are intended to popularize mysticism by removing existing prejudices, then the writers ought to express their motives. It is an open question whether the benefit resulting from such popularization is not more than counterbalanced by the injury worked to helpless votaries of mysticism, who are misled. And there is less justification for our present allegorical writers than there was for those of Lytton's time. Moreover, in the present quarter of our century, veils are thrown by symbolical or misleading utterances over much that can be safely given out in plain words. With these general remarks let us turn to "The Seer."

In the Invocation, addressed evidently to the Seer's guru, (7) we find these words:

"When in delicious dreams I leave this life,
And in sweet trance unveil its mysteries;
Give me thy light, thy love, thy truth divine!"

Trance here means only one of the various states known as cataleptic or somnambulic, but certainly neither Turya nor Sushupti. In such a trance state very few of the mysteries of "this life," or even of the state of trance itself, could be unveiled. The so-called Seer can "enjoy" as harmlessly and as uselessly as a boy who idly swims in the lagoon, where he gains no knowledge and may end his sport in death. Even so is the one who swims, cuts capers, in the astral light, and becomes lost in something strange which surpasses all his comprehension. The difference between such a Seer and the ordinary sensualist is, that the first indulges both his astral and physical senses to excess, while the latter his physical senses only. These occultists fancy that they have removed their interest from *self*, when in reality they have only enlarged the limits of experience and desire, and transferred their interest to the things which concern their larger span of life.

(8)

Invoking a Guru's blessings on your own higher nature for the purpose of sustaining you in this trance state, is as blasphemous and reprehensible an act of assisting descent, and conversion of higher into lower energies, as to invoke your Guru to help you in excessive wine drinking; for the astral world is also material. To be able to solve the mysteries of any consciousness whatever, even of the lowest physical, while in trance, is as vain a boast of the hunters for such a state as that of physiologists or mesmerists. While you are in trance state, if you are not ethical enough in your nature, you will be tempted and forced, by your powerful lower elements, to pry into the secrets of your neighbors, and then, on returning to your normal state, to slander them. The surest way to draw down your higher nature into the miry abyss of your physical and astral world, and thus to animalize yourself, is to go into a trance or to aspire for clairvoyance.

"And thou, (Guru) left me looking upward through the veil,
To gaze into thy goal and follow thee!"

These lines are highly presumptuous. It is impossible, even for a very high Hierophant, in *any of his states whatever*, to gaze into his Guru's goal (9) his subjective consciousness can but *barely* come up to the level of the normal or objective consciousness of his Guru. It is only during the initiation that the initiated sees not only his own immediate goal, but also Nirvana, which of course includes his Guru's goal also; but after the ceremony is over he recollects only his own immediate goal for his next "class," but nothing beyond that. (10) This is what is meant by the God Jehovah saying to Moses: "And I will take away mine hand and Thou shall see my back, but my face shall not be seen." And in the Rig Veda it is said: (11) "Dark is the path of Thee, who art bright: the light is before Thee."

Mr. Hellon opens his poem with a quotation from *Zanoni*: "Man's first initiation is in trance: in dreams commence all human knowledge, in dreams he hovers over measureless space, the first faint bridge between spirit and spirit — this world and the world beyond."

As this is a passage often quoted approvingly, and recognized as containing no misconceptions, I may be permitted to pass a few remarks, first, upon its intrinsic merits, and secondly, on Lytton himself and his *Zanoni*. I shall not speak of the rage which prevails among mystical writers for quoting without understanding what they quote.

In *Swapna* state man gets human, unreliable knowledge, while divine knowledge begins to come in Sushupti state. Lytton has here thrown a gilded globule of erroneous ideas to mislead the unworthy and inquisitive mysticism hunters, who unconsciously prize the globule. It is not too much to say that such statements in these days, instead of aiding us to discover the true path, but give rise to numberless patent remedies for the evils of life, remedies which can never accomplish a cure. Man-made edifices called true Raja Yoga, (12) evolved in trance, arise confronting each other, conflicting with each other, and out of harmony in themselves. Then not only endless disputation arises, but also bigotry, while the devoted and innocent seekers after truth are misled, and scientific, intelligent, competent men are scared away from any attempt to examine the claims of the true science. As soon as some one sided objective truth is discovered by a Mesmer, a defender of ancient Yoga Vidya (13) blows a trumpet crying out, "Yoga is selfmesmerization, mesmerism is *the key* to it, and animal magnetism develops spirituality and is itself spirit, God, Atman," deluding himself with the idea that he is assisting humanity and the cause of truth, unconscious of the fact that he is thus only degrading Yoga Vidya. The ignorant medium contends

that her "control" is divine. There seems to be little difference between the claims of these two classes of dupes and the materialist who sets up a protoplasm in the place of God. Among the innumerable hosts of desecrated terms are *Trance*, *Yoga*, *Turya*, *initiation*, &c. It is therefore no wonder that Lytton, in a novel, has desecrated it and misapplied it to a mere semi-cataleptic state. I, for one, prefer always to limit the term *Initiation* to its true sense, viz., those sacred ceremonies in which alone "Isis is unveiled."

Man's first initiation is *not* in trance, as Lytton means. Trance is an artificial, waking, somnambulistic state, in which one can learn nothing at all about the real nature of the elements of our physical consciousness, and much less any of any other. None of Lytton's admirers seems to have thought that he was chaffing at occultism, although he believed in it, and was not anxious to throw the pearls before swine. Such a hierophant as Mejnour — not Lytton himself — could not have mistaken the tomfoolery of somnambulism for even the first steps in Raja Yoga. This can be seen from the way in which Lytton gives out absolutely erroneous ideas about occultism, while at the same time he shows a knowledge which he could not have, did he believe himself in his own chaffing. It is pretty well recognized that he at last failed, after some progress in occultism as a high accepted disciple. His Glyndon might be Lytton, and Glyndon's sister Lady Lytton. The hieroglyphics of a book given him to decipher, and which he brought out as *Zanoni*, must be allegorical. The book is really the master's ideas which the pupil's highest consciousness endeavors to read. But they were only the mere commonplaces of the master's mind. The profane and the cowardly always say that the master descends to the plane of the pupil. Such can never happen. And precipitation of messages, from the master is only possible when the pupil's highest ethical and intuitive faculties reach the

level of the master's normal and objective state. In *Zanoni*, this is veiled by the assertion that he had to *read* the hieroglyphics — they did not *speak* to him. And he confesses in the preface that he is by no means sure that he has correctly deciphered them. "Enthusiasm," he says, "is when that part of the soul which is above intellect soars up to the Gods, and there derives the inspiration." Errors will therefore be due to wilful misstatements or to his difficulty in reading the cipher.

"In dreams I see a world so fair,
That life would love to linger there,
And pass from this to that bright sphere.
In dreams ecstatic, pure and free,
Strange forms my inward senses see,
While hands mysterious welcome me."

Such indefinite descriptions are worse than useless. The inward senses are psychic senses, and their perceiving strange forms and mere appearances in the astral world is not useful or instructive. Forms and appearances in the astral light are legion, and take their shape not only from the seer's mind unknown to himself, but are also, in many cases, reflections for other people's minds.

"Oh, why should mine be ever less,
And light ineffable bless
Thee, in thy starry loneliness,"

seems to be utterly unethical. Here the seer is in the first place jealous of the light possessed by his guru, or he is grasping in the dark, ignorant even of the *rationale* of himself being in lower states than his guru. However, Mr. Hellon has not erred about the existence of such a feeling. It does and should exist in the trance and dreaming state. In our ordinary waking state, attachments, desires, &c., are the very life of our physical senses, and in the same way the emotional energies manifest themselves on the

astral plane in order to feed and fatten the seer's astral senses, sustaining them during his trance state. Unless thus animated, his astral nature would come to rest.

No proof is therefore needed for the proposition that any state which is sustained by desires and passions cannot be regarded as anything more than as a means for developing one part of the animal nature. Van Helmont is of the same opinion as Mr. Hellon. (14) We cannot, therefore, for a moment believe that in such a state the "I" of that state is *Atman*. (15) It is only the false "I"; the vehicle for the real one. *Ahankara* — lower self, or individuality of the waking state, for even in trance state the lower sixth principle plays no greater part and develops no more than in the wakeful state. The change is only in the field of action, from the waking one to the astral plane; the physical one remaining more or less at rest. Were it otherwise, we would find somnambules day by day exhibiting increase of intellect, whereas this does not occur.

Suppose that we induce the trance state in an illiterate man. He can then read from the astral counterpart of Herbert Spencer or Patanjali's books as many pages as we desire, or even the unpublished ideas of Spencer; but he can never make a comparison between the two systems, unless that has already been done by some other mind in no matter what language. Nor can any somnambule analyze and describe the complicated machinery of the astral faculties, much less of the emotional ones, or of the fifth principle. For in order to be analyzed they must be at rest so that the higher self may carry on the analysis. So when Mr. Hellon says:

"A trance steals o'er my spirit now,"

he is undoubtedly wrong, as *Atman*, or spirit, cannot go into a trance. When a lower plane energy ascends to a higher plane, it

becomes silent there for a while until by contact with the denizens of its new home its powers are animated. The somnambulant state has two conditions, (a) waking, which is psycho-physiological or astro-physical; (b) sleeping, which is psychical. In these two the trance steals partly or completely only over the physical consciousness and senses.

"And from my forehead peers the sight," etc.

This, with much that follows, is pure imagination or misconception. As for instance, "floating from sphere to sphere." In this state the seer is confined to but one sphere — the astral or psycho-physiological —; no higher one can he even comprehend.

Speaking of the period when the sixth sense shall be developed, he says:

"No mystery then her sons shall find,
Within the compass of mankind;
The one shall read the other's mind."

In this the seer shows even a want of theoretical knowledge of the period spoken of. He has madly rushed into the astral world without a knowledge of the philosophy of the mystics. Even though the twelfth sense were developed — let alone the physical sixth — it shall ever remain as difficult as it is now, for people to read one another's mind. Such is the mystery of Manas. (16) He is evidently deluded by seeing the apparent triumphs during a transitional period of a race's mental development, of those minds abnormally developed which are able to look into the minds of others; and yet they do that only partially. If one with a highly developed sixth principle were to indulge for only six times in reading others' minds, he would surely drain that development down to fatten the mind and desires. Moreover, Mr. Hellon's seer seems to be totally unaware of the fact that the

object of developing higher faculties is not to peer into the minds of others, and that the economy of the occult world gives an important privilege to the mystic, in that the pages of his life and *manas* shall be carefully locked up against inquisitive prowlers, the key safely deposited with his guru, who never lends it to any one else. If with the occult world the laws of nature are so strict, how much more should they be with people in general.

Otherwise, nothing would be safe. The sixth sense would then be as delusive and a curse to the ignorant as sight and learning are now. Nor shall this sixth sense man be "perfect." Truth for him shall be as difficult to attain through his "sense," as it is now. The horizon shall have only widened, and what we are now acquiring as truth will have passed into history, into literature, into axiom. "Sense" is always nothing else than a channel for desire to flow through and torment ourselves and others.

The whole poem is misleading, especially such expressions as: "His spirit views the world's turmoil; behold his body feed the soil. — A sixth sense race borne ages since, to God's own zone. "Our higher self — Atman — can never "view the world's turmoil," nor behold the body. For supposing that it did view the body or the world's turmoil, it would be attracted to them, descending to the physical plane, where it would be converted more or less into physical nature. And the elevation of a sixth sense race unphilosophically supposes the raising up of that sense, which certainly has only to do with our physical nature, at most our astro-physical nature, to the sphere of God or Atman.

By merely training the psychical powers true progress is not gained, but only the enjoyment of those powers; a sort of alcohol on the astral plane, which results in unfavorable Karma. The true path to divine wisdom is in performing our duty unselfishly in the station in which we are placed, for thereby we convert lower nature into higher, following Dharma — our whole duty.

FOOTNOTES:

1. See *Theosophist*, Vol. III, p. 177. ([return to text](#))
2. See *Esoteric Buddhism* for the sevenfold classification adopted by many Theosophists. ([return to text](#))
3. *Zanoni*, Book IV, Chapter 2. ([return to text](#))
4. *Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms*, 30 & 31, Part I ([return to text](#))
5. The following from the *Kaushitaki Upanishad*, (see Max Muller's translation, and also that published in the Bibliotheka Indica, with Sankaracharya's commentary — Cowell's tran.) may be of interest to students. "Agatasatru to him: 'Balaki, where did this person here sleep? Where was he? Whence did he come back?' Balaki did not know. And Agatasatru said to him: 'Where this person here slept, where he was, whence he thus came back, is this: The arteries of the heart called Hita extend from the heart of the person towards the surrounding body. Small as a hair divided a thousand times, they stand, full of a thin fluid of various colors, white, black, yellow, red. In these the person is when sleeping, he sees no dream (Sushupti). Then he becomes one with that prana (breath) alone.'" (Elsewhere the number of these arteries is said to be 101.) "And as a razor might be fitted in a razor case, or as fire in the fire place, even thus this conscious self enters into the self of the body, to the very hair and nails; he is the master of all, and eats with and enjoys with them. So long as Indra did not understand the self, the Asuras (lower principles in man) conquered him. When he understood it, he conquered the Asuras, and obtained the pre-eminence among all gods. And thus also he who knows this obtains pre-eminence, sovereignty, supremacy." And in the *Khandogya Upanishad*, VI Prap. 8, Kh, I: "When the man sleeps here, my dear son, he becomes united with the True — in Sushupti sleep — he is gone to his own self. Therefore they

say, he sleeps (Swapita), because he is gone (apita) to his own (sva). And in *Prasna Up II, 1*, "There are 101 arteries from the heart; one of them penetrates the crown of the head; moving upwards by it man reaches the immortal; the others serve for departing in different directions." [ED.] ([return to text](#))

6. This opens up an intensely interesting and highly important subject, which cannot be here treated of, but which will be in future papers. Meanwhile, Theosophists can exercise their intuition in respect to it. [ED.] ([return to text](#))

7. *Guru*, a spiritual teacher. ([return to text](#))

8. Vide *Light on the Path*, Rule 1, note, part I. ([return to text](#))

9. There is one exceptional case where the Guru's goal is seen, and then the Guru has to die, for there can be no two *equals*. ([return to text](#))

10. There is no contradiction between this and the preceding paragraph where it is said, "To see the Guru's goal is impossible." During the initiation ceremony, there is no separateness between those engaged in it. They all become one whole, and therefore even the High Hierophant, while engaged in an initiation, is no more his separate self, but is only a part of the whole, of which the candidate is also a part, and then, for the time being, having as much power and knowledge as the very highest present. [ED.] ([return to text](#))

11. Rig Veda, IV, VII, 9. ([return to text](#))

12. Divine science. ([return to text](#))

13. The knowledge of Yoga, which is, "joining with your higher self." ([return to text](#))

14. See *Zanoni*, Book IV, c. iii. ([return to text](#))

15. Highest soul. ([return to text](#))

16. Fifth principle. ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE NATURE AND OFFICE OF BUDDHA'S RELIGION

From a dissertation by the Rt. Rev. H. Sumangala, High Priest of Adam's Peak, Ceylon. (1)

What must a religion chiefly reveal? A religion, as such, must for the most part propound what is not generally seen and felt in the nature of sentient beings. It must also proclaim "the ways and means" by which the good of the world is attained. These *teachings* are essential to a religion, or it would, at best, become only a system of philosophy or a science of nature. We find these two essentials fully treated in the religion of Buddha.

Buddha says: (2) "The world has mounted on the passions and is suspended therefrom — that is, the thoughts of men are hanging down from the lusts and other evils. The whole world is encompassed by decay; and Death overwhelms us all, (consumption and decay ever slowly but steadily creep in and eat into each and everything in existence, and it is here likened to something like land encircled by sea). Nature has subjected us to birth, decay, and death, *and the deeds of our past lives are covered by the terrors of death from our view*, although the time of their action is not very far removed from our present state of existence. Hence it is that we do not view the scenes of our past births. Human life before it arrives at its final destiny is ever inseparable from Jati, Jara, Marana, etc., (birth, infirmities, death, etc.). As we are at present we are in sorrow and pain, and we have not yet obtained the highest object of our being. It behooves us, therefore, to exert ourselves everytime and by all means to attain to our *summum ultimum*, and we have to use and practice 'the ways and means' shown in religion in earnestness and integrity."

Now what are they as set forth in Buddhism? "The man who is ever fully in the observance of the precepts of morality; who sees and understands things well and truly; who has perfect and serene command over his thoughts; and who has his mind fixed well in proper contemplation. I say that such a man alone will safely pass over the dreadful torrent of metempsychosis, which is indeed hard to be gone over safely and without meeting with great obstacles and difficulties."

The way to holiness of being, to destruction of sorrows, pain, and sufferings, and to the path to Nirvana and to its attainment, is the starting of memory, on the body, on sensation, on mind, and on the true doctrines, largely discoursed on by the Lord Gautama Buddha. "Men are sanctified by their deeds, their learning, their religious behavior, their morals, and by leading a holy life; *they do not become holy by race or wealth.*" (3)

Buddha has opened up to us a supreme path for sanctification, described in detail in many verses of His *Dharma*. (4) He says: "Oh Bhikkus! what is the holy path which ought to be walked over to destroy pain and sorrows! It is the *ariya* path, consisting of eight members or component parts, which are: Right Seeing or correct belief; right Thinking; right Words; right Actions; right Living; right Exertions; right Recollecting; and right Composing of Mind — *the practice of Yoga.*"

Of all the paths this, the eight membered one, is the Supreme; of the Truths, the fourfold one is the highest; of all classes of knowledge, that of Nirvana is the most excellent, and of all bipeds Buddha is the highest and most supremely exalted and enlightened.

I. Right seeing is the correct and full comprehension of the four facts or divisions, which are: Sorrows, the origin of sorrows, the destruction of sorrows, and the ways and means to be used for

that destruction. Now this Right seeing may be viewed in two ways, (1) *worldly*, (2) *over worldly*, or above the worldly way. The first is understanding, while still we have not overcome our lusts, passions, and desires, the effects of good and bad actions, and that such acts alone brought about the effects; the second is brought about by destroying lust, anger, &c., and rightly comprehending what are known as the "four supreme verities."

II. Right thinking includes pondering on the abandoning of all merely worldly happiness, bad desires, anger, &c., and the cherishing of thoughts to live separated from them all; loathing to take life, and the continued mental exercise of the determination not to hurt a sentient being.

III. Right Speech avoids lying, slandering, uttering rough or vulgar words, and vain babbling or empty talk.

IV. Right Actions is sanctifying the body by refraining from killing, stealing, enjoying unlawful sexual intercourse, &c.

V. Right Living is obtaining a livelihood by being worthily employed, supporting one's self.

VI. Right Exertion is to labor willingly and earnestly to prevent evil thoughts *from arising in the mind*, nipping even the buds of such thoughts already sprung, and by nourishing good thoughts and by creating morally virtuous ideas when heart and mind are vacant and empty of them.

VII. The seventh is the four above mentioned — in possession.

VIII. The last member includes the four *dhyanas*. *Samma Samadhi*, or Right Meditation, is the last member of the Supreme Path. In religion *Samadhis* are of various natures, but now we will confine ourselves to one particular *Samadhi*.

It is that state of mind in which dispersed thoughts are brought

together and concentrated on one particular object. The chief feature is composure of the mind, and its essential characteristic is the restriction of thoughts from dispersion. Stability aids its sustentation, and undisturbed happiness is its natural result.

The primary stage of this state of mind is known as Upachara Samadhi; (5) the second, or advanced stage, as Uppana Samadhi. (6)

It is also divided into two classes. *Lokiya*, (7) which any one may enter into; and *Lokuttara* (8) which can be entered into only by those who are free from worldly desires. The first is a preliminary step to the attainment of the second. For the first, the devotee must give himself up to devotion in the manner prescribed in 3d, 4th, and 5th angas of the *Arya astangikamarga chatuparisuddhi silas*, and then free himself from the ten worldly troubles, which arise: from building houses; connections with family; excessive gains; the duties of a teacher; from manual work; journeys for another or for one's own gain; sickness of teacher, pupils, and parents; bodily sufferings; constant study, and worldly power and its loss. Being free from these, he must then be acquainted with the systematic process of meditation, instructed by a friend or an eminent preceptor.

Meditation is of two classes. First, that wherein the devotee exercises universal love of mankind, reflects that death is close at hand, and that the human body, being liable to decay, is not to be regarded with consideration. The second is that which applies to a man according to his moral nature. (9) These are forty in number. Taking one let us see how meditation should be practiced.

Man's moral nature is divided into six classes: Sensuous, irascible, ignorant, faithful, discreet, reflective. The first three are evil, and the last three good qualities. If in any man's nature an evil and

virtue combine, that which predominates will influence his moral character. The process of meditation, then, is to be decided by the preceptor according to the tendency of the moral character as thus influenced. (10) The devotee then seeks retirement resigned to Buddha.

FOOTNOTES:

1. See Vol. 1, *Theosophist*. ([return to text](#))
2. Tanhaya uddito loko; jaraya pari varato; Maccuna pihito loko; Dukkhe loko patitthito. ([return to text](#))
3. Kammam vijja dhammoca; Silam jivita muttamam; Etena macca sujhianti; Na-gottena dhanenava. ([return to text](#))
4. Code of laws. ([return to text](#))
5. Restraining thoughts from being dispersed. ([return to text](#))
6. Effecting complete reconciliation and composure of mind. ([return to text](#))
7. Worldly. ([return to text](#))
8. Superhuman. ([return to text](#))
9. This means the particular kind which each man, because of heredity, education, and class exercises. It is also known as using the path pertaining to the Lodge or Ray, to which the one meditating belongs. — [ED.] ([return to text](#))
10. See Bhagavad-Gita, c. 14. — [ED.] ([return to text](#))

STUDIES IN THE UPANISHADS: I

[BY A STUDENT]

Many American theosophists are asking, "What are the Upanishads?" They are a portion of the ancient Aryan literature which this journal has set itself to help lay before theosophists of America, to the end that whatever in them is good and true may be brought out. As Max Muller says, hitherto the Upanishads have not received at the hands of Sanskrit and oriental scholars, that treatment which in the eyes of philosophers and theologians they seem so fully to deserve. He also calls them "ancient theosophic treatises" and declares that his real love for Sanskrit literature was first kindled by them. (1) They have received no treatment at all in the United States, because they are almost absolutely unknown in the original tongue in this country, and in translations, have been but little studied here. Europe and America differ in this, that while in England and Germany nearly all such study is confined to the book-worm or the theologian, here there is such a general diffusion of pretty fair education in the people, that the study of these books, as translated, may be made popular, a thing which in Europe is perhaps impossible.

Muller returned to the study of the Upanishads after a period of thirty years, during which he had devoted himself to the hymns and Brahmanas of the Vedas, and found his interest in them undiminished. As for the period of these treatises, he says that has been fixed provisionally, at about 800 B. C.

The word means "secret charm," "philosophical doctrine;" and more strictly, "to sit down near." Hindu theologians say the Upanishads belong to revealed religion in opposition to that which is traditional. In the opinion of our friend Muller, to whom

all western students must ever remain grateful no matter how much they may disagree with his views as to the Vedas being the lispings of baby man, "the earliest of these philosophical treatises will always maintain a place in the literature of the world, among the most astounding productions of the human mind in any age and in any country." (2)

Professor Weber placed the number of Upanishads at 235; (3) in 1865 Muller put them at 149, and others added to that number, so that even today the actual figures are not known. Indeed it is held by several Orientalists, that before they assumed their present form, a large mass of traditional Upanishads must have existed.

The meaning of the word which ought to be borne most in mind is, "secret knowledge, or true knowledge" although there may be a Upanishad or secret knowledge, which is false.

In the Chandogya Upanishad (I, 1,) after describing the deeper meaning of OM, it is said that the sacrifice which a man performs with knowledge, with faith, and with the Upanishad, *i.e.*, with an understanding of the secret charm, or underlying principles and effects, is more powerful than when with faith, the only knowledge possessed is of the rites themselves, their origin and regularity. The sacrifice referred to is, not alone the one offered on the altar in the temple, but that daily sacrifice which every breath and every thought, brings about in ourselves.

THE MUNDAKA UPANISHAD

This is in the *Atharva Veda*. Although it has the form of a mantra, it is not to be used in the sacrifices, as its sole object is to teach the highest knowledge, the knowledge of Brahman, which cannot be obtained by either worship or sacrifices. Offerings to the Gods, in no matter what mode or church, restraining of the breath, penances, or cultivation of the psychic senses, will not lead to the

true knowledge. Yet some works have to be performed, and many persons require works, sacrifices and penances as stepping stones to a higher life. In the progress of these works and sacrificial performances, errors are gradually discovered by the individual himself. He can then remove them. So the Hindu commentators have explained the title of this Upanishad as the "shaving" one. That is, it cuts off the errors of the mind like a razor. It is said by European scholars that the title has not yet been explained. This may be quite correct for them, but it is very certain the Hindu explanation appears to the Hindu mind to be a very good one. Let us proceed.

FIRST MUNDAKA

This means first shaving, or beginning of the process for removing error. It may be considered as a division equivalent to "first title," after which follow the lesser divisions, as: *First Khanda*.

"1. Brahma was the first of the Devas, the maker of the universe, the preserver of the world. He told the knowledge of Brahman, the foundation of all knowledge, to his eldest son Atharva."

Here at once should be noted, that although in Hindu theology we find Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, as the creator, preserver and destroyer, forming the Trinity, the Upanishad now before us — for cutting away error — has not such a division. It says Brahma is first, also the maker and the preserver. Even knowledge that is true for certain stages of development becomes error when we rise up into the higher plane and desire to know the true. Similarly we find Buddha in his congregation teaching his disciples by means of the "three vehicles," but when he had raised them to the higher plane, he informed them that these vehicles might be discarded and *sat* or truth be approached through one

vehicle.

The knowledge here spoken of is Brahman knowledge which is the supreme vehicle.

"2. Whatever Brahma told Atharvan that knowledge Atharvan told to Angir, he told it to Satyavaha Bharadvaga, and he in succession told it to Angiras. "3. Sannaka, the great householder, approached Angiras respectfully and asked 'Sir, what is that through which if it is known, everything else becomes known?' "4. He said to him: 'Two kinds of knowledge must be known, this is what all who know Brahman tell us, the higher and the lower knowledge.' "5. 'The lower knowledge is the Rig-Veda, Yajur-Veda, Sama-Veda, Atharva-Veda, Phonetics, Ceremonial, Grammar, Etymology, Metre and Astronomy; but the higher knowledge is that by which the Indestructible (Brahma) is apprehended. "6. 'That which cannot be seen nor seized, which has no origin and is without qualities, no eyes nor ears, no hands nor feet, the eternal, the all pervading, infinitesimal, that which is imperishable, that is what is regarded by the wise as the source of all beings. "7. 'As the spider sends forth and draws in its thread, as plants grow on the earth, as from every man hairs spring forth on the head and the body, thus does everything arise here from the Indestructible. "8. 'The Brahman swells by means of meditation; hence is produced matter; from matter mind, breath and intellect, the seven worlds, and from the works performed by men in the worlds, the eternal effects, rewards and punishment of works. "9. 'From Him who perceives all and who knows all, whose meditation consists of knowledge, from that highest Brahman is born that other Hiranyagarbha — name, form, and matter.'"

This Khanda unfolds broadly the whole philosophy. The following ones go into particulars. It is very easy here to see that the imperishable doctrine could not be communicated directly by the Great Brahma to man, but it has to be filtered down through various channels. The communicator of it to mortals, however, would be regarded by his finite auditors as a god. The same method is observable in the *Bhagavad-Gita* (ch. iv) where Krishna says to Arjuna that "this never failing doctrine I formerly taught unto Vivaswat and he to Manu, who told it to Ikswaku, succeeding whom came the Rajarshis who studied it." Manu is regarded as of a wholly Divine nature although not the Great Brahm.

Now, when Angiras, as detailed in the Upanishad, had received this higher knowledge, he was approached by a great householder, by name Saunaka. This has reference to an ancient mode of life in India when Saunaka would be called a grihastha, or one who was performing all his duties to his family, his tribe, and his nation while still in the world. All the while, however, he studied the knowledge of Brahman, so that when the proper time came for him to give up those duties of life, he could either die or retire to solitude. It was not considered then to be a virtue for one to violently sever all ties and assume the garb and life of a mendicant devoted to religious contemplation, but the better way was thought to be that one which resulted in our, so to speak, consuming all the Karma of our family in ourselves. Otherwise it would inevitably result that if he retired with many duties unfulfilled, they waited, figuratively speaking, for him, sure to attach to him in a succeeding incarnation and to work him either injury or obstruction. So it was thought better to work out all such results in the present life as far as possible.

We find here also a foreshadowing of some ideas held by the Greek philosophers. In the third verse, the question is asked:

"What is that through which when it is known, the knower thereof knows everything else." Some of the Greeks said that we must first ascend to the general, from which descent to the particular is easy. Such, however, is directly opposite to the modern method, which delights in going from particulars to generals, from effects to causes. The true knowledge proceeds as shown in the Upanishad. By endeavoring to attain to the Universal Soul of all, the knowledge of the particular parts may be gained. This is not easy, but it is easy to try. At the same time do not forsake modern methods altogether, which correspond to the lower knowledge spoken of in Verse 5. Therefore Angiras says: Two kinds of knowledge, the lower and the higher, must be known.

Here and there are persons who seem not to need the lower knowledge, who pay no attention to it, and who apprehend the higher flights impossible for others. This is what is known as the result of past births. In previous incarnations these persons studied upon all the lower planes so that their spiritual perceptions do not now need that help and training which the lower knowledge gives to others. They are approaching that state which is beautifully described by Longfellow in his "Rain in Summer," in these words: —

"Thus the seer,
With vision clear,
Sees forms appear and disappear,
In the perpetual round of strange,
Mysterious change
From birth to death, from death to birth;
From earth to heaven, from heaven to earth:
'Till glimpses more sublime,
Of things unseen before,
Unto his wondering eyes reveal

The Universe, as an immeasurable wheel
Turning forevermore
In the rapid and rushing river of Time."

(To be continued)

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. I. lxxv. ([return to text](#))
 2. *Sacred Books, &c.*, Vol. I, lxxvii. ([return to text](#))
 3. *Hist. of Sans. Lit.*, p. 155, note. ([return to text](#))
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The Path

THE MYSTERY OF NUMBERS — *Seth Pancoast*

In a previous article on the Kabbalah, we spoke of it as being a tradition embodying a noble philosophy, which is but slightly understood, owing to its symbolical representations.

There were three forms of symbols introduced by the Ancient Theosophists to express their thoughts and convey their ideas from one to another. The object of the symbolic language was for the purpose of preventing their esoteric knowledge from becoming public property and to obviate persecution from those who were in authority and held different views. These three forms were: hieroglyphics, numbers and allegories.

It is the Kabbalistic science of numbers of which we purpose to speak. Deity in constructing the universe, employed but few means to accomplish a great purpose. They consisted *energy* and *law*. The former is under control of the latter. The first act was the positing of energy, which formed substance. In this manner He converted chaos, which was a motionless, dark abyss, into activity and light. Light is not energy, but primarily resulted from the activity of atomic substance.

God creates all things by number, weight and measure, and with an arithmetical and geometrical precision. The universal *continuity* observed in nature is owing to the law that controls energy. Any interference with this law throws energy out of harmony, producing discord, and consequently a varying of continuity.

Every seed has within it an individual life energy which gives to it when developed into a plant or tree its type and form. Any external interference induces a struggle for life in the forces in

maintaining their ancestral types and forms. Heredity may produce the same by interfering with the law controlling development.

The Kabbalists never intended to convey the idea that numbers possessed special virtues. They merely represent them: for example 3 represents a life entity; without this ternary combination it would be impossible for life to exist. The self-existing Deity is a Triune Entity: so is every individual life form. Whether it be a *Monera*, the lowest structureless life organism, or *Man*, the highest in the scale of living beings. Number three is therefore called the generating number.

Again, 7 is the harmonic numeral, there being seven primary grades of harmony, and in order to extend it, the scale of seven must be repeated, and every repetition lessens the harmony and tends to discord.

The *Sepher Jetzirah*, which is recognized by the Kabbalist as the key of the Sohar, is a wonderful and obscure work. Its wisdom is represented in ten numbers and twenty-two letters. From the numbers "are drawn or cut" the twenty-two letters which are divided into three mothers, seven double and twelve single letters. According to the Sepher there were three acts of creation; 1st, *Conception or Idea*; 2nd *The Word*; 3rd. *The Writings*. For example, *first*, God conceived in His own mind, the archetype of the universe which constituted the design; *second*, the Word represents the law and the energy it controls and directs in carrying out the design; *third* the product arising from the second constitute the writings.

The Sepher Jetzirah teaches that the hidden ways of wisdom are in the ten *sephiroth*, which are usually termed spheres. The Hebrews use the word "ways," which with us mean degrees, forms or species. These hidden ways are the workings of the

forces producing differentiation of forms, which represents the twenty-two letters, which are expressed as one in three, and three in seven, and seven in twelve, making twenty-two.

The ten sephiroth interest us the most for they represent the unity and synthesis of numbers and the manifestations of Deity in nature. The first setir is called the *Crown* on account of its being the abode of the *En Soph* (1) the unmanifested infinite Being; but the first form by which he became known was the *Memra* or "word," which is represented by the first three sephiroth, namely, *Kether*, "the Crown," *Chochma*, "wisdom," *Binah*, "understanding." (2) To express it more clearly, the first three sephiroth comprise a Triune Entity, the verbalized spirit of God consisting of self-consciousness, wisdom and love which embodied the *Word*, "the heavenly man," "the man on high," (Ezekiel I, 26), the Adam Kadmon of the Kabbalist, the Paradisical Adam of Genesis, the Christ of the Christians and the Buddha of the Buddhists.

In order to be understood, we will state that the Triune spirit of the world contains the word, and is therefore the source of energy and life in both the subjective and objective worlds, and in fact is the source of all that exists outside of spirit. It is under the direction of spirit in developing forms and giving them activity and life. We thus perceive how a knowledge of the word gives us an insight into the work of God in creation.

Jacob Behmen was a mystic, and acquainted with the meaning of the word which he obtained through illumination or the unfolding of inner consciousness. What he called the *Signatura Rerum* — the signature of all things — is the word. He describes it as coming from a triune entity, which he locates in the super-celestial world. It is first manifested in the subjective or esoteric world, and afterwards in the objective. He also alludes to the septenary which he applies to the external world; he could not

have understood the laws of harmony or he would not have made this application, for it applies to both the subjective and objective worlds.

We will now explain the *Tetractys* of Pythagoras; before doing so, however, we have a few remarks to make regarding his Kabbalistic knowledge. He is said to have been initiated into the secrets of nature by Daniel and Ezekiel, and subsequently admitted into the Egyptian Sanctuaries upon a personal recommendation by King Amosis. His tetractys proves that he was thoroughly familiar with theosophical science, which enabled him to study nature and arrive at correct conclusions. It is a noted fact that he was familiar with the movements of the heavenly bodies: which science did not reveal until centuries after his death. If he mistook some of its details, his substantial correctness was none the less wonderful. He was the founder of the renowned school of Crotona, about five hundred years before Christ. He maintained that the Sun is the center of a system around which all the planets revolve, and that the fixed stars were each the center of a system. He also believed that the planets were inhabited and that they and our earth are ever revolving in harmonious order — "keeping up a grand celestial concert, inaudible to man, but as a music of the spheres audible to God." He was not permitted to declare publicly all that he knew, but taught it privately to a few chosen friends. He was also familiar with the laws of attraction and repulsion, which constituted one of the most important duties of the sanctuaries. Newton was led to the discovery of these forces through the study of the Kabbalah.

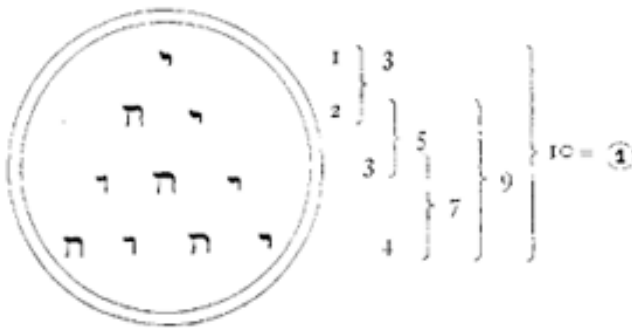
Speaking of Pythagoras calls to mind the Kabbalistic enigma written by Plato and sent to Dionysius: "all things surround our King, (God) He is the cause of all things: seconds for seconds and thirds for thirds." This expresses the division of the Sephiroth.

Plato was an earnest and most intelligent Kabbalist.

We will now explain for the first time the Tetractys of Pythagoras, which reveals the numerical meaning of the word. We remark, however, before doing so, that there is a greater enigma attached to it than is expressed by the numbers, which we cannot give for several reasons. One is, the name has never been imparted; when obtained, it was through self illumination; another is, it would open the doors of masonry, and reveal the secrets of the order. It is the key to mysticism — to religion and universal science.

In the Tetractys the four letters composing the name, are arranged in a triangular form, enclosed with a double circle. (3) The numerical division he has made applies to the *super-celestial*, *celestial* and *material* worlds:

The Tetractys of Pythagoras.



Super Celestial. — The first series of numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 of the tetractys refers to the super-celestial world.

- 1 is the unity of God represented thus: ① God in nothing.
- 2 is the duality of God.
- 3 is the spirit of a triune entity.
- 4 is Divine volition, capable of determining choice and forming a purpose, and manifesting activity.

Celestial. — The above numerals are combined in the following

order: — $1+2=3$ — the manifestation of the word, in the celestial world. $2+3=5$ — substance or quintescent matter, produced by the activity of the word.

$3+4=7$ — the law of harmony — the providence of God in Nature. The celestial world is called by the Kabbalist the world of harmony, which none can occupy save the pure in spirit. Harmony is the only passport to Heaven.

Material. — The numeral 1, which represents the unity of God, is not represented in this world — we only have the following numerals:

$2+3+4=9$ — humanity with the word unmanifested in the spirit. Yet it exists and can be made manifest through harmony of the spirit. It not being manifested debar's humanity from the pleasure of enjoying the light of the celestial world. It is for this reason the Kabbalist called it the world of darkness or Hades. It is also called the world of discord. There are as many grades of discord here as there are harmonies in the world above. When man throws off the material covering of his soul, his consciousness reveals to him his moral standard and he gravitates to the sphere with which he is in accord. If harmonious he ascends, if discordant he descends.

10 is the synthesis of numbers. In the beginning before Deity manifested himself, it stood thus ①; in the consummation of creation it became reversed, thus 10.

FOOTNOTES:

1. From the negatives *en* and *am* and the noun *Soph* "end or terminus." ([return to text](#))

2. See *Kabbalah*, published by R. Worthington, 770 Broadway, N. Y. ([return to text](#))

3. See *Kabbalah*, Page 47. ([return to text](#))

The Path

SUFISM: I — *C. H. A. Bjerregaard*

In Two Parts: Part I, Texts; Part II, Symbols.

The spirit of Sufism is best expressed in the couplet of Katebi:

"Last night a nightingale sung his song, perched on a high cypress,
when the rose, on hearing his plaintive warbling, shed tears in
the garden, soft as the dews of heaven."

INTRODUCTION.

Sufism has not yet received fair treatment in any publication that has appeared in Western literature.

The reason is that no Western writer upon the subject has endeavored to understand it, either because of an intellectual bias or from willful perversion. Most treatises are written under strong dogmatic prejudices, or by persons intellectually and morally incapable of rising to the A B C of a spiritual philosophy.

The present attempt to represent the doctrines and practices of Sufism has been made in the hope of overcoming the effect of these evils. We have studied patiently Sufism from Sufi works and claim to be in full sympathy with our subject.

That which we here present to the judgment of the candid reader is a part of a larger work we have been engaged on for many years; a work designed as a text book for students in Mysticism. This fact, the intention of making a text book for reference on all mystic questions, will account for the unusual method adopted in this series of articles.

In the first part we shall give a resume of Sufi doctrine with copious quotations from Sufi works. In the second we shall give a

full exposition of Sufi practices and symbols.

The following is a partial list of works consulted and quoted without further reference:

Tholuck, *Sufismus, sive theosophia persarum* — Tholuck, *Bluthensamm-lung der morgenl Mystik* — Malcolm, *Hist. of Persia* — Trans. of the lit. soc. of Bombay, vol. 1, art. by Capt. Graham — J. von Hammer, *Geschichte der Schonen Redekunste Persiens, mit einer Bluthenlese* — Garcin de Tassy, *la poesie phil. et rel. chez les Persans*, in *Rev. cont.* 1856 — Fleischer, *uber die farbigen Lichterscheinungen der Sufis*, in *Zeitsh. f. morgl. Geselsch.* vol. 16 — G. P. Brown, *The Dervishes, or Oriental Spiritualism* — *Journal of Am. Orient. Soc.*, vol. 8 — *The Dabistan, or school of sects* — E. H. Palmer, *Oriental Mysticism* — *Persian Poetry* by S. Robinson — Th. P. Hughes, *Dict. of Islam* — Ouseley, *Biographical notices of Persian poets* — Omar Khayyam, see ed. illust. by Vedder — Al Gazzali, *la perle precieuse*, par L. Gautier — *Allegories recits poetiques traduit de l'arabe, du persan &c.*, par Garcin de Tassy — Al Gazzali, *Alchemy of Happiness* tr. by H. A. Homes — Hammer-Purgstall, *Literatur-Geschichte der Araber* — *The works of Nizami, Saadi, Attar, Jellalladin Rumi, Hafiz, Jami, Hatifi, &c.*, in English, French, German and Latin translations — Lane's transl. of the Quran — &c., &c.

PART I — TEXTS.

ORIGIN OF SUFISM

It is generally conceded among the Sufis that one of the great founders of their system, as found in Islam, was the adopted son and son-in-law of the Prophet, Ali-ibn-Abi-Talib. But it is also admitted that their religious system has always existed in the world, prior to Mohammed. It is known that a tribe, Sufah, from whom possibly the name is derived, in "the time of ignorance" separated themselves from the world and devoted themselves to

spiritual exercises like those of the present Sufis.

Sufism in its best known forms must thus be considered to be the philosophy of Mohammedanism and to represent the protest of the human soul against the formalism and barrenness of the letter of the Quran. Still there is much in favor of Schmokler's assertion (*Essai sur les écoles philos. chez les Arabes*) that Sufism is neither a philosophical system nor the creed of a religious sect, but simply a way of living.

Perhaps the simplest statement is this: *Sufism is Theosophy from the standpoint of Mohammedanism.*

Said-Abul-Chair (about A. D. 820) is often called the author of Sufism. Abu Hashem (A. D. 767) has been called the first Sufi.

The *Dabistan* maintains the identity of the pure Sufis and that of Platonism and it has popularly been supposed that Sufism has borrowed very much from the Vedanta and from Plato and Aristotle; it has even been confidently asserted that the similarity is so striking to the student, that it is a most easy matter to find identical statements in either of them. We must confess that our study does not prove the assertion. The similarity is to be accounted for by the universality of truth.

ETYMOLOGY

The root of the word implies wisdom, the Greek Sophia, purity, spirituality, etc. Some have connected it with suf, wool, on account of the woolen garment worn by the devotees.

Graham (1) maintains that "any person or a person of any religion or sect, may be a Sufi. The mystery lies in this: a total disengagement of the mind from all temporal concerns and worldly pursuits; an entire throwing off not only of every superstition, doubt, or the like, but of the practical mode of

worship, ceremonies, etc., laid down in every religion, which the Mohammedans term *Sheriat*, being the law, or canonical law; and entertaining solely mental abstraction, and contemplation of the soul and Deity, their affinity, etc." In short, Sufism may be termed the religion of the heart, as opposed to formalism and ritualism.

"Traces of the Sufi doctrine exist in some shape or other in every region of the world. It is to be found in the most splendid theogonies of the ancient school of Greece and of the modern philosophers of Europe. It is the dream of the most ignorant and the most learned, and is seen at one time indulging in the shade of ease, at another traversing the pathless desert." (Malcolm Hist. of Persia.)

Abu-Said-Abul-Chair, the accredited founder of Sufism, when asked what Sufism was, answered: "What you have in the head, give it up; what you have in the hand, throw it away; whatever may meet you, depart not from it."

Dschuneid, a Sufi Shaikh, thus defined Sufism: "To liberate the mind from the violence of the passions, to put off nature's claims, to extirpate human nature, to repress the sensual instinct, to acquire spiritual qualities, to be elevated through an understanding of wisdom, and to practice that which is good — that is the aim of Sufism."

Abul Hussein Nuri thus expressed himself: "Sufism is neither precept nor doctrine, but something *inborn*. If it were a precept, it could be followed; if it were a doctrine, it could be learned; it is rather something inborn — and as the Quran says: 'Ye are *created* in the image of God.' Evidently no one can, either by application or by teaching, possess himself of the likeness of God."

SUFI DOCTRINES

DEITY

The Deity alone is and permeates all things. All visible and invisible things are an emanation from Deity, and are not absolutely distinct from it.

One sect "the Unionists," believe that God is as one with every enlightened being. They compare the Almighty to a flame, and their souls to charcoal; and say, that in the same manner that charcoal when it meets flame, becomes flame, the immortal part, from its union with God becomes God.

According to the Dabistan, the presence of the universal Deity is fivefold. The first is the presence of "the absolute mystery." The absolute mystery is one with "the invariable prototypes" (or realities of things). The second is the presence of "the relative mystery," and this belongs to pure intellects and spirits. The third is the presence of "the mysterious relation," which is nearest to the absolute evidence: this is the world of similitude or dream. The fourth is the presence of the "absolute evidence" which reaches from the center of the earth to the middle of the ninth empyrean heaven. The fifth is "the presence of the rest," and this is the universe in an extensive, and mankind in a restricted acceptation.

Silvestre de Sacy gives the following explanation to the above from Jorjani. The five divine presences are (1) the presence of the absolute absence (or mystery); its world is the world of the fixed substances in the scientific presence. To the presence of the absolute mystery is opposed: (2) the presence of the absolute assistance; it is the world of the throne or seat of God, of the four elemental natures. (3) The presence of the relative absence; this is divided into two parts: The one nearer the presence of the absolute mystery; the world of which is that of spirits, which belong to what is called intelligences and bare souls: the other: (4) Nearer the presence of the absolute assistance: the world of

which is that of models (images). (5) The presence which comprises the four preceding ones, and its world is the world of mankind, a world which reunites all the worlds, and all they contain.

GOOD AND EVIL: ETHICS

There is no absolute difference between Good and Evil; all that exists, exists in unity and God is the real author of all the acts of mankind.

The Sufi says that evil only came into the world through ignorance, and that ignorance is the cause of error and disunion among men. The following tale answers to the point: "Four travelers — a Turk, an Arab, a Persian, and a Greek, having met together, decided to take their meal in common, and as each one had but ten paras, they consulted together as to what should be purchased with the money. The first said *Uzum*, the second *Ineb*, the third decided in favor of *Inghur*, and the fourth insisted upon *Stafilion*. On this a dispute arose between them and they were about to come to blows, when a peasant passing by happened to know all four of their tongues, and brought them a basket of grapes. They now found out, greatly to their astonishment, that each one had what he desired."

They believe the emanating principle, proceeding from God, can do nothing without His will and can refrain from nothing that He wills. Some of them deny the existence of evil on the ground that nothing but good can come from God.

The Dabistan: One sect, "the Eternals," conceive that man is taught his duty by a mysterious order of priesthood, (2) whose number and ranks are fixed, and who rise in gradation from the lowest paths to the sublimest height of divine knowledge.

Another sect, "the Enlightened," teach that men's actions should

neither proceed from fear of punishment nor the hope of reward, but from innate love of virtue, and detestation of vice.

THE SOUL, ITS LIFE AND CONDITIONS

The soul existed, before the body and is confined in it like in a cage. To the Sufi, death is liberation and return to the Deity.

The soul is confined in a body (metempsychosis) to be purified, to fulfill its destination, the union with Deity.

Without the grace of God (Fazlu allah) no soul can attain this union, but God's grace can be obtained by fervently asking for it.

*The soul of man is of God, not from God, an exile from Him; it lives in the body as in a prison and banishment from God. Before its exile the soul saw *Truth*, but here it only has glimpses "to awaken the slumbering memory of the past." The object of all Sufi teaching is to lead the soul onward by degrees to reach that stage again.*

"You say 'the sea and the waves,' but in that remark you do not believe that you signify distinct objects, for the sea when it heaves produces waves, and the waves when they settle down again become sea; in the same manner men are the waves of God, and after death return to His bosom. Or, you trace with ink upon paper the letters of the alphabet, a, b, c; but these letters are not distinct from the ink which enabled you to write them; in the same manner the creation is the alphabet of God, and is lost in Him."

RELIGIONS

are matters of indifference; still they serve as stepping-stones to realities. Some are more useful than others, among which is al-Islam, of which Sufism is the true philosophy.

THE WORLD, &C.

The world is life and intellect, as far as the mineral kingdom; but the manifestation of intellect in everybody is determined by the temperature of the human constitution. Sometimes beauty attains an excellence which is uttered with ecstasy, and becomes a modulation more powerful than that which strikes the ear; and this is the work of the prophet.

THE TARIGAH OR "JOURNEY OF LIFE" AND ITS STATES

The main duty of this life is *Meditation on the Unity of Deity* (wahdaniyah), the *Remembrance of God's Name* (Zikr), and *Progression in the Tarigah* (the Path, the Journey of Life).

Human life is a *journey* (safar) and the seekers after God are *travellers* (salik). *Perfect knowledge* (marifah) of Deity as diffused throughout creation is the purpose of the journey. *Sufism is the guide*, and the *end of the journey, is Union with God*.

The natural state of every human being is nasut. In this state the disciple cannot yet observe the Law (shariat). This is the lowest form of spiritual existence.

The states in the Tarigah are the following:

The first state is called *Shariat* — the *state of law or method*. The student's passions are in this degree checked by a rigid observance of ritual, &c., whereby he learns human nature and to respect order and finds out for himself the rudiments of a knowledge of God.

The second state is *Tureequt* or the way, or road. This state implies mental or spiritual worship, abstracted totally from the above. The student learns to see the propaedeutic nature of ceremonies and devotes himself to realities. At this stage the ascetic exercises begin and he holds communion with *Melkut* or

the angelic world.

The third state, *Huqeequt*, or the state of truth is the state of inspiration or greater natural knowledge. The Sufi now lives no more in faith but in subjective truth and spiritual power; he has seen the similarity of God's nature and his own; all antinomies are destroyed, even sin disappears from his reflections.

The fourth and last state is *Marifut* or union of spirit and soul with God. "Union (with God) is reality, or the state, truth and perception of things, when there is neither lord nor servant." Still "the man of God is not God; but he is not separate from God." At this stage man's "corporeal veil will be removed, and his emancipated soul will mix again with the glorious essence, from which it had been separated, though not divided." (3)

Aziz Ibn Muhammad Nafasi in a book called *al-Maqsadu 'l-Aqsa* or the "Remotest Aim," (trans, in E. H. Palmer's *Oriental Mysticism*) marks out the journey a little differently from that already described.

When a man possessing the necessary requirements of fully developed reasoning powers turns to them for a resolution of his doubts and uncertainties concerning the real nature of the Godhead, he is called a *talib* "a searcher after God."

If he has further desire for progress he is called a "murid" or "one who inclines," and he places himself under the instruction and guidance of a teacher and becomes a "traveller."

The *first* stage of his journey is called "ubudiyah" or "service" and is as described above.

The *second* stage is *ishq* or "love." He loves God. The divine love filling his heart, it expels all other loves and brings him to the *third* stage, *Zuhd* or "seclusion." He occupies himself exclusively

with contemplation of God and his attributes, and comes to the *fourth* state, Marifah or "knowledge."

When settled he is come to the *fifth* stage, wajd or "ecstasy" he now receives revelations and soon reaches the sixth stage, that of hagigah or "*truth*" and proceeds to the final state, that of "wasl," or "union with God."

He has now finished the journey and remains in the state he has come to, still going on, however, progressing in depth of understanding. Finally he comes to "the total absorption into Deity."

The Zikr, or ecstatic exercises belonging to the training on this journey, will be explained in our second part: Symbols.

THE SEVEN WAY-STATIONS OF PILGRIMAGE are these: (4)

The *first* degree consists of penitence, obedience, and meditation, and in this degree the light is, as it were, green.

The *second* degree is the *purity of the Spirit* from satanic qualities, violence, and brutality, because as long as the spirit is the slave of satanic qualities, it is subject to concupiscence, and this is the quality of fire. In this state Iblis evinces his strength, and when the spirit is liberated from this, it is distressed with the quality of fierceness, which may be said to *be flashing* and this is conformable to the property of wind. Then it becomes insatiable (lit. eager after anything to excess), and this is similar to water. After this it obtains quietness, and this quality resembles earth (*i.e.*, apathy or cessation from all action). In the degree of repose, the light is as it were, blue, and the utmost reach of one's progress is the earthly dominion.

The *third* degree is the *manifestation of the heart*, by laudable qualities, which is similar to red light, and the utmost reach of its

progress is the middle of the upper dominion; and in this station the heart praises God, and sees the light of worship and spiritual qualities.

The *fourth* degree is the *applying of the constitution to nothing else but to God* and this is similar to yellow light, and the utmost reach of its progress is the midst of the heavenly *Malkat* "dominion."

The *fifth* degree of the soul is that which resembles white light, and the utmost aim of its progress is the extreme heavenly dominion.

The *sixth* degree is the *hidden*, which is like a black light, and the utmost reach of its progress is "the world of power."

The *seventh* degree is "the evanescence of evanescence," which is annihilation " and "eternal life," and is colorless. It is *absorption* in God, non-existence and effacement of the imaginary in the true being, like the loss of a drop of water in the ocean. It is *eternal* life as the union of the drop with the sea. "Annihilation" is not to be taken in the common acceptance, but in a higher sense, "annihilation in God."

SUFI SYMBOLICAL LANGUAGE

The Sufis inculcate the doctrine, "Adore the Deity in his creatures." It is said in a verse of the Quran — "It is not given to man that the Deity should speak to him; if it does so it is by inspirations, or through a veil." *Thus all the efforts of man should tend to raise the veil of divine love and to the annihilation of the individuality* which separates him from the Divine essence; and this expression "raise up the veil" has remained in the language of the East as expressive of great intimacy.

One of the most violent and able of the enemies of the Sufis, says that they deem everything in the world a type of the beauty and

power of the Deity and adds that it appears from both their actions and writings, that it is in the red cheeks of beautiful damsels that they contemplate its beauty; and in the "impious" daring of Nimrod and of Pharaoh, that they see and admire the omnipotence of its power. (5)

The Persian commentator *Suruni* says in regard to sexual love: "the beauty of the wife is a ray from God and not from the beloved herself. The Mystic recognizes the fact of the divine beauty everywhere in creation, and loves because he in beauty sees a revelation of the blessings of the divine name. It is therefore the prophet says he prefers these three things to all others: women, incense, and enjoyments."

Jellaladdin Rumi said: "They (the Sufis) profess eager desire, but with no carnal affection, and circulate the cup, but no material goblet: since all things are spiritual, all is mystery within mystery."

Jami exclaims, addressing the Deity:

Sometimes the wine, sometimes the cup we call Thee!
Sometimes the lure, sometimes the net we call Thee!
Except Thy name, there is not a letter on the tablet of the universe:
Say, by what name shall we call Thee?

Nizami explains himself:

Think not that when I praise wine I mean the juice of the grape;
I mean that wine which raiseth me above self,
"My cup-bearer" is to perform my vow to God:
"My morning draught from the tavern" is the wine of self oblivion.

My heaven so long as I have enjoyed existence.

Never hath the tip of my lip been stained with wine!

In regard to *Hafis* it is maintained that by *wine* he invariably means *devotion*; and his admirers have gone so far as to compose a dictionary of words of the language, as they call it, of the *Sufis*. In that vocabulary *sleep* is explained by *meditation* on the divine perfections, and *perfume* by hope of divine favor; *gales* (*i.e.* Zephyrs) are illapses of grace; *kisses and embraces*, the raptures of piety; *idolators, infidels, and libertines* are men of the purest religion, and their *idol* is the creator himself: *the tavern* is the cell where the searcher after truth becomes intoxicated with the wine of divine love. Read with this key to the esoteric meaning, Mr. Clouston says, the gazelles of Hafis are no longer anacreontic and bacchanalian effusions, but ecstatic lucubrations on the love of man to his creator. The *keeper*, or wine seller, the spiritual instructor: *beauty* denotes the perfection of the supreme being; *tresses and curls* are the expansion and infiniteness of his glory; *lips*, the hidden and inscrutable mysteries of his essence; *down* on the cheek, the world of spirits, who encircle the creator's throne; and a *black mole* is the point of indivisible unity; lastly, *wantonness, mirth and ebriety*, mean religious ardor, ecstasy and abstraction from all terrestrial thoughts and contempt for all worldly things.

Mohammed Missiree: On the Tesavuf, or spiritual life of the Sufis. Translated from the Turkish by John P. Brown, Esq., of the American embassy at Constantinople. (In Journ. of Am. Orient. Soc. vol. viii.):

What is the beginning of at-Tesavuf? Faith, which has six pillars, namely: (1) Belief in God, (2) in His Angels, (3) in His Books, (4) in His Prophets, (5) and in the Last Day, and (6) in His decree of Good and Evil. What is the result of the Tesavuf? It is not only the

reciting with the tongue of these pillars of faith but also establishing them in the heart. What is the distinction between a Sufi and an ordinary person? The knowledge of an ordinary person is a "counterfeit faith" whereas that of the Sufi is "true faith" What do you mean by "counterfeit faith?" It is that which an ordinary person has derived from his forefathers, or from the teachers and preachers of his own day, without knowing why it is essential that a man should believe in these six articles for his soul's salvation. What is the proof of faith? The proof of faith consists in a search being made for the true origin of each of these six pillars of faith, until the enquirer arrives at "the Truth." The Sufis regard certain things as lawful which are forbidden. For instance, they enjoin the use of wine, wine-shops, the wine-cup, sweethearts; they speak of the curls of their mistresses, and the moles on their faces, cheeks, &c. and compare the furrows on their brows to verses of the Quran. What does this mean? The Sufis often exchange the external features of all things for the internal, the corporeal for the spiritual, and thus give an imaginary signification to outward forms. They behold objects of a precious nature in their natural character and for this reason the greater part of their words have a spiritual and figurative meaning. For instance, when, like Hafis, they mention wine, they mean a knowledge of God, which, figuratively considered, is the love of God. Wine, viewed figuratively, is also love; love and affection are here the same thing. The wine-shop, with them, means "spiritual director," for his heart is said to be the depository of the love of God. The sweetheart means the excellent preceptor, because, when anyone sees his beloved, he admires her perfect proportions, with a heart full of love. As the lover delights in the presence of his sweetheart, so the Salik rejoices in the company of his beloved preceptor. The sweetheart is the object of a worldly affection, but the preceptor of a spiritual attachment. The curls or ringlets of the beloved are the grateful

praises of the preceptor, tending to bind the affections of the disciple; the moles on her face signify that when the pupil, at times, beholds the total absence of all worldly wants on the part of the preceptor, he also abandons all the desires of both worlds — he perhaps even goes so far as to desire nothing else in life than his preceptor; the furrows on the brow of the beloved one, which they compare to verses of the Quran, mean the light of the heart of the preceptor; they are compared to verses of the Quran, because the attributes of God, in accordance with the injunction of the Prophet, "Be ye endued with divine qualities," are possessed by the preceptor.

(To be continued.)

FOOTNOTES:

1. Trans. Bomb. lit. Soc. Comp. the Dabistan. ([return to text](#))
2. The Dabistan: The prophet is a person who is sent to the people as their guide to the perfection which is fixed for them in the presence of God, according to the exigency of the dispositions determined by the fixed substances, whether it be the perfection of faith, or another. ([return to text](#))
3. It is to this state the Sufis refer Mohammed's words: "I have moments when neither prophet nor angel can comprehend me." ([return to text](#))
4. From the Dabistan. Comp. Zeitschrift d. morgl. Gesellsch, 16 art. by Fleischer Ueber die farbigen lichtscheinungen der Sufis. ([return to text](#))
5. J. P. Brown, Dervishes pp. 333. ([return to text](#))

THEOSOPHICAL SYMBOLISM — *Nilakant*

The number 7 has, ever since the Theosophical Society was founded November 17th, 1875, played a prominent part in all its affairs, and, as usual, the symbols which particularly relate or pertain to the Society are in number, seven. They are: first the seal of the Society; second, the serpent biting his tail: third, the gnostic cross near the serpent's head; fourth, the interlaced triangles; fifth, the cruxansata in the centre; sixth, the pin of the Society, composed of a cruxansata entwined by a serpent, forming together T. S.: and seventh, OM the sacred Vedic word.

The seal of the Society contains all of the symbols enumerated, excepting *aum*, and is the synthesis of them. It, in fact, expresses what the Society is itself, and contains, or ought to, in symbolic form, the doctrines which many of its members adhere to.

A symbol to be properly so called, must be contained in the idea or ideas which it is intended to represent. As a symbol of a house could never be the prow of a boat, or the wing of a bird, but must be contained somewhere in the form of the house itself: that is, it must be an actual part chosen to represent or stand for the whole. It need not be the whole, but may be a lower form or species used as the representative of a higher of the same kind. The word is derived from the Greek words meaning *to throw with*, that is to throw together. To be a just and correct symbol, it should be such as that the moment it is seen by one versed in symbolism, its meaning and application become easily apparent. The Egyptians adopted to represent the soul passing back to its source, after the trial in the Hall of Two Truths, a winged globe, for a globe is a symbol of either the Supreme Soul or a portion of it, and the wings were added to represent its life and flight to the upper

spheres. In another branch of their symbology they represented justice by a scale which gives a just balance; while even there in the Hall of Two Truths, they reverted again to the other mode and symbolized the man being weighed by justice, in the form of his heart over against the feather of truth in the opposite pan of the scales.

There is one very curious hieroglyph of the Egyptians which deserves some study by those of curious mind. Here we will merely point it out, remarking that there is a mine of great value in the Egyptian method of picturing their ideas of the macrocosm. In one of the numerous papyri now in the British Museum, there is a picture of a globe being held up by a beetle by means of his head and two fore legs, while he is standing upon a sort of pedestal which has certain divisions, looking on the whole, like a section of an hour glass crossed by horizontal lines that project from each side. This pedestal represents stability: but what does the whole mean or shadow forth? Those who can follow up suggestions should direct their thoughts to the relation which the Sun bears to the earth in its orbital revolution.

To proceed with our analysis: The second symbol is, the serpent biting his tail. This is wisdom, and eternity. It is eternity, because that has neither beginning nor end and therefore the ring is formed by serpent swallowing his tail. There is an old hermetic symbol similar to this, in which the circle is formed by two serpents interlaced and each swallowing the tail of the other one. No doubt the symbolism in that is, in respect to the duality of the manifested All, and hence, two serpents inextricably entwined.

Furthermore, the scales of the reptiles form the figures of facettes or diamonds, which shadow forth the illimitable diversity of the aspects of wisdom or truth. This is not due to any want of coherence or congruity in truth itself, but solely to the diverse

views which each individual takes of the one Truth. These reflecting facettes are the beings composing the macrocosm: each one has developed himself only to a certain degree, and therefore can only appreciate and reflect that amount of wisdom which has fallen to his lot. As he passes again and again through the form of man, he slowly develops other various powers of appreciating more truth, and so at the last may become one with the whole — the perfect man, able to know and to feel completely his union with all. This is when he has acquired the highest Yoga. So in our experience and in history and ethnology we find individuals, nations and races, whose want of responsiveness to certain ideas, and others whose power to grasp them, can only be explained by the doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma. If those doctrines are not accepted, there is no escape from a blank negation.

It is not necessary to express the duality of the Supreme Soul by two serpents, because in the third component part of the Seal, elsewhere, that is symbolized by the interlaced triangles. One of these is white, that one with the point uppermost, and the other is black with its apex directed downward. They are intertwined because the dual nature of the Supreme, while in manifestation, is not separate in its parts. Each atom of matter, so called, has also its atom of spirit. This is what the *Bhagavad-Gita* (1) denominates Purusha and Prakriti, and Krishna there says that he is at once Purusha and Prakriti, he is alike the very best and the very worst of men. These triangles also mean, "the manifested universe." It is one of the oldest and most beautiful of symbols, and can be discovered among all nations, not only those now inhabiting the earth, but also in the monuments, carvings and other remains of the great races who have left us the gigantic structures now silent as far as the voice of man is concerned, but resounding with speech for those who care to listen. They seem to be full of ideas turned into stone.

The triangles thus combined form in the interior space, a six sided plane figure. This is the manifested world. Six is the number of the world, and 666 is the great mystery which is related to the symbol. St. John talks of this number. Around the six sided center are the six triangles projecting into the spiritual world, and touching the enclosed serpent of wisdom. In an old book, this is made by the great head of the Lord rising above the horizon of the ocean of matter, with the arms just raised so that they make the upper half of the triangle. This is the "long face," or macroscopos, as it is called. As it rises slowly and majestically, the placid water below reflects it in reverse, and thus makes the whole double triangle. The lower one is dark and forbidding in its aspect, but at the same time the upper part of the darker one is itself light, for it is formed by the majestic head of this Adam Kadmon. Thus they shade into one another. And this is a perfect symbolism, for it clearly figures the way in which day shades into night, and evil into good. In ourselves we find both, or as the Christian St. Paul says, the natural and spiritual man are always together warring against each other, so that what we would do we cannot, and what we desire not to be guilty of, the darker half of man compels us to do. But ink and paper fails us in the task of trying to elucidate this great symbol. Go to Hermes, to St. John, the Kabbalah, the Hindu books, wherever you please, and there will you find the seven times seven meanings of the interlaced triangles.

OM is the Sacred Vedic syllable: let us repeat it with a thought directed to its true meaning. (2)

Within the small circle, placed upon the serpent, is a cross with its ends turned back. This is called the Gnostic Cross. It signifies evolution, among other ideas, for the turning back of its ends is caused by the revolving of the two diameters of the circle. The vertical diameter is the spirit moving down and bisecting the

horizontal. This completed, the revolution round the great circle commences, and that motion is represented in the symbol by the ends turned back. In Chapter III. of *Bhagavad-Gita*. Krishna says: "He who in this life does not cause this cycle, thus already revolved, to continue revolving lives to no purpose, a life of sin, indulging his senses." That is, we must assist the great wheel of evolution and not oppose it; we must try to help in the great work of returning to the source from whence we came, and constantly endeavor to convert lower nature into higher, not only that of ourselves, but also of our fellow men and of the whole animated world.

This cross is also the symbol of the Hindu Chakka, or discus, of Vishnu. In the Mahabharata is described the conflict between the Asuras and Devas, for the possession of the vase of Amreeta which had been churned with infinite trouble, from the ocean, and which the Asuras desired to take for themselves. The conflict began when *Rahu*, an Asura, assuming the form of a Deva, began drinking the ambrosia. In this case the Amreeta was spiritual wisdom, material existence, immortality, and also magic power. The deceit of *Rahu* was discovered before he had swallowed, and then the battle began.

"In the midst of this dreadful hurry and confusion of the fight, *Nar* and *Narayan*, entered the field together. *Narayan* beholding a celestial bow in the hands of *Nar*, it reminded him of his Chakka, the destroyer of the Asuras. The faithful weapon, ready at the mind's call, flew down from heaven with direct and refulgent speed, beautiful, yet terrible to behold. And being arrived, glowing like the sacrificial flame, and spreading terror around, *Narayan* with his right arm formed like the elephantine trunk, hurled forth the ponderous orb, the speedy messenger, and glorious ruin of hostile towns, who raging like the final all destroying fire, shot bounding with desolating force, killing

thousands of the Asuras in his rapid flight, burning and involving, like the lambent flame, and cutting down all that would oppose him. Anon he climbeth the heavens from whence he came."
(Mahabharata, Book I, Chap 15.)

Exekiel, of the Jews, saw this wheel, when he was among the captives by the river Chebar in Chaldea. In a vision he saw the four beasts and the man of the Apocalypse, and with them "for each of the four faces," was a wheel, of the color of a beryl; it was "as a wheel within a wheel," and they went wherever the living creatures went, "for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels." All of this appeared terrible to him, for he says: "And when they went I heard a noise like the noise of great waters, like the voice of the Almighty, a noise of tumult like the noise of a host."

There are many other meanings concealed in this symbol, as in all the others.

In the center of the interlaced triangles is placed the *Cruxansata*. This is also extremely ancient. In the old Egyptian papyri it is frequently found. It signifies life. As Isis stands before the candidate, or the soul, upon his entry, she holds in one hand this cross, while he holds up his hand that he may not look upon her face. In another there is a winged figure, whose wings are attached to the arms, and in each hand is held the same cross. Among other things we find here the horizontal and vertical diameters once more, but conjoined with the circle placed on top. This is the same as the old astrological sign for Venus. But in the seal, its chief and most important meaning is *the regenerated man*. Here in the center, after passing the different degrees and cycles, both spirit and matter are united in the intelligent regenerated man, who stands in the middle knowing all things in the manifested universe. He has triumphed over death and holds

the cross of life.

The last theosophical symbol is, the pin of the Society, adopted early in its history but not used much. It is the cross we have just been considering, entwined in such a way by a serpent, that the combination makes T S as a monogram.

The foregoing is not exhaustive. Every symbol should have seven meanings of principal value, and out of every one of those we have been considering can be drawn that number of significations. Intelligent study of them will be beneficial, for when a consistent symbol, embodying many ideas is found and meditated upon, the thought or view of the symbol brings up each idea at once before the mind.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Bhagavad-Gita. ch. 13; id. ch. 10. ([return to text](#))
2. Path, No. 1, p. 24. ([return to text](#))

A HINDU CHELA'S DIARY: I (1)

In the month of December he arrived at Benares, on what he hoped would be his last pilgrimage. As much as I am able to decipher of this curious manuscript, written in a mixture of Tamil — the South Indian language — with Mahratta, which, as you know, is entirely dissimilar, shows that he had made many pilgrimages to India's sacred places, whether by mere impulse or upon actual direction, I know not. If he had been only any ordinary religiously disposed Hindu we might be able to come to some judgment hereupon, for the pilgrimages might have been made in order to gain merit, but as he must long ago have risen above the flowery chains of even the Vedas, we cannot really tell for what reason these journeys were made. Although, as you know, I have long had possession of these papers, the time had not until now seemed ripe to give them out. He had, when I received them, already long passed away from these busy scenes to those far busier, and now I give you liberty to print the fragmentary tale without description of his person. These people are, you know, not disposed to have accurate descriptions of themselves floating about. They being real disciples, never like to say that they are, a manner quite contrary to that of those famed professors of occult science who opportunely or inopportunately declare their supposed chelaship from the house top.

* * * Twice before have I seen these silent temples standing by the rolling flood of sacred Ganges. They have not changed, but in me what changes have occurred! And yet that cannot be, for the I changeth not, but only the veil wrapped about, is either torn away or more closely and thickly folded round to the disguising of the reality. * * * It is now seven months since I began to use the privilege of listening to Kunala. Each time before, that I came to

see him, implacable fate drove me back. It was Karma, the just law, which compels when we would not, that prevented me. Had I faltered then and returned to the life then even so far in the past, my fate in this incarnation would have been sealed — and he would have said nothing. Why? Happy was I that I knew the silence would have not indicated in him any loss of interest in my welfare, but only that the same Karma prevented interference. Very soon after first seeing him I felt that he was not what he appeared exteriorly to be. Then the feeling grew into a belief within a short time so strong that four or five times I thought of throwing myself at his feet and begging him to reveal himself to me. But I thought that was useless, as I knew that I was quite impure and could not be trusted with that secret. If I remained silent I thought that he would confide to me whenever he found me worthy of it. I thought he must be some great Hindu Adept who had assumed that illusionary form. But there this difficulty arose, for I knew that he received letters from various relatives in different parts, and this would compel him to practice the illusion all over the globe, for some of those relatives were in other countries, where he had been too. Various explanations suggested themselves to me. * * * I was right in my original conception of Kunala that he is some great Indian Adept. Of this subject I constantly talked with him since — — although I fear I am not, and perhaps shall not be in this life worthy of their company. My inclination has always been in this direction. I always thought of retiring from this world and giving myself up to devotion. To Kunala I often expressed this intention, so that I might study this philosophy, which alone can make man happy in this world. But then he usually asked me what I would do *there* alone? He said that instead of gaining my object I might perhaps become insane by being left alone in the jungles with no one to guide me; that I was foolish enough to think that by going into the jungles I could fall in with an adept: and that if I really wanted to gain my object

I should have to work in the reform in and through which I had met so many good men and himself also, and when the Higher Ones, whom I dare not mention by any other names, were satisfied with me they themselves would call me away from the busy world and teach me in private. And when I foolishly asked him many times to give me the names and addresses of some of those Higher Ones he said once to me: 'One of our Brothers has told me that as you are so much after me I had better tell you once for all that I have no right to give you any information about them, but if you go on asking Hindus you meet what they know about the matter you might hear of them, and one of those Higher Ones may perhaps throw himself in your way without your knowing him, and will tell you what you should do.' These were orders, and I knew I must wait, and still I knew that through Kunala only would I have my object fulfilled. * * *

"I then asked one or two of my own countrymen, and one of them said he had seen two or three such men, but that they were not quite what he thought to be '*Raj Yogs*.' He also said he had heard of a man who had appeared several times in Benares, but that nobody knew where he lived. My disappointment grew more bitter, but I never lost the firm confidence that Adepts do live in India and can still be found among us. No doubt too there are a few in other countries, else why had Kunala been to them. * * * In consequence of a letter from Vishnurama, who said that a certain X (2) lived in Benares, and that Swamiji K knew him. However, for certain reasons I could not address Swamiji K directly, and when I asked him if *he* knew X he replied: "If there be such a man here at all he is not known." Thus evasively on many occasions he answered me, and I saw that all my expectations in going to Benares were only airy castles. I thought I had gained only the consolation that I was doing a part of my duty. So I wrote again to Nilakant: "As directed by you I have neither let him know what I

know of him nor what my own intentions are. He seems to think that in this I am working to make money, and as yet I have kept him in the dark as regards myself, and am myself groping in the dark. Expecting enlightenment from you, etc." * * * The other day Nilakant came suddenly here and I met Sw. K. and him together, when to my surprise K at once mentioned X, saying he knew him well and that he often came to see him, and then he offered to take us there. But just as we were going, arrived at the place an English officer who had done Kunala a service in some past time. He had in some way heard of X and was permitted to come. Such are the complications of Karma. It was absolutely necessary that he should go too, although no doubt his European education would never permit him to more than half accept the doctrine of Karma, so interwoven backward and forwards in our lives, both those now, that past and that to come. At the interview with X, I could gain nothing, and so we came away. The next day came X to see us. He never speaks of himself, but as 'this body.' He told me that he had first been in the body of a Fakir, who, upon having his hand disabled by a shot he received while he passed the fortress of Bhurtpore, had to change his body and choose another, the one he was now in. A child of about seven years of age was dying at that time, and so, before the complete physical death, this Fakir had entered the body and afterwards used it as his own. He is, therefore, doubly not what he seems to be. As a Fakir he had studied Yoga science for 65 years, but that study having been arrested at the time he was disabled, leaving him unequal to the task he had to perform, he had to choose this other one. In his present body he is 53 years, and consequently the inner X is 118 years old. * * * In the night I heard him talking with Kunala, and found that each had the same Guru, who himself is a very great Adept, whose age is 300 years, although in appearance he seems to be only 40. (3) He will in a few centuries enter the body of a *Kshatriya*, (4) and do some great deeds for India, but the time had

not yet come."

FOOTNOTES:

1. The original MS. of this Diary as far as it goes is in our possession. The few introductory lines are by the friend who communicated the matter to us. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

2. I find it impossible to decipher this name. ([return to text](#))

3. There is a peculiarity in this, that all accounts of Cagliostro, St. Germain and other Adepts, give the apparent age as forty only. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

4. The warrior caste of India. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

The Path

SUFISM: II — C. H. A. Bjerregaard

In Two Parts: Part I, Texts; Part II, Symbols.

The spirit of Sufism is best expressed in the couplet of Katebi:

"Last night a nightingale sung his song, perched on a high cypress, when the rose, on hearing his plaintive warbling, shed tears in the garden, soft as the dews of heaven."

(Continued)

SUFI ECSTASY

MOTTO: "Highest nature wills the capture; "Light to light!"
the instinct cries;

And in agonizing rapture falls the moth, and bravely
dies.

Think not what thou art, Believer; think but what thou
mayest become

For the World is thy deceiver, and the Light thy only
home." (*Palm Leaves.*)

ABULFAZL (A.D. 1595):

O Lord, whose secrets are for ever veiled,
And whose perfection knows not a beginning!
End and beginning both are lost in thee;
No trace of them is found in thy eternal realm.
My words are lame; my tongue, a stony tract;
Slow wings my foot, and wide is the expanse.
Confused are my thoughts; but this is thy best praise —
In ecstasy alone I see thee face to face!

SHEMS TEBREEZ:

What advice, O Musselmans? I don't know myself; I (1) am neither Christian nor Jew, nor am I a fire-worshipper nor Musselman.

I am not from the East or West, nor am I of land or fire.

I am not from the country of Iran, nor am I from the land of Khoodassan.

I am neither of water nor air, nor am I of fire or earth.

I am not of Adam or Eve, nor am I of the inhabitants of paradise.

My place is no place, my sign is without sign:

I have neither body nor soul, — what is there then? I am the soul of my Beloved. (2)

When I took out my heart, the two worlds I saw as one. He is the first, he is the last, he is the manifest, He is the secret. Except Him, and that I am Him, I do not know anything else.

O thou, Shems Tebreez, why this rapture in this world?
Except with rapture, and enthusiastic ardour, this work cannot be effected."

ECSTASY: THE HEART AS MEDIUM.

All the earth I'd wandered over, seeking still the beacon light.

Never tarried in the day time, never sought repose at night;
Till I heard a reverend preacher all the mystery declare,
Then I looked within my bosom, and 'twas shinning brightly there.

(E. H. Palmer, *Orient. Myst.*)

Who so knoweth himself, knoweth the Godhead. — Thy soul is the sufficient proof of the existence of the Godhead: When by reflection thou hast penetrated to that deep within, thou shalt discover there the Universal Worker of

his work. (*D'Herbelot — Persian Paraphrases.*

Wouldst know where I found the Supreme? One step beyond self. — Behind the veil of self shines unseen the beauty of the Beloved. — (*Aphorisms.*)

Soul of the soul! Neither thought nor reason comprehend thy essence, and no one knows thy attributes. Souls have no idea of thy being. The prophets themselves sink into the dust before thee. Although intellect exists by thee, has it ever found the path of thy existence? *Thou art the interior and the exterior of the soul.* — (*Attar.*)

They who see God are ever rapt in ecstasy. * * * (*The Mesnevi.*)

ECSTASY: NATURE AS MEDIUM

The varied pictures I have drawn on space,
Behold what fair and goodly sights they seem;
One glimpse I gave them of my glorious face,
And lo! 'tis now the universal theme.

(*E. H. Palmer, Orient. Myst.*)

Recognize the mark of Deity in every place, and never place the foot without its own limit. The world is the image of the Godhead. — (*Buslami.*)

RABIA LEGENDS

— The widow *Rabia* (3) is reported having said "an interior wound consumes my heart; it can only be cured by communion with a friend. (4) I shall remain sick till the day of judgment when I shall reach my end. —

— It is told of *Rabia* that once when requested to marry, she answered: My being has for a long time been in marital

communion; hence I say that my ego is long ago lost in itself and arisen again in Him (in God); since then I am entirely in His power, yea, I am He. He, who would ask me for a bride, would ask me, not from myself, but from Him (God). *Hassan Basri* (a famous Mohamedan Theologian) asked her how she had reached this state. She answered: In this way, everything which I had found I lost again in Him (God). When questioned as to by which mode she knew Him, she made answer: O, *Hassan*, you know Him by certain methods and means, I know Him without modes and means. —

— *Ibn Chali Kan* tells about Rabia that she often in the middle of the night went up upon the roof and in her lonesomeness cried out: O, my God! Now is silenced the noise of the day, and the lover enjoys the night with the beloved, but I enjoy myself in my lonesomeness with Thee; Thou art my true lover. —

— It is told of her that once while journeying to Mecca on seeing the Kaaba she exclaimed: What is the Kaaba to me? I need the Lord of the Kaaba! I am so near God that I apply to myself his words: He who approaches me by an inch, him I approach by a yard. What is the Kaaba to me? —

— *Feri'd Eddin Attar* tells about her, that she, once while crossing the fields, cried out: Deep longing after God has taken possession of me! True, Thou art both earth and stone, but I yearn to behold Thee, Thyself. The high God spoke to her in her heart, without a medium: O, Rabia! Do you not know that once when Moses requested to see God, only a grain fell from the sun and he collapsed: Be satisfied with my name! —

— Once asked if she beheld God while worshipping Him. "Assuredly," said she, "I behold Him, for Whom I cannot see, I cannot worship." —

— Once when Rabia was sick three famous Theologians called upon her, namely *Hassan Basri*, *Malik Dinar*, and *Schakik Balchi*. Hassan said: The prayers of that man are not sincere who refuses to bear the Lord's chastisements. Schakik added to that: He is not sincere who does not rejoice in the Lord's chastisements. But Rabia, who detected selfish joy even in those words, replied: He is not sincere in his prayers, who does not, when he beholds his Lord, forget entirely that he is being chastised. —

— On one occasion Rabia was questioned concerning the cause of an illness and replied: I allowed myself to think on the delights of paradise, therefore my Lord has punished me. —

ACTS OF ADEPTS (5)

Munsoor Halaj attained victory of the body, by incessant prayer and contemplation. He used to say "*I am the Truth.*"

The following story is told of him. He observed his sister go out frequently at night, and wondering what it meant, he resolved to watch her and see where she went. He did so and found that she went to a company of celestial spirits, who gave her of their nectar or immortal beverage. Thinking that a drop might be left in the cup after his sister had drank from it, he took hold of it and did, much against her warning, get a drop of the divine fluid. Ever afterwards he went about exclaiming "I am the Truth!" This was too much for the observers of the canonical law and they sentenced him to be impaled alive. When they came to take him, he told them, that he did not fear them, they could do him no harm, and when they were putting him on the stake, he disappeared from them and appeared in a sitting posture in the air at a small distance over the stake. This was repeated several times. His spirit ascended to heaven and asked the Prophet if it be right that he should suffer. The Prophet advised him to suffer, otherwise there would be an end to formal religion. On this

Munsoor Halaj's spirit descended and permitted the body to take the course of nature. When about to be impaled, he called a disciple of his, told him the secret and that his voice, "I am the Truth" would be heard, when they after burning him, should throw his ashes into the sea; and that the sea would rise and overflow all the land, if they did not take his godhra (6) and place it on the rising-waves. It so all happened. —

A Sufi poet has explained the cause of Munsoor's death, to lie in the fact, that he revealed a mystery.

Of *Shems Tebreez* the following story is told. He raised a King's only son from death by throwing his mantle over him and ordering him "Rise by my order." For this he was summoned before the ecclesiastical court and sentenced to be flayed alive. When the sentence came to be executed, no knives could cut him, his body was invulnerable. It is related, that he ascended in spirit to heaven and the Prophet directed him to undergo his punishment, which he subsequently did. He directed the doctors of Law, himself, how to begin to cut the skin from his feet, or rather made the incision himself. When they had thus flayed him, he requested his own skin, be given to him as the letter of the law was fulfilled, and they gave it to him. Of this he made his *Khirqeh* or derwish's habit, threw it over his shoulders, and went away.

After that the doctors of law ordered everybody to give him nothing to eat, drink, etc. He thus remained for some days without food, etc. At last he found a dead ox and cut out a piece, but as no one dared give him fire, he ordered the sun to descend from the firmament and come nearer to broil his meat. The sun obeyed — but the prince and people fearing the consequences implored him to relieve their sufferings by ordering the sun to return to its station. He granted their request.

Al-Ghazzali (Abu Hamid Muhammed ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad al Ghazzali.) surnamed Hajjatu 'l-Islam ("the proof of Islam"). He was born at Tus A.D. 1058 and died A.D. 1111. —

The following are his own words: "I said to myself: the aim of my life is simply to know the truth of things; therefore I must ascertain what *knowledge* is. * * I then said to myself the only hope of acquiring incontestable convictions is by the perceptions of the senses and by necessary truths. Their evidence seemed to me to be indubitable. I soon began to examine the objects of sensation and speculation to see if they were beyond doubt and doubts crowded in upon me, that my incertitude became complete. * * I abandoned the senses, therefore, having seen all my confidence in their truth shaken. * * * Perhaps, said I, there is no assurance but in the notions of reason, viz., in first principles. * * * Upon this the senses replied: "What assurance have you that your confidence in reason is not of the same nature as your confidence in us? May there not be some other judge superior to reason? The non-appearance of such a judge is no proof of his non-existence. * * * I came to reflect on sleep, how during sleep we give to visions, reality and consistence, and have no suspicion of their untruth. On awaking we see they were nothing but visions. What assurance have we that all we feel and see and know when we are awake does actually exist?"

Al Gazzali had now come to disbelief and distrust of the world of sense. He gave his wealth away, left Bagdad and retired into Syria, to the desert, where he spent two years in solitary struggle, combating his passions, purified his heart and prepared for another world. *He attained freedom.* Afterwards he said: "The life of man passes through three degrees. The first or infantile state is that of pure sensation; the second is that of understanding, and the third that of reason, where the intellect perceives the

necessary truths, etc. But there is a fourth state, beyond these three, in which man perceives the hidden things, that have been, and that will be and the things that escape both the senses and reason. This state is Freedom."

AL GAZZALI: ALCHEMY OF HAPPINESS

CHAP I. ON THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SOUL, AND HOW KNOWLEDGE OF THE SOUL IS THE KEY TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

O seeker after the divine mysteries! Know thou that the door to the knowledge of God will be opened to a man first of all, when he knows his own soul, and understands the truth about his own spirit, according as it has been revealed, "he who knows himself knows his Lord also."

If you wish, O seeker of the way! to know your own soul, know that the blessed and glorious Cod created you of two things: the one is a visible body, and the other is a something internal, that is called spirit and heart, which can only be perceived by the mind. But when we speak of the heart, we do not mean the piece of flesh which is in the left side of the breast of man, for that is found in a dead body and in animals: it may be seen with the eyes, and belongs to the visible world. That heart, which is emphatically called spirit, does not belong to this world, and although it has come to this world, it has only come to leave it. It is the sovereign of the body, which is its vehicle, and all the external and internal organs of the body are its subjects. Its special attribute is to know God and to enjoy the vision of the Beauty of the Ford God. — They will ask you about the spirit. Answer, "The spirit is a creation by decree of the Ford. The spirit belongs to the world of decrees. All existence is of two kinds, one is of the world of decrees, and the other is of the world of creation. To Him belong creation and decree."

— That spirit, which has the property of knowing God is called the heart; it is not found in beasts, nor is it matter or an accident. The heart has been created with angelic qualities. It is a substance of which it is difficult to apprehend the essence. The law does not permit it to be explained, but there is no occasion for the student being acquainted with it at the outset of his journey.

— Know, O seeker after the divine mysteries! that the body is the kingdom of the heart, and that in the body there are many forces in contrariety with the heart, as God speaks in his Holy Word.

— Know, O student of wisdom! that the body, which is the kingdom of the heart, resembles a great city. The hand, the foot, the mouth and the other members resemble the people of the various trades. Desire is a standard bearer; anger is a superintendent of the city, the heart is its sovereign, and reason is the vizier. The sovereign needs the service of all the inhabitants. But desire, the standard bearer, is a liar, vain and ambitious. He is always ready to do the contrary of what reason, the vizier, commands. He strives to appropriate to himself whatever he sees in the city, which is the body. Anger, the superintendent, is rebellious and corrupt, quick and passionate. He is always ready to be enraged, to spill blood, and to blast one's reputation. If the sovereign the heart, should invariably consult with reason, his vizier, and when desire was transgressing, should give to wrath to have power over him (yet, without giving him full liberty, should make him angry in subjection to reason, the vizier, so that passing all bounds he should not stretch out his hand upon the kingdom), there would then be an equilibrium in the condition of the kingdom, and all the members would perform the functions for which they were created, their service would be accepted at the mercy seat, and they would obtain eternal felicity.

The dignity of the heart is of two kinds; one is by means of

knowledge, and the other through the exertion of divine power. Its dignity by means of knowledge is also of two kinds. The first is external knowledge, which everyone understands: the second kind is veiled and cannot be understood by all, and is extremely precious.

— In the second, by the power of thought, the soul passes from the abyss to the highest heaven, and from the East to the West.

The most wonderful thing of all is, that there is a window in the heart from whence it surveys the world. This is called the invisible world, the world of intelligence, or the spiritual world.

— The heart resembles a pure mirror, you must know, in this particular, that when a man falls asleep, when his senses are closed, and when the heart, free and pure from blamable affections, is confronted with the preserved tablet, then the tablet reflects upon the heart the real states and hidden forms inscribed upon it. In that state the heart sees most wonderful forms and combinations. But when the heart is not free from impurity, or when, on waking, it busies itself with things of sense, the side towards the tablet will be obscured, and it can view nothing. For, although in sleep the senses are blunted, the image-making faculty is not, but preserves the forms reflected upon the mirror of the heart.

— In death, the senses are completely separated and the veil of the body is removed, the heart can contemplate the invisible world and its hidden mysteries, without a veil, just as lightning or the celestial rays impress the external eye.

— If a person calls into exercise, in perfection, holy zeal and austerities, and purifies his heart from the defilement of blamable affections, and then sits down in a retired spot, abandons the use of his external senses, and occupies himself

with calling out "O God! O God!" his heart will come into harmony with the visible world, he will no longer receive notices from the material world, and nothing will be present in his heart but the exalted God. In this revelation of the invisible world, the windows of the heart are opened, and what others may have seen in a dream, he in this slate sees in reality. The spirits of angels and prophets are manifested to him and he holds intercourse with them. The hidden things of the earth and heaven are uncovered to him. * * * Probably the knowledge of all the prophets was obtained in this way, for it was not obtained by learning.

— When the heart is free from worldly lusts, from the animosities of society and from distractions by the senses, the vision of God is possible. And this course is adopted by the Mystics. It is also the path followed by the prophets.

— The heart of man while in the spiritual world knows its Maker and Creator; it had mingled with the angels and knows for what service it was created.

— To whomsoever this revelation has been vouchsafed, if it directs him to reform the world, to invite the nations to turn to God, and to a peculiar way of life, that person is called a prophet, and his way of life is called a law; and that influence which proceeds from him, which transcends what is ordinary, is called a *miracle*. If he has not been appointed to invite nations, but worships in accordance with the law of another, he is called a *saint*, and that which proceeds from him, which transcends what is ordinary, is called a *manifestation of grace*.

— The knowledge of God, which is the occasion of the revelation of truth, cannot be acquired without self-denial and effort. Unless a man has reached perfection and the rank of a Superior, nothing will be revealed to him, except in cases of special divine grace and merciful providence, and this occurs very rarely.

— You have now learned, O student of the divine mysteries, the dignity of the heart through knowledge.

— Now listen to the heart's dignity through divine power and the greatness of which it is capable.

— When God wills it, the angels send forth the winds, cause the rain to fall, bring forth the embryo in animals, shape their forms, cause seeds to sprout in the earth and plants to grow, many legions of angels being appointed to this service. The heart of man, being created with angelic properties must also have influence and power over the material world; * * * and if the animal and ferocious qualities should not be dominant, if it should look upon a lion or tiger with "majesty" they would become weak and submissive. If it should look with kindness upon one who is sick, his infirmity might be changed to health. If it should look upon the vigorous with majesty, they might become infirm. The reality of the existence of these influences is known both by reason and experience.

— In whomsoever these influences are shown to have power, if he occasions misery in the exercise of this power, he is designated a sorcerer.

— The heart has dominion and control through three channels. One is through visions; — the second is through the dominion which the heart exercises over its own body; — the third source of dominion of the heart is through knowledge. — Some persons have all things opened up to them by the will of God. This kind of knowledge is called "infused and illuminated" as God says in his Word: "we have illuminated him with our knowledge." These three specialities are all of them found in certain measure in some men, in others two of them are found, and in others, only one is found: but whenever the three are found in the same

person, he belongs to the rank of prophets or of the greatest of the saints. Man cannot comprehend states of being which transcend his own nature. No person can understand any individual who belongs to a scale of rank above him.

— The path of mysticism is sought for by all men, and longed for by all classes of society, yet those who attain to the end are exceedingly rare.

— The body is but an animal to be ridden by the heart, which is its rider, while the heart's chief end is to acquire a knowledge of God.

CHAP. II. ON THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

— In the books of former prophets it is written, "Know thine own soul, and thou shalt know thy Lord," and we have received it in a tradition, that "He who knows himself, already knows his Lord."

— Everyone in the sphere to which he attains, is still veiled with a veil. The light of some is as of a twinkling star. Others see as by the light of the moon. Others are illuminated as if by the world-effulgent sun. To some the invisible world is even perfectly revealed, as we hear in the holy word of God: "And thus we caused Abraham to see the heaven and the earth." And hence it is that the prophet says: "There are before God seventy veils of light; if he should unveil them, the light of His countenance would burn everything that came into His presence."

CHAP. III. ON THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD.

— Know, that this world is one stage of our life for eternity. For those who are journeying in the right way, it is the road of religion. It is a market opened in the wilderness, where those who are travelling on their way to God, may collect and prepare provisions for their journey, and depart thence to God, without

sorrow or despondency.

— The world is delusive, enchanting and treacherous.

— The world will be brought to the great assembly at the last day, in the form of a woman with livid eyes, pendent lips, and deformed shape, and all the people will look upon her, and will exclaim, "what deformed and horrible person is that, whose aspect alone is severe torture to the soul." And they will be answered, "It was on her account that you were envying and hating one another, and were ready to slay one another. It was on her account that you rebelled against God, and debased yourselves to every sort of corruption." And then God will order her to be driven off to hell with her followers and her lovers. (7)

The Lord Jesus (upon whom be peace!) declares that the world is like the man who drinks sea water. The more he drinks, the more his internal heat increases, and unless he stops, he will destroy himself by drinking.

CHAP. IV. ON THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE FUTURE WORLD.

— Know, beloved, that we cannot understand the future world, until we know what death is: and we cannot know what death is, until we know what life is: nor can we understand what life is, until we know what spirit is.

— The following is an illustration of the duration of eternity, so far as the human mind can comprehend it. If the space between the empyreal heaven to the regions below the earth, embracing the whole universe, should be filled up with grains of mustard seed, and if a crow should make use of them as food and come but once in a thousand years and take but a single grain away, so that with the lapse of time there should not remain a single grain, still at the end of that time not the amount of a grain of mustard seed would have been diminished from the duration of eternity.

— Prayers are of three degrees, of which the first are those that are simply spoken with the lips. Prayers are of the second kind, when with difficulty, and only by a most resolute effort, the soul is able to fix its thoughts on Divine things without being disturbed by evil imaginations: of the third kind, when one finds it difficult to *turn away* the mind from dwelling on Divine things. But it is the very marrow of prayer, when He who is invoked takes possession of the soul of the suppliant, and the soul of him who prays is absorbed into God to whom he prays, and his prayer ceasing, all consciousness of self has departed, and to such a degree, that all thought whatsoever of the praying is felt as a veil betwixt the soul and God. This state is called by the Mystics "absorption," for the reason that the man is so absorbed, that he takes no thought of his body, or of anything that happens externally, none of what occurs in his own soul, but, absent as it were from all such matter whatsoever, is first engaged in going *towards* his Lord, and finally is wholly *in* his Lord. If only the thought occurs that he is absorbed into the Absolute, it is a blemish: for that absorption only is worthy of the name which is unconscious of itself. And these words of mine, although they will be called, as I well know, but foolish babbling by raw theologians, are yet by no means without significance. For consider, the condition of which I speak, resembles that of a person who loves any other object, as wealth, honor, or pleasure. We see such persons so carried away with their love, and others with anger, that they do not hear one who speaks to them, nor see those passing before their eyes; nay, so absorbed are they in their passion, that they do not perceive their absorption. Just so far as you turn your mind upon your absorption, you necessarily turn it away from that which is the object of it."

Again he says: "The commencement of this is the going to God, then follows the finding Him, when the "absorption" takes place. This is, at first, momentary, as the lightening swiftly glancing upon the eye. But afterwards confirmed by use, it introduces the soul into a higher world, where the most pure, essential essence meeting it, tills the soul with the image of the spiritual world, while the majesty of deity evolves and discovers itself."

Omar Khayyam (Ghias uddin Abul Fath Omar ibn Ibrahim Al Khayyam) was born in Khorassan "the focus of Persian culture" and is supposed to have died A. D. 11 23.

He was not affiliated with any Sufi order, but large parts of his works are full of true Sufi philosophy and are recognized as such.

The first part of the following quotations are taken from the translation by E. H. Whinfield in Trubner's Oriental Series. The second part is extracted from B. Quarritch's ed. 1879.

MOTTO: There is a mystery I know full well,
Which to all, good and bail, I cannot tell;
My worlds are dark, but I cannot unfold
The secrets of the "station" where I dwell.

(66) — to attain unconsciousness of self
Is the sole cause I drink me drunk with wine. —

(108) They preach how sweet those Houri brides will be,
But I say wine is sweeter — taste and see! —

(120) Ten powers, and nine spheres, eight heavens made
He,
And planets seven, of six sides, as we see,
Five senses, and four elements, three souls,
Two worlds, but only one, O man, like thee. —

(124) What lord is fit to rule but "Truth?" not one.

What beings disobey His rule? not one. —

(131) Thy being is the being of Another,
Thy passion is the passion of Another.
Cover thy head, and think, and then wilt see,
Thy hand is but the cover of Another. —

(148) Allah hath promised wine in Paradise,
Why then should wine on earth be deemed a vice? —

(225) When the fair soul this mansion doth vacate,
Each element assumes its principal state, —

(266) They go away, and none is seen returning,
To teach that oilier world's recondite learning:
'Twill not be shown for dull mechanic prayers,
For prayer is naught without true heartfelt yearning.—

(285) Life's fount is wine, Khizer (8) its guardian
I, like Elias, (9) find it where I can;
'Tis sustenance for heart and spirit too,
Allah himself calls wine "a boon to man." —

(340) Man is the whole creation's summary,
The precious apple of great wisdom's eye;
The circle of existence is a ring,
Whereof the signet is humanity. —

(351) The more I die to self, I live the more,
The more abase myself, the higher soar;
And, strange! the more I drink of Being's wine,
More sane I grow, and sober than before! —

(369) This world a body is, and God its soul,
And angels are its senses, who control
Its limbs — the creatures, elements, and spheres;
The One is the sole basis of the whole. —

(376) Some look for truth in creeds, and forms, and rules;
Some grope for doubts or dogmas in the schools;
But from behind the veil a voice proclaims,
"Your road lies neither here nor there, O fools." —

(400) My body's life and strength proceed from Thee!
My soul within and spirit are of Thee!
My being is of Thee, and Thou art mine,
And I am Thine, since I am lost in Thee! —

(31) Up from Earth's Centre through the Seventh Gate
I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn (10) sate,
And many a Knot unravel'd by the Road;
But not the Master-knot of Human Fate. —

(32) There was the Door to which I found no Key;
There was the Veil through which I might not see:
Some little talk awhile of *Me* and *Thee*
There was — and then no more of *Thee* and *Me*. (11) —

(33) Earth could not answer; nor the Seas that mourn[lb]
In flowing Purple, of their Lord forlorn;
Nor rolling Heaven, with all his Signs reveal'd
And hidden by the sleeve of Night and Morn.

(34) Then of the *Thee in Me* who works behind[lb]
The Veil, I lifted up my hands to find
A Lamp amid the Darkness; and I heard,
As from Without — "*The Me Within Thee Blind!*" —

(35) Then to the Lip of this poor earthen Urn
I lean'd, the Secret of my Life to learn:
And Lip to Lip it murmur'd "While you live,
Drink! — for once dead, you never shall return." —

(36) I think the Vessel, that with fugitive

Articulation answered, once did live,
And drink; and Ah! the passive lip I kiss'd.
How many kisses might it take — and give! — (12)

(44) Why, if the Soul can fling the dust aside.
And naked on the Air of Heaven ride.
Wer't not a Shame — wer't not a Shame for him
In this clay carcase crippled to abide?

(50-52) A Hair perhaps divides the False and True;
Yes; and a single Alif were the clue —
Could you but find it — to the Treasure-house.
And peradventure to *The Master* too.
Whose secret Presence * * *
* * * * eludes your pains;
Taking all shapes * * * ; and
They change and perish all — but He remains.[lb]
A moment guess'd — then back behind the Fold
Immerst of darkness* * *

(55-56) You know, my Friends, * * *
I made a Second Marriage in my house;
Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to spouse.
For "Is" and "Is-not" though with Rule and line,
And "Up-and-Down" by Logic I define,
Of all that one should care to fathom, I
Was never deep in anything but — Wine.

(66-67) I sent my Soul through the Invisible,
Some letter of that After-life to spell:
And by and by my Soul returned to me,
And answer'd: "I myself am Heav'n and Hell;"
Heav'n but the Vision of fulfill'd Desire

And Hell the shadow from a Soul on fire
Cast on the Darkness info which Ourselves,
So late emerg'd from, shall so soon expire.
* * * the Banquet is ended!

FARIDU 'D-DIN SHAKRGUNJ (about A. D 1200).

Man, what thou art is hidden from thyself.
Kwnw'st not that morning, mid-day, and the eve
Are all within Thee? The ninth heaven art Thou,
And from the sphere into the roar of time
Didst fall ere-while, Thou art the brush that painted
The hues of all the world — the light of life
That ranged its glory in the nothingness.
Joy! Joy! I triumph now; no more I know
Myself as simply me. I burn with love.
The centre is within me, and its wonder
Lies as a circle everywhere about me.
Joy! Joy! No mortal thought can fathom me.
I am the merchant and the pearl at once.
Lo! time and space lay crouching at my feet.
Joy! Joy! When I would revel in a rapture,
I plunge into myself, and all things know.

Saadi (Shaikh-Muslah-ud-Din Saadi) was born at Shiraz, the capital of Persia. A.D. 1176.

He thus characterizes his life and his studies: "I have wandered to various regions of the world, and everywhere have I mixed freely with the inhabitants; I have gathered something in each corner; I have gleaned an ear from every harvest." The divan of Saadi is *by* his countrymen reckoned to be the true Salt mine of poets. Jami calls him "the nightingale of the groves of Shiraz."

We would call him the moral philosopher of Sufism. His writings

do not contain much metaphysics.

SAADIS' GULISTAN (OR ROSE GARDEN):

MOTTO: The Rose may continue to bloom five or six days;
But my *Rose garden* is fragrant for ever.

Who, when the drum soundeth for departure, hath not made up
his burden;

— Shame on the man * *

Who, on the morning of his journey, is still indulging in sweet
sleep.

— They asked Lockman, the wise, from whence he learnt wisdom.
He answered: "From the blind; for till they have tried the ground,
they plant not the foot."

— The world, O my brother, abideth with no one.

— Ask the inhabitants of Hell, they will tell you it is Paradise.

— The sons of Adam are limbs of one another, for in their
creation they are formed of one substance.

When Fortune bringeth affliction to a single member, not one of
the rest remaineth without disturbance.

— Know that from God is the difference of enemy and friend, for
the hearts of both are alike in His keeping.

— So long as thou art able, crush not a single heart, for a sigh has
power to overturn a world.

— Not a word can be said, even in child's play, from which an
intelligent person may not gather instruction; but if a hundred
chapters of wisdom were read in the hearing of a fool, to his ears
it would sound as nothing but child's play.

— Yesternight, towards morning', a warbling bird stole away my reason, my patience, my strength, and my understanding. My exclamations, by chance, reached the ear of a most intimate friend. "Never," he said "could I believe that the voice of a bird should have such a power to disturb thy intellect!" — "It is not," I replied, "befitting the condition of man, that a bird should be reciting its hymn of praise, and that I should be silent."

— One day the Prophet said to Abu Huraizah: "Do not come *every* day, that our friendship may increase."

A holy man has said: "With all the beauty which attends the sun, I have never heard that anyone has taken him for a friend, except in winter, when he is veiled, and *therefore* is loved.

— The treasure chosen by Lokman was patience: without patience there is no such thing as wisdom.

— Were every night a night of power, *the Night of Power*, would lose its worth. Were every pebble a ruby, the ruby and the pebble would be of equal value.

[Quran, Chap, xcvi: Verily we sent down the Quran in the night of al Kadr. — Therein do the angels descend, and the spirit of *Gabriel* also, by the permission of their Lord *with his decrees* concerning every matter. It is peace until morning. Comp. footnote to Lane's transl. of the Quran and our Part II: Symbols].

— How should the multitude find its way to their secret chambers, for, like the waters of life, they are hidden in darkness?

They kindle themselves the flame, which, as a moth, consumeth them; not wrapping themselves up like the silk-worm in its own web.

Seeking for the Soul's repose on the bosom which only can give

repose, their lips are still dry with thirst on the very margin of the stream:

Not that they have no power to drink the water, but that their thirst could not be quenched, even on the banks of the Nile.

"The bird of the morning only knoweth the worth of the book of the rose; for not every one who readeth the page understandeth the meaning."

(*Hafiz.*)

SAADIS' BOOSTAN [FRUIT GARDEN OR GARDEN OF PLEASURE]

His nature's true state all are helpless to read.
The extent of *His* glory, no mortal has found;
His exquisite beauty, no vision can bound.

* * * * *

To the skirt of *His* praise Reason's hand comes not nigh.

* * * * *

The mind can't *this* world by reflection embrace.

But the Lord of the sky and the earth's rutted skin.
On none shuts the door of subsistence for sin.
Like a drop in the ocean of knowledge are seen
Both *His* worlds, and the faults, Me sees, kindly, He'll
screen.

* * * * *

The Creator is mercy-diffusing and kind,
For He helps all *His* creatures and knows ev'ry mind.
In Him, self-reliance and grandeur you see,
For *His* kingdom is old and *His* nature is free. —

* * * * *

He is tardy in seizing on those who rebel,
And does not excuse-bringers rudely repel.

* * * * *

When you've penitent turned "*It is past*," He will write.

* * * * *

The extent of God's mercies, no mortal can guess;
The need of His praises, what tongue can express?

Who knows that communion with God you don't share,
When without an absolution you stand to say pray'r?

* * * * *

That pray'r is the key of the portal of hell,
Over which in men's presence a long time you dwell.
If your path does not lead to the Maker alone,
Your carpet for pray'r into Hell will be thrown!
He ordered, and something from nothing arose;
Who something from nothing but He could disclose?
Again to nonentity's hiding He flings us. —

And thence to the plain of the judgment He brings us.
Let the robes of deceit, name and fame be dispersed!
For a man becomes weak if in garments immersed.
Wordly love is a veil by which nothing is gained;
When you snap the attachments the Lord is obtained.

* * * * *

Know, that the people in ecstasy drown'd,
In the eyes of the Lord special favour have found!
He watches the "friend," in the fierce burning pile?

* * * * *

You've no road in yourself while to self you are wed;
The enraptured alone are informed on this head. —
Some one said to a Moth "Oh, contemptible mite!
Go! love one who will your affection requite.

* * * * *

Between you and the candle no friendship can be!

* * * * *

No one tells you your conduct is perfectly right
In destroying your life for the love of the light!
Observe what the moth, full of hot anguish, said:
"If I burn, oh astonishing! What is the dread?"

* * * * *

* * *I fancy the flame is a beautiful rose!

* * * * *

Won't you helplessly, one day, your life give away?
For the sake of space and death, better give it to-day

A wild beast is not likely to change into man;
Instruction is lost on it, strive as you can.

* * * * *

Effort makes not a rose from a willow to grow;
A warm bath will not whiten a negro like snow.
Since naught can the arrow of destiny brave.
Resignation's the shield that is left to God's slave.

FOOTNOTES:

1. The soul soliloquizing. ([return to text](#))
2. The Deity. ([return to text](#))
3. Second century. ([return to text](#))
4. The Deity. ([return to text](#))
5. The Work entitled "*The Acts of the Adepts*," by Shemsu — D — Din Ahmad, EI Eflaki Las been reserved for our second part: Symbols. ([return to text](#))
6. A *godhra* is the counterpane of shreds the Fakirs use to lie down upon, and throw over their shoulders. ([return to text](#))
7. Comp. the mediaeval conception "Lady World." ([return to text](#))

8. Khizer, the "Green Old Man" is the guardian of "the fountain of life" and the type of the self sustaining power of Deity. ([return to text](#))

9. Quran II. 216, Elias discovered the water of life. ([return to text](#))

10. Saturn is lord of the seventh heaven. ([return to text](#))

11. No more individual existence. ([return to text](#))

12. The following is told, and attributed to Attar; A thirsty traveller dips his hand into a spring of water to drink from. Another comes likewise to drink and loaves his earthen howl behind him. The first traveller takes it up for another draught and is surprised to find the same water bitter when drank from the earthen cup. But a voice from heaven tells him the clay from which the bowl is made was once *Man*; and, into whatever shape renewed, *can never lose the bitter flavour of mortality*. ([return to text](#))

The Path

POLARITY OF THE HUMAN BODY — *Ch. J. Quetil, F.T.S.*

Mr. H. Durville, Director of the "Journal du Magnetisme," published in Paris, France, has made some very interesting experiments which have led him to fix the exact Polarity of the Human Body. To understand well what I am going to state, it is necessary to know first that the French call the South pole of the Earth, Austral, and the North pole, Boreal, and that they call the end of the compass needle or of a Magnet which is attracted to the North of the Earth, Austral, and the end which is attracted to the South, Boreal.

Mr. Durville has replaced the denominations Austral and Boreal by the terms positive and negative, based on the following Electro-Chemical law. If a Saline solution be submitted to the action of a Voltaic current, the acids go to the pole +, or positive and the alkalis to the pole –, or negative.

Also if we put in the water contained in two different glasses, the two electrodes of a pile, uniting the two glasses by a wet woolen or cotton thread, the water in the glass exposed to the electrode +, will take a fresh and acidulated taste, and the water in the other glass exposed to the electrode –, will take an alkaline, tepid and unsavoury taste. Now, if we submit two glasses filled with water to the poles of a Magnet, the water exposed to the Austral pole will take an acidulated taste, and the water exposed to the Boreal pole will take an alkaline taste.

There is, then, a concordance of nature between the positive or + pole of the pile, and the Austral or positive pole of the Magnet, both being fresh and acids; and between the negative or – pole of the pile, and the Boreal or negative pole of the Magnet, both being tepid, nauseous and alkaline. Consequently we can call +, or

positive, the Austral pole of the Magnet and –, or negative, the Boreal pole. Furthermore, if we magnetize two glasses of water, one with the right hand, and the other with the left hand, the first will become acidulated and fresh, and the second, tepid, nauseous and alkaline.

Then, there is again concordance of nature between the positive or – pole of the pile, the positive or Austral pole of the Magnet, and the right hand, which are fresh and acidulated; and between the negative or – pole of the pile, the negative or Boreal pole of the Magnet, and the left hand which are tepids, nauseous and alkalines.

Consequently we can call positive or +, the right hand and the Austral pole of the Magnet, as well as the positive pole of the pile; and negative or –, the left hand and the Boreal pole of the Magnet, as well as the negative pole of the pile.

We know that the Earth is a Magnet and that it acts like one.

We also know that when Magnets act freely one upon another, the poles of the same name are repulsed and the poles of contrary names are attracted.

Now, Mr. Durville found by repeated experiments that all the right side of a sensitive subject is strongly influenced by the positive pole of the Magnet which produces contraction, repulsion and excitation; while, on the contrary, the other pole relaxes, attracts and calms the same side. The Austral pole of the Magnet presented within about 4 inches of the forehead of the subject, repulses him and puts him to sleep; while the left hand attracts and awakens him. It is evident, then, that the positive pole of the Magnet and the right hand are poles of the same name; and, if the Austral pole of the Magnet is positive, then the Boreal or Northern pole of the Earth must be negative. The

physical laws of the Human Magnetism are consequently identical with those governing the actions of the Magnets.

The Human body represents three horse-shoe Magnets, two of them having the neutral point at the summit of the head and the third in an inverted position to that of the two first ones. The axis the most important divides us laterally from right to left, the other from the forepart to the back part of the body. The first horse-shoe Magnet has its neutral point at the summit of the head, and its extremities or poles at the right hand and the left hand, the right hand being the positive, and the left hand the negative pole.

The second horse-shoe Magnet has also its neutral point at the summit of the head, and the extremities or poles of its two branches are the right and the left foot, the right foot being positive and the left foot negative.

The third horse-shoe Magnet, the one in an inverted position, has its neutral point at the perineum and the extremities of its branches are the forehead and the occiput. The forehead being positive and the occiput negative.

From this it follows that in the human body, from the extremities of the feet to the summit of the head, all the right side is positive and the left side negative, and from the forehead to the perineum all the forepart of the body is positive, while the opposite or back part, from the occiput to the perineum is negative. The Human body possesses other polary axes of less importance.

Reichenbach has found, through experiments made with many sensitives, that the end of the Magnet which seeks the North pole of the Earth, the end we call positive, sends to the left hand of a sensitive a fresh breeze, while the other end emits a tepid one. He also found that the positive end emits in the dark a blue light,

while the negative one emits a yellow red light. His sensitives found that in the dark, the right side of the human body emits a blue light, while the left side emits a yellow red one. Then the right side of the body has the same quality of Magnetism as the positive, or North seeking, or Austral pole of the Magnet, and the left side has the same quality of Magnetism as the negative, or South seeking, or Boreal pole of the Magnet. Those experiments of Reichenbach agree thus entirely with those made by Mr. Duville. His polarity of the Human body is also the same as given by Andrew Jackson Davis, page 91 of his work "The Harbinger of Health." There are consequently very strong reasons for believing that the theory of Mr. Durville is the right one, since it has been confirmed by practical experiments made by himself, Reichenbach and Davis.

Mr. Durville concludes his article in the "Journal du Magnetisme," January number of 1886, with some interesting points in Therapeutics. Diseases can be classed as of two kinds, those due to atony or paralysis of the organs, and those due to excitation or inflammation.

The object of Medicine is to excite the functions of the atonic organs and to calm or moderate those which are too active. Magnetizers knew that the ends of the fingers presented within a few inches of the diseased part, will produce excitation, while the palm of the hand applied on produces calm; but they could not always obtain the desired effect for want of the knowledge of the true polarity of the Human body.

The right hand will produce attraction, calm and easiness on the left and back side of the body; and repulsion, excitation and uneasiness on the right and forepart of the body; and the left hand will produce the same corresponding effects on the right and forepart of the body, and on the left and backpart. The right-

hand, a positive pole, will act with more energy than the left-hand, a negative one.

He found by experiments that the most certain and active results are produced by presenting the palm of the hand within about two inches from the diseased part, the attractions and repulsions being in inverse ratio of the square of the distances. Every time we want to take off a pain, or calm an excitation, we will succeed by presenting the palm of the right hand to the diseased part, if that part is on the left side or the back of the body, or by presenting the palm of the left hand, if it is on the right side or the forepart of the body. For example, a heaviness in the head, a neuralgia and in general, all kinds of headaches, will cease more or less rapidly under the influence of the palm of the hand presented with the fingers upright at about two inches from the forehead. To calm the nervous system, place yourself on the left of the patient and apply the left hand on the epigastrium, and the right hand on the vertebral column, on the corresponding part. If we were to use the other hand on the same part, we should increase for a while the intensity of the pain. To obtain the desired result, the time necessarily varies according to the nature of the disease and sensibility of the patient.

With a knowledge of the laws regulating the human polarity, Magnetism becomes an exact science, a positive one. But the application of it is also an art which constant practice may improve considerably.

The Path

THE HERMETIC PHILOSOPHY: I

Fragments of the Ancient Wisdom Religion have come down to us from the remotest past, through many channels, and in various forms.

The study of philology alone will be inadequate to discover the true meaning of ancient sacred writings, though it may very greatly assist the labors of those who have already gained a clue to the Secret Doctrine. The Theosophist and the Antiquarian differ very widely, and though the former has sometimes been accused of searching out obsolete doctrines and magnifying the achievements of the past, but little observation will be required to reveal the fact, that that for which they search may be very old because it is valuable, but never valuable merely because it is old. In short that of which they are in search may truly be said to never fade, and ne'er grow old, though it is often lost sight of. Occultism is not a new craze as some suppose, it is not simply a line of the marvelous, it is rather the profoundest of all sciences, conforming in its methods of research and the character of its results to those of all sciences. The naturalist does not hesitate to construct from a single tooth or a few fragments of bone, the entire animal and assign to it its proper place, declare its habits, modes of life, size, &c., &c., even though he fixed its era centuries ago, and no one nowadays questions the general correctness of the result; the study of comparative anatomy and the science of biology testify all this. In like manner and by similar methods may one familiar with the science of occultism, which deals with the operation of uniform laws in the higher realms of nature, arrive at exact data from very small beginnings, and with this advantage, viz., that he has the means at hand to verify his conclusions, which the naturalist has not, for in this realm there

are no extinct species, the elements of human nature, and the laws which underlie their unfoldment and manifestation are the same now, as thousands of years ago.

It is the custom of many who are entirely ignorant of this higher science to deny its existence and ridicule its cultivators. Just as an uneducated and conceited boor would ridicule an Agassiz for attempting to reconstruct an animal from its thigh bone. When, therefore, one entirely ignorant not only of the principles but of the existence of such a thing as occult science, examines ancient records in which it is concealed, he will arise from his task possibly better satisfied with his own possessions as contrasted with the "ignorance" of past ages, but seldom wiser for his endeavor. Few persons nowadays are ignorant of the form of most ancient hierarchic writings, as consisting of, or containing a double meaning under the garb of allegory or parable. It is moreover becoming quite generally known that many of these ancient records are of vital importance to us of the present day, as containing the very knowledge of which we stand most in need, and the amount of attention they are receiving may be determined by observing the interest in, and almost unprecedented sales of such works as Arnold's *Light of Asia*, while the labors of men like Max Muller in rendering the ancient scriptures into English have made it possible for everyone to gain some familiarity with the religious casts of antiquity. Bearing in mind these general observations, let us briefly examine one of the most ancient, most famous, and yet least comprehended sources of ancient wisdom. As to the questions who was Hermes? which Hermes? when did he write? we have these points for the philologists and historians, quoting here the remark of Iamblichus in his treatise on the Mysteries: "Hermes, the God who presides over language was formerly very properly considered as common to all priests; and the power who presides over the true

science concerning the Gods is one and the same in the whole of things. Hence our ancestors dedicated the inventions of their wisdom to this deity, inscribing all their own writings with the name of Hermes," and "the late learned Divine Doctor Everard" in the preface to his translation of the Divine Pymander 1650, contends that Hermes Trismegistus lived a long time before Moses, that he had "perfect and exact knowledge of all things contained in the world," * * "that he was the first that invented the art of communicating knowledge to the world by writing, that he was King of Egypt, that he styled himself the son of Saturn, and that he was believed to have come from heaven, and not to have been born on earth." (1)

The above writer goes on to say that Hermes did excel in the right understanding of, because he attained to, the knowledge of the quintessence of the whole universe, otherwise called the *Elixir* of the philosophers, which secret many ignorantly deny, many have sought after, and some have found. A description of this great Treasure is said to have been found engraved upon a Smaragdine Tablet in the valley of Hebron after the flood. (2)

To the modern reader, all this sounds very queer, a bundle of contradictions and vagaries, taxing reason and even credulity. But suppose we are told, that it was designed for exactly that purpose, that only they who were *determined* to find the truth, and who therefore had faith that it existed somewhere, were expected to walk around or dig under this stumbling-block. If we turn now to *Isis Unveiled* p. 507, Vol. I, we shall find the inscription said to have been found on the tablet.

FOOTNOTES:

1. See Introduction to The Divine Pymander p. VI-et. seq. edition 1650. ([return to text](#))

2. Ibid. ([return to text](#))

The Path

A HINDU CHELA'S DIARY: II

"Yesterday I went with Kunala to look at the vast and curious temples left here by our forefathers. Some are in ruins, and others only showing the waste of time. What a difference between my appreciation of these buildings now, with Kunala to point out meanings I never saw, and that which I had when I saw them upon my first pilgrimage, made so many years ago with my father. * * * * *

A large portion of the MS. here, although written in the same characters as the rest, has evidently been altered in some way by the writer, so as to furnish clues meant for himself. It might be deciphered by a little effort, but I must respect his desire to keep those parts of it which are thus changed, inviolate. It seems that some matters are here jotted down relating to secret things, or at least, to things that he desired should not be understood at a glance. So I will write out what small portion of it as might be easily told without breaking any confidences.

It is apparent that he had often been before to the holy city of Benares, and had merely seen it as a place of pilgrimage for the religious. Then, in his sight, those famous temples were only temples. But now he found, under the instruction of Kunala, that every really ancient building in the whole collection had been constructed with the view to putting into imperishable stone, the symbols of a very ancient religion. Kunala, he says, told him, that although the temples were made when no supposition of the ordinary people of those eras leaned toward the idea that nations could ever arise who would be ignorant of the truths then universally known, or that darkness would envelop the intellect of men, there were many Adepts then well known to the rulers

and to the people. They were not yet driven by inexorable fate to places remote from civilization, but lived in the temples and while not holding temporal power, they exercised a moral sway which was far greater than any sovereignty of earth. (1) And they knew that the time would come when the heavy influence of the dark age would make men to have long forgotten even that such beings had existed, or that any doctrines other than the doctrine based on the material rights *of mine* and *thine* had ever been held. If the teachings were left simply to either paper or papyrus or parchment, they would be easily lost, because of that decay which is natural to vegetable or animal membrane. But stone lasts, in an easy climate, for ages. So these Adepts, some of them here and there being really themselves Maha Rajahs, (2) caused the temples to be built in forms, and with such symbolic ornaments, that future races might decipher doctrines from them. In this, great wisdom, he says, is apparent, for to have carved them with sentences in the prevailing language would have defeated the object since languages also change, and as great a muddle would have resulted as in the case of the Egyptian hieroglyphics, unless a key stone had also been prepared; but that itself might be lost, or in its own turn be unintelligible. The ideas underneath symbols do not alter, no matter what might be the language, and symbols are clear immortally, because they are founded in nature itself, in respect to this part of the matter, he writes down that Kunala informed him that the language used then was not Sanskrit, but a far older one now altogether unknown in the world.

From a detached sentence in the MS., it is shadowed out that Kunala referred to a curious building put up many years ago in another part of India and now visible, by which he illustrated the difference between an intelligent construction and unintelligent one. This building was the product of the brain of a Chandala, (3)

who had been enriched through a curious freak. The Rajah had been told upon some event occurring, by his astrologers, that he must give an immense sum of money to the first person he saw next day, they intending to present themselves at an early hour. Next day, at an usually early season, the Rajah, arose, looked out of the window, and beheld this Chandala. Calling his astrologers and council together and the poor sweeper into his presence, he presented him with lacs upon lacs of rupees, and with the money the Chandala built a granite building having immense monolithic chains hanging down from its four corners. Its only symbology was, the change of the chains of fate; from poor low caste to high rich low caste. Without the story the building tells us nothing.

But the symbols of the temple, not only those carved on them, but also their conjuncture, need no story nor knowledge of any historical events. Such is the substance of what he writes down as told him by Kunala. He says also that this symbology extends not only to doctrines and cosmology, but also to laws of the human constitution, spiritual and material. The explanation of this portion is contained in the altered and cryptic parts of the MS. He then goes on:

* * * "Yesterday, just after sunset, while Kunala and X were talking, Kunala suddenly seemed to go into an unusual condition, and about ten minutes afterwards a large quantity of malwa flowers fell upon us from the ceiling.

"I must now go to — and do that piece of business which he ordered done. My duty is clear enough, but how am I to know if I shall perform it properly. * * * When I was there and after I had finished my work and was preparing to return here, a wandering fakir met me and asked if he could find from me the proper road to Karli. I directed him, and he then put to me some questions that looked as if he knew what had been my business: he also had

a very significant look upon his face, and several of his questions were apparently directed to getting me to tell him a few things Kunala had told me just before leaving Benares with an injunction of secrecy. The questions did not on the face show that, but were in the nature of inquiries regarding such matters, that if I had not been careful, I would have violated the injunction. He then left me saying: "You do not know me but we may see each other." * * * I got back last night and saw only X, to whom I related the incident with the fakir, and he said that, 'it was none other than Kunala himself using that fakir's body who had said those things, and if you were to see that fakir again he would not remember you and would not be able to repeat his questions, as he was for the time being taken possession of for the purpose, by Kunala, who often performs such things.' I then asked him if in that case Kunala had really entered the fakir's body, as I have a strange reluctance toward asking Kunala such questions, and X replied that if I meant to ask if he had really and in fact entered the fakir's person, the answer was no, but that if I meant to ask if Kunala had overcome that fakir's senses, substituting his own, the answer was, yes; leaving me to make my own conclusions. * * * I was fortunate enough yesterday to be shown the process pursued in either entering an empty body, or in using one which has its own occupant. I found that in both cases it was the same, and the information was also conveyed that a Bhut (4) goes through just the same road in taking command of the body or senses of those unfortunate women of my country who sometimes are possessed by them. And the Bhut also sometimes gets into possession of a part only of the obsessed person's body, such as an arm or a hand, and this they do by influencing that part of the brain that has relation with that arm or hand; in the same way with the tongue and other organs of speech. With any person but Kunala I would not have allowed my own body to be made use of for the experiment. But I felt perfectly safe, that he would not only let me

in again, but also that he would not permit any stranger, man or gandharba, (5) to come in after him. We went to ___ and he * *. The feeling was that I had suddenly stepped out into freedom. He was beside me and at first I thought he had but begun. But he directed me to look, and there on the mat I saw my body, apparently unconscious. As I looked * * * the body of myself, opened its eyes and arose. It was then superior to me, for Kunala's informing power moved and directed it. It seemed to even speak to me. Around it, attracted to it by those magnetic influences, wavered and moved astral shapes that vainly tried to whisper in the ear or to enter by the same road. In vain! They seemed to be pressed away by the air or surroundings of Kunala. Turning to look at him, and expecting to see him in a state of samadhi, he was smiling as if nothing, or at the very most, but a part, of his power had been taken away * * * another instant and I was again myself, the mat felt cool to my touch, the bhuts were gone, and Kunala bade me rise.

He has told me to go to the mountains of — where — and — usually live, and that even if I were not to see any body the first time, the magnetized air in which they live would do me much good. They do not generally stop in one place, but always shift from one place to another. They, however, all meet together on certain days of the year in a certain place near Bhadrinath, in the northern part of India. He reminded me that as India's sons are becoming more and more wicked, those adepts have gradually been retiring more and more toward the north, to the Himalaya mountains. * * * Of what a great consequence is it for me to be always with Kunala. And now X tells me this same thing that I have always felt. All along I have felt and do still feel strongly that I have been once his most obedient and humble disciple in a former existence. All my hopes and future plans are therefore centred in him. My journey therefore to up country has done me

one good, that of strengthening my belief, which is the chief foundation on which the grand structure is to be built. * * * As I was walking past the end of Ramalinga's compound holding a small lamp of European make, and while there was no wind, the light three several times fell low. I could not account for it. Both Kunala and X were far away. But in another moment, the light suddenly went out altogether, and as I stopped, the voice of revered Kunala, who I supposed was many miles away, spoke to me, and I found him standing there. For one hour we talked; and he gave me good advice, although I had not asked it — thus it is always that when I go fearlessly forward and ask for nothing I get help at an actual critical moment — he then blessed me and went away. Nor could I dare to look in what direction. In that conversation, I spoke of the light going down and wanted an explanation, but he said I had nothing to do with it. I then said I wanted to know, as I could explain it in two ways, viz: 1st, that he did it himself, or 2nd, that some one else did it for him. He replied, that even if it were done by somebody else, *no Yogee will do a thing unless he sees the desire in another Yogee's mind.* (6) The significance of this drove out of my mind all wish to know *who* did it, whether himself, or an elemental or another person, for it is of more importance for me to know even a part of the laws governing such a thing, than it is to know who puts those laws into operation. Even some blind concatenation of nature might put such natural forces in effect in accordance with the same laws, so that a knowledge that nature did it would be no knowledge of any consequence.

(To be continued)

FOOTNOTES:

1. In the ancient Aztec civilization in Mexico, the sacerdotal order was very numerous. At the head of the whole establishment were

two high priests, elected from the order, solely for their qualifications, as shown by their previous conduct in a subordinate station. They were equal in dignity and inferior only to the sovereign, who rarely acted without their advice in weighty matters of private concerns. Sahagun *Hist. de Nueva Espana*, lib. 2; lib. 3 cap. 9- *Torq. Mon. Ind.* lib. 8 cap 20; lib. 9, cap. 3, 56; cited by Prescott in vol. 1, *Conq. Mex.* p. 66). — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

2. King or Ruler. ([return to text](#))

3. A low caste man, *e.g.* a sweeper. Such a building can now be seen at Bijapur, India. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

4. An obsessing astral shell. The Hindus consider them to be the reliquae of deceased persons. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

5. Nature spirit or elemental. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

6. This sentence is of great importance. The Occidental mind delights much more in effects, personalities and authority, than in seeking for causes, just as many Theosophists have with persistency sought to know when and where Madame Blavatsky did some feat in magic, rather than in looking for causes or laws governing the production of phenomena. In this italicized sentence is the clue to many things, for those who can see. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

The Path

PORTRAIT OF PLATO IN CARNELIAN STONE — *Fulvius Ursinus*



This portrait was taken from an old work by John Moretus, published in 1606 at Antwerp, containing 167 other portraits of ancient Greek and Latin philosophers, poets, orators, and scholars of renown. Accompanying each is a description in old Latin, and a literal translation of that which is given of the head of Plato is as follows:

"This likeness of Plato is represented on some precious stone, perhaps a Carnelian, very beautiful, of oval shape, and in the highest style of art, which one hundred years before, a Cardinal under Julius Caesar a Pontifical legate in the Florentine Council had brought from Greece. But it is long haired and bearded, as are the other likenesses of Plato, as the son of Ailius writes, that the first debate between Plato and Aristotle was about the hair and beard, because Aristotle, contrary to the fixed habit and style

of Plato, was accustomed to have his hair cut and his face shaved.

"Very like to this portrait is that which is seen cut very artistically in Carnelian stone, and which was once in the possession of the first Cardinal of the Holy Cross, which in addition to the likeness of Plato, has also a likeness of the great teacher himself, Socrates.

"On the pillar of Hermes, which has the head broken off, these words are inscribed in Greek: *'Plato was a son of Ariston, an Athenian.'*

"This also Laertius himself confirms, since he writes that he was born at Athens of his father Ariston, in the village Collyteum, eighteen years after the second year of the Olympiad, Aminia being chief ruler.

"Moreover there is extant in marble, by Fulvius, a portrait of this same Plato of the very highest artistic skill: and there is another very like to this by the same artist cut in a most beautiful Carnelian stone which represents Plato at that time an old man, as it would appear, about eighty-one years old, at which time, engaged in writing extensively he died, one hundred and eight years after the first year of the Olympiad. In the same Carnelian portrait not only is the forehead of Plato represented very broad on account of which he was called by the name of Plato, prior to which he had been called Aristocles; but also his shoulders are very broad on which account some wished him to select a name from the Greek language.

"A statue of this same Plato was dedicated in the Academy, the work of a Silanian sculptor of the highest rank; and Cicero reminds us in his Brutus, of a statue which he had, in these words: "Then we erected a statue of Plato on the public square, etc., etc.""

The Path

NOTES ON THE CABBALAH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT: I — J.

Ralston Skinner

I said in my article on Hebrew Metrology, (1) that the system embracing it was a language, veiled under the Hebrew text of Scripture, and that "To the extent to which the language was known among the Jews, the learning and teaching thereof was called 'CABBALAH.'"

It is a fact that so little is known of Cabbalah that its existence has been denied. It has seemed to possess a like property with that of Prester John, namely, the more and further he was searched for the less he could be found and the more fabulous he became. After the same fashion, as very much was related of wonders connected with Prester John, so the most marvelous things are claimed for Cabbalah. The Cabbalistic field is that in which astrologers, necromancers, black and white magicians, fortune tellers, chiromancers, and all the like, revel and make claims to supernaturalism *ad nauseam*. Claim is also made that it conceals a sublime divine philosophy, which has been attempted to be set forth in a most confused and not understandable way. The Christian quarrying into its mass of mysticism, claims for it support and authority for that most perplexing of all problems the Holy Trinity, and the betrayed character of Christ. The good, pious, ignorant man picks up Cabbalah at will as a cheap, easy and veritable production, and at once, with the poorest smattering of starved ideas, gives forth to the world, as by authority, a devout jumble of stuff and nonsense. With equal insurance, but more effrontery the knave, in the name of Cabbalah, will sell amulets and charms, tell fortunes, draw horoscopes, and just as readily give specific rules, as in the case of that worthy, Dr. Dee, for raising the dead, and actually — the

devil.

No wonder then that the whole affair has been discredited and condemned by the rational and the wise.

Discovery has yet to be made of what Cabbalah really consists before any weight or authority can be given to the name. On that discovery will rest the question whether the name should be received as related to matters worthy of rational acknowledgment.

The writer claims that such a discovery has been made, and that the same embraces rational science of sober and great worth. He claims that it will serve to clear up and take away very much of the mysticism which up to this time has been an unexplainable part of religious systems, — especially the Hebrew or Jewish, and the Christian, so much so that the supernatural in those systems will have to give place to the rational, to a very great extent. He claims that that sublime science upon which Masonry is based, is in fact, the substance of Cabbalah, — which last is the rational basis of the Hebrew text of Holy writ.

Cabbalah is inseparably connected with the text of the Scriptures, and an exposition of the inner sense of the same is as John Reuchlin claimed necessary to a right and full understanding of the Sacred Text. But he saw vaguely, being taught only in a mystic phraseology which was really a blind, and he did not come into possession of the solid, rational grounds of it which he could formulate and impart. For this reason, though he was right in his general assertion, his scheme failed, and his works in this regard, passed away from the common sense world, and have ever since lived only among the mystics and dreamers.

Like all other human productions of the kind, the Hebrew text of the Bible was in characters which could serve as sound signs for

syllabic utterance, or for this purpose what are called letters. Now in the first place, these original character signs were also pictures, each one of them; and these pictures of themselves stood for ideas which could be communicated, — much like the original Chinese letters. Gustav Seyffarth shows that the Egyptian hieroglyphics numbered over six hundred picture characters, which embraced the modified use, syllabically, of the original number of letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The characters of the Hebrew text of the Sacred Scroll were divided into classes, in which the characters of each class were interchangeable; whereby one form might be exchanged for another to carry a modified signification, both by letter, and picture and number. Seyffarth shows the modified form of the very ancient Hebrew alphabet in the old Coptic by this law of interchange of characters. This law of permitted interchange of letters is to be found quite fully set forth in the Hebrew dictionaries, such as Fuerst's and others. Though recognized and largely set forth it is very perplexing and hard to understand, because we have lost the specific use and power of such interchange. In the second place, these characters stood for *numbers* — to be used for numbers as we use specific number signs, — though, also, there is very much to prove that the old Hebrews were in possession of the so-called Arabic numerals, as we have them, from the straight line 1 to the *zero* character, together making $1+9=10$. The order of these number letters run from 1 to 9, then 10 to 90, then 100 upward. In the third place it is said, and it seems to be proven, that these characters stood for musical notes; so that for instance, the arrangement of the letters in the first chapter of Genesis, can be rendered musically, or by song. Another law of the Hebrew characters was that only the consonantal signs were characterized, — the vowels were not characterized, but were supplied. If one will try he will find that a consonant of itself cannot be made vocal without the help of a vowel; therefore it was said that the consonants made the frame

work of a word, but to give it life or utterance into the air, so as to impart the thought of the mind, and the feeling of the heart, the vowels had to be supplied. Thus the dead word of consonants became quickened into life by the Holy Spirit, or the vowels.

This being said then: —

First: The Holy or Sacred Text was given in consonants only, without any vowelizing, or signs of vowels.

Second: The letters were written one after the other at equal distances, without any separation whatever of distinct words, and without any punctuations whatever, such as commas, semi-colons, colons or periods.

It will be seen at once that a various reading of the text might be had in many places, both by differing arrangements of letters, and by a differing supplying of vowels. A very important difference of reading may be instanced in the first line of Genesis. It is made to be read "B'rashith bara Elohim," etc., "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"; wherein Elohim is a plural nominative to a verb in the third person singular. Nachminedes called attention to the fact that the text might suffer the reading, "B'rash ithbara Elohim," etc. "In the head (source or beginning) created itself (or developed) Gods, the heavens and the earth," — really a more grammatical rendering.

What the originally and intended right reading was who can tell? It may be surmised, however, that it was made to subserve a coordinating, symmetrical and harmonious working of the characters to unfold and develop their various uses; — as sound signs to frame a narrative, — as numbers to develop geometrical shapes and the numerical enunciations of their elements, comparisons and applications, — as pictures to show forth ideas in some accordance with the story told, and finally, — as musical

sounds to give an appropriate song to embrace the whole. The whole compass was to embrace rational proof, through operations in nature, of the existence of that Divine Contriving Willing Cause which we call God. But be this as it may there was no end of effort for thousands of years, by the best trained and most learned men of the Hebrews and Jews, to give and preserve what had to be decided upon by them as the right reading of the Sacred Text. This reading was certainly perfected as we have it, as early as the time of Ezra; and as to the various readings which offered, the present was perfected as the orthodox one, — or that one to be received by the profound vulgar.

It must be known that it is claimed for the Sacred Scroll by the Hebrew, that no letter in it has ever been changed, and that even the marginal readings were part of the original text for a varied use thereof, in perfect accord with the object of its writing. Unlike the Christian Gospels, with the Hebrews and Jews, alike, the original text was sacredly precious as to its every and very letter, and had to be thus preserved. To the contrary of this, the Gospels can be changed in their reading to suit the currently changing ideas of what the same should be. The marks to indicate "*right reading*" were after the time of Ezra gradually made public, were called *Massorah*, and finally, edited by Ben Chajim, were published by Bomberg, in Venice, in the fifteenth century.

After this fashion and mode the books of the Old Testament were prepared and read by the Jews long before the time of the Christian Era. They were thus accepted at that time; and afterwards by the Christian World: — so that, to day, we accept the record, as thus prepared by the ancient orthodox Jewish and Hebrew Church.

Whatever may have been the Jewish mode of complete interpretation of these books, the Christian Church had taken

them *for what they show on their first face*, — and that only. As they may be read orally, so is their fullest meaning to be gathered from the oral reading; and by means of what the sound of the words may convey to the ear the full and complete intendment of meaning is to be had. The Christian Church has never attributed to these books any property beyond this; and herein has existed its great error.

Now, as said, the substance of the Cabbalah is a rendering of the secret doctrine of the Old Testament, and this is not only asserted, but an argument is raised about the matter in the following set terms: "If the Law simply consisted of ordinary expressions and narratives, ex. gr. the words of Esau, Hagar, Laban, the ass of Balaam, or of Balaam himself, why should it be called the Law of Truth, the perfect law, the true witness of God? Each word contains a sublime source, each narrative points not only to the single instance in question, but also to generals." (Sohar iii, 149 b). "Woe be to the son of man who says that the Tora (Pentateuch) contains common sayings and ordinary narratives. * * There is the garment that every one can see, but those who have more understanding do not look at the garment but at the body beneath it; while the wisest, the servants of the Heavenly King, those who dwell at Mount Sinai, look at nothing else but the soul (i.e., the secret doctrine), which is the root of all the real Law." (Sohar, iii, 152 a).

Now it is a strange thing, that in the quotations made by Dr. Ginsburg in his Essay, (2) can be gleaned a series of data wherewith to arrange a philosophy of Cabbalistic teaching, covered by the names and remarks on the Ten Sephiroth. The "*trick of the thing*" lays plainly before the eyes in its development, and yet is perfectly concealed from unintelligent observation. In other words, the very text is laughing at the worthy doctor, while he is criticizing it with an apparent aspect of superiority and

authority. The same thing is to be found in the text of Plutarch's *Morals*, by C. W. King, and in many other texts where the like phenomenal mode is practiced. It in fact is said that the Cabbalah is evolved by "*hints scarcely perceptible*," and the cunning of the concealment is something to admire and laugh at. The description in *Sohar* of the mode of communication tends to explain what has been said:

"The opinion that the mysteries of the Cabbalah are to be found in the garment of the Pentateuch is still more systematically propounded in the following parable: 'Like a beautiful woman, concealed in the interior of her palace, who when her friend and beloved passes by, opens for a moment a secret window and is seen by him alone, and then withdraws herself immediately and disappears for a long time, so the doctrine only shows herself to the chosen (i.e., to him who is devoted to her with body and soul); and even to him not always in the same manner. At first she simply beckons at the passer by with her hand, and it generally depends upon his understanding this gentle hint. This is the interpretation known by the name of *ramaz*. Afterwards she approaches him a little closer, lisps him a few words but her form is still covered with a thick veil, which his looks cannot penetrate. This is the so-called *daraus*. She then converses with him with her face covered by a thin veil; this is the enigmatic language of the *hagadah*. After having thus become accustomed to her society, she at last shows herself face to face and entrusts him with the innermost secrets of her heart. This is the secret of the Law, *sod*. He who is thus far initiated in the mysteries of the *Tora* will understand that all these profound secrets are based upon the simple literal sense, and are in harmony with it, and from this literal sense not a single iota is to be taken and nothing is to be added to it.'" (*Sohar*, ii, 99.)

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Masonic Review*, July, 1885. ([return to text](#))

2. The Cabbalah, its Doctrine, Development and Literature.
([return to text](#))

The Path

SUFISM: III — C. H. A. Bjerregaard

In Two Parts: — Part I, Texts; Part II, Symbols.

The spirit of Sufism is best expressed in the couplet of Katebi:

"Last night a nightingale sung his song, perched on a high cypress, when the rose, on hearing his plaintive warbling, shed tears in the garden, soft as the dews of heaven."

(Continued)

SAADIS' BOOSTAN (FRUIT GARDEN OR GARDEN OF PLEASURE)

Continued:

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE CANDLE AND THE MOTH:

I remember one night lying sleepless in bed,
That I heard what the moth to the fair candle said:
"A lover am I, if I burn it is well!
Why you should lie weeping and burning, do tell."
"Oh my poor humble lover!" the caudle replied,
"My friend, the sweet honey away from we hied.
When sweetness away from my body departs,
A fire-like *Farhads* (1) to my summit then starts."
Thus she spoke, and each movement a torrent of pain
Adown her pale cheeks trickled freely like rain.
"Oh, suitor! with love you have nothing to do,
Since nor patience, nor power of standing have you.
Oh, crude one! a flame makes you hasten away;
But I, till completely consumed, have to stay.
If the burning of love makes your wings feel this heat,
See how I am consumed, from the head to the feet!"
But a very small portion had passed of the night

When a fairy-fated maiden extinguished her (2) light.
She was saying while smoke from her head curled above,
"Thus ends, oh my boy, the existence of love!"
If the love-making science you wish to acquire,
You're more happy extinguished than being on fire.
Do not weep o'er the grave of the slain for the friend:
Be glad! for to him lie will mercy extend.
If a lover, don't wash the complaint from your head!

I have told you: don't enter this ocean at all!
If you do; yield your life to the hurricane squall!

The above translation is from the hand of G. S. Davie but since this story is representative of Sufi love, I add another made by S. Robinson.

I remember that one night, when I could not close my eyes in sleep, I heard the moth say to the taper.

"I am a lover, therefore it is right that I should be burnt, but wherefore shouldst thou be lamenting and shedding tears?"

It replied: "O my poor airy friend, my honey-sweet Shirin is going away;

"And since my Shirin hath left me, like Ferhad's (3) my head is all on fire."

So spoke the taper, and each moment a flood of sorrow flowed down over its pale cheek.

Then it continued: "O pretender, love is no affair of thine: for thou hast neither patience nor persistency.

"Thou takest to flight before a slight flame; I stand firm till I am totally consumed.

"Thou mayest just singe a wing at the fire of love; look at me, who burn from head to foot."

A part of the night was not yet gone, when suddenly a Peri-faced damsel extinguished the light.

Then said the taper: "My breath is departed, the smoke is over my head; — such my son, is the ending of love!"

If thou wouldst learn the moral of the story, it is this: Only will the pangs of burning affection cease, when life's taper is extinct.

Weep not over this monument of thy perished friend — rather praise Allah, that he is accepted by Him.

If them art indeed a lover, wash not the pains of love from thy head; wash rather, like Saadi, thy hand from all malevolence.

The man who volunteereth a service of peril will not withdraw his grasp from his purpose, though stones and arrows rain down upon his head.

I have said to thee: "Take heed how thou goest to the sea; but if thou wilt go, resign thyself to its billows."

Jelaluddin Rumi (Mevlana — Our Lord — Jelalu-'d-din, Muhammed, Er Rumi of Qonya) usually called *Jelal or Mulla* (4) Born A. D. 1195, he died 1273.

Jelal is the greatest poet among the Sufis and is their Grand Master of spiritual knowledge. His name means "Majesty of Faith." He instituted the order of the Mevlevi, the "dancing or whirling dervishes," of which we shall speak more later on. This order is a realization of Jelal's father's prophecy about his son: "The day shall come, when this child will kindle the fire of divine enthusiasm throughout the world."

Jelal is truly the greatest Sufi saint, for marvelous were his

powers. In the *Menaqibu'l Afifin* (the Acts of the Adepts) by *Shemsu'-d-din Ahmed, el Eflaki* the following acts are recorded against his name. "When five years old, he used at times to become extremely uneasy and restless, so much so that his attendants used to take him into the midst of themselves. The cause of these perturbations was that spiritual forms and shapes of the absent (invisible world) would arise before his sight, that is, angelic messengers, righteous Genii, and saintly men — the concealed ones of the bowers of the True One (spiritual spouses of God), used to appear to him in bodily shapes: * * * His father used on these occasions to coax and soothe him by saying: "These are the Occult Existences. They come to present themselves before you, to offer unto you gifts and presents from the invisible world." These ecstasies and transports of his began to be publicly known and talked about. The honorific title of Khudavendgar (5) was conferred upon him at this time by his father, who used to address him as "My Lord." — "It is related that when Jelal was six years old, he one Friday afternoon was taking the air on the terraced roof of the house, and reciting the Quran, when some other children of good families came in and joined him there. After a time, one of these children proposed that they should try and jump from thence on to a neighbouring terrace, and should lay wagers on the result. Jelal smiled at this childish proposal, and remarked: "My brethren, to jump from terrace to terrace is an act well adapted for cats, dogs, and the like, to perform; but is it not degrading to man, whose station is so superior. Come now, if you feel disposed, let us spring up to the firmament, and visit the regions of God's realm." As he yet spake, he vanished from there sight. Frightened at Jelal's sudden disappearance, the other children raised a shout of dismay, that some one should come to their assistance, when lo, in an instant, there he was again in their midst; but with an altered expression of countenance and blanched cheeks. They all uncovered before him, fell to the earth

in humility, and all declared themselves his disciples. He now told them that, as he was yet speaking to them, a company of visible forms, clad in green raiment, had led him away from them, and had conducted him about the various concentric orbs of the spheres, and through the signs of the Zodiac, showing him the wonders of the world of spirits, and bringing him back to them so soon as their cries had reached his ears.

At that age, he was used not to break his fast more often than once in three or four, and sometimes even seven, days.

When Jelal went to Damascus to study, he passed by Sis in Upper Cilicia. There, in a cave, dwelt forty Christian monks, who had a great reputation for sanctity, but in reality were mere jugglers. On the approach of Jelal's caravan to the cave, the monks caused a little boy to ascend into the air, and there remain standing between heaven and earth. Jelal noticed this exhibition, and fell into a reverie. Hereupon, the child began to weep and wail, saying that the man in the reverie was frightening him. The monks told him not to be afraid, but to come down. "Oh!" cried the child, "I am as though nailed here, unable to move hand or foot." The monks became alarmed. They flocked around Jelal, and begged him to release the child. After a time, he seemed to hear and understand them. His answer was: "Only through the acceptance of Islam (6) by yourselves, all of you, as well as by the child, can he be saved." In the end they all embraced Islam, and wished to follow Jelal as his disciples, but he recommended them to remain in their cave, as before, to cease from practising jugglery, and to serve God in the spirit and in truth. So he proceeded on his journey.

To prove that man lives through God's will alone, and not by blood, Jelal one day, in the presence of a crowd of physicians and philosophers, had the veins of both his arms opened and allowed

them to bleed until they ceased to flow. He then ordered incisions to be made in various parts of his body; but not one drop of moisture was anywhere obtainable. He now went to a hot bath, washed, performed an ablution, and then commenced the exercise of the sacred dance.

(To be continued.)

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Farhad* was the youthful lover of *Sairin*. ([return to text](#))
2. *Her* refers to the candle. The moth is the lover and the candle the beloved. ([return to text](#))
3. See note above. ([return to text](#))
4. Mulla is the Persian form of the Arabic Maulawi, "a learned man," "a scholar." ([return to text](#))
5. Khudawand is a Persian word signifying "lord," "prince," "master." A professor: a man of authority. It is used as a title of the Deity and by Christian missionaries in India it is generally employed as a translation of the Greek Kyrios, "Lord." (Hughes Dic.) ([return to text](#))
6. *Islam* means *the resigning or devoting one's self entirely to God, and his service.* ([return to text](#))

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THE HERMETIC PHILOSOPHY: II

(Continued from June Number.)

The inscription said to have been found on the Smaragdine Tablet and to which reference was made in a former article, and which Dr. Everard refers to as containing the "*Elixir* of the philosophers," is further explained by the author of *Isis*, where it is also said "It is for the Hermetic student to watch its motions, to catch its subtile currents, to guide and direct them with the help of the *Athanor*, the Archimedean lever of the Alchemist." (1) It is further stated in plain words that this mysterious agent "is the universal magical agent, the astral light, which in the correlation of its forces furnishes the Alkahest, the philosophers' stone, and the elixir of life." (2) Now one great advantage to the student who follows carefully these hints is, that he soon discovers certain basic principles which reach far and wide, and in Hermetic language enable him to ascend from Earth to Heaven, and descend from Heaven to Earth, not in a vague, fanciful way, but as applicable to physical phenomena as to philosophical synthesis. These basic principles are not hypothesis, they are the *first principles of Nature*, as manifested in the phenomenal universe, a thread or clue to the labyrinth of phenomena.

There is a vast difference between modern and ancient science in regard to the Ether: The former hypothecates it to bridge a gap in phenomena and at once, as if ashamed of its weakness, turns its back upon it. Not so our ancient Hermetic brethren. Modern speculation regarding a fourth dimension of space apprehends the necessity for something beyond the old conception, as does physical science. And yet the latter reaches no solid ground, though the problem lies in the rubbish derived from analytical

science, and the necessity which has compelled it to pay tribute. There is a logical, uniform, invariable antithesis in all manifested nature, which at once suggests the unmanifested. Sometimes the change of a letter or an accent in a word or its division into syllables produces wonderful results, *e.g.*, atonement, at-one-ment. So here in the phenomenal universe, nothing and no-thing are not synonymous. To say that the ether tills all space, penetrates the densest matter, and gives rise by emanation to the whole phenomenal universe, and yet that it is *nothing* is nonsense, but that it is no-thing is perfectly true. The ether is to the phenomenal universe what the 0 is to the mathematician, nothing in itself and yet from association, implication or involution, it enters into even form and quantity. Oken has shown (3) that there are really two zeros, or that zero exists as $0+$ and $0-$, and even here begins the science of symbolism in the ancient *Mathesis*. It is in this shoreless ocean of ether that suns and solar systems are suspended. It is the alkahest or universal solvent from which all forms and qualities of matter and life proceeds, and into which they return. It is luminous, and yet the abode of darkness, the Unmoved Mover of Plato.

Take now the three dimensions of space, and we find the *idea* of length, breadth and thickness are associated with objects. Where there is no object upon which the eye can rest, we have then no length, no breadth, no thickness, *i.e.*, Ether, the antithesis of objective forms in which occur all phenomena. This ether is called the Mirror of Isis, because in it are impressed or mirrored all forms. When these forms are clothed upon then occurs, first, a *positing*; second, motion; third, the "picture" in the ether is involved and the outer material shape evolved. Nay, there is no first, second, third about it, for all occurs coincidently. The last analysis of physics is matter, force and motion; and these three, inseparable on the physical visual plane, resolve back into the

ocean of ether, which contains them all *potentially*, and which sends them out as an indissoluble trinity. Compared with matter then, the ether is transcendental, and yet we cannot say it is nothing, as has already been pointed out. Now all life, all matter, all forms, are in their essence cyclic. This is readily seen in the colloidal forms incident to organic life, but even in crystalline forms, though often overlooked, it is none the less apparent.

In relation to objective manifestation, preserving the idea of cyclic form, the ether is spoken of as the center which is everywhere, and the circumference which is nowhere.

Proceeding now with the idea of center and circumference (as yet only an idea) let us imagine a globule of protoplasm to spring instantly into visual existence. The act of *positing* was geometrical, *i.e.*, "position without extension." Let this positing represent *force*, and extension represent matter, typically, (in all directions) but this tension and extension begets motion, all together; creation, from the hitherto "*without form and void*" *i.e.*, the ether.

What was the immediate coefficient of the positing? a picture, a Divine idea, an essential form, projected in the ether. This idea is now being clothed upon, or involved in matter, and coincidentally the outer material shape and structure is being evolved. Here is an equation being solved, and from this on, it is easy to trace what occurs even under a good microscope. We are, however, interested in principles rather than processes, therefore we will preserve our typical sphere with its center and circumference.

We shall presently come back to the Smaragdine inscription, and then be able to see what a revelation it contains, and what a magical key it affords to unlock the doors of knowledge.

(To be continued.)

FOOTNOTES:

1. Isis Unveiled, p. 507, vol. I. ([return to text](#))
2. Ibid. ([return to text](#))
3. Physio-philosophy. ([return to text](#))

The Path

STUDIES IN THE UPANISHADS: II

(Continued from May number)

Longfellow, in the lines last quoted, symbolized the Universe by an immeasurable wheel forever turning in the stream of time. Allowing for the western habit of studying effects and not causes, this is a fair simile. Yet it is faulty in that it presupposes two co-existing eternities; the wheel of the Universe, and the stream in which it turns. There can be but one eternity,

Saunaka asks in this Upanishad a natural question, propounded by nearly every thinking man, especially by students of occultism who are continually seeking a royal road to the accomplishment of their objects. He wishes to be told what may be the great solvent of all knowledge. The reply of Angiras points out two great roads, which include all the others. The lower road is the one of hard work for countless births, during which we acquire knowledge slowly in all directions, and, of course, when that is possessed, one rises to the higher road.

This is the true initiation, nature, so to speak, acting as the initiator. In replying to Saunaka, Angiras did not mean to be understood, that a man could in one birth pass over the lower road, but that the progress of a human monad toward perfection proceeded in a certain fixed manner which included all experiences. Of course if we say that we appear on the earth once only, and then disappear from it, to the place called by the spiritualists of America, "the summer land," and by the Christian, "heaven," there is no need for one to acquire the lower knowledge, for that might be obtained in the life after death. But we regard it as true that the spirit, in order to acquire complete knowledge, must inhabit a human form, and one term of tenancy

in such a form will not be enough for the testing of the countless varieties of life, of temptation, of triumph, failure and success.

The sage Angiras in this Upanishad looks at man from the standpoint of one who can see the great stream of life which flows through the eternal plain, and therefore he could not have meant to apply his words to one incarnation, but to the whole series through which man has to pass until he reaches "immortal, blest nirvana."

In the journey along this road we will encounter great differences in the powers of our fellow travellers. Some go haltingly and others quickly; some with eyes bent on the ground, a few with gaze fixed on the great goal. Those who halt or look down will not reach the end because they refuse to take the assistance to be found in the constant aspiration to the light. But we are not to blame them: they have not yet been often enough initiated to understand their error. Nature is kind and will wait for them much longer than their human fellows would if they were permitted to be their judges. This ought to give us a lesson in charity, in universal brotherhood. Very often we meet those who show an utter inability to appreciate some spiritual ideas which we quite understand. It is because they have not, so far, been able to transmute into a part of themselves, that which we have been so fortunate as to become possessed of, and so they seem devoted to things that to us appear to be of small value.

The Bhagavad-Gita says that there is no detriment or loss to one's efforts in any direction, be it good or bad; that is, in going through these countless incarnations, all inquiry, every sort of investigation, no matter even if it seems at the close of any one life that the life was wasted, is so much energy and experience stored up. For although, in the course of one existence, physical energy is expended, there is, all the while, a storing up of spiritual

energy which is again a power in the next succeeding life.

In consequence of the modern, western system of education, we are apt constantly to forget the existence of the great force and value belonging to our super-sensuous consciousness. That consciousness is the great register where we record the real results of our various earthly experiences; in it we store up the spiritual energy, and once stored there, it becomes immortal, our own eternal possession. The question then will be asked: "How is one to store up such spiritual energy: do we do it unconsciously, and how are we to know that any has been stored up?" It is to be done by trying to know and to act truth; by "living in the eternal," as *Light on the Path* directs. To live thus in the eternal, does not mean that we shall abandon the cares and struggles of life, for so surely as we do we must suffer, but that we should try to make the real self direct its aspirations ever to the eternal truth.

This series of births is absolutely necessary, so that the "lower knowledge" can be acquired; and just so long as we do not acquire that, we must be reborn. Here and there will occur exceptions to this rule, in those great souls who with "an astonishing violence," leap beyond and over all barriers, and by getting the higher knowledge, become at the same time, possessors of the lower knowledge also.

In the Chaldean Oracles such souls are thus described: "More robust souls perceive truth through themselves, and are of a more inventive nature," and by Proklus in I Alkibiad: "such a soul being saved, according to the oracle, through its own strength." But even this rapid progress must be regarded as comparative, for even these "robust souls," had to go through certain incarnations in which they were accumulating to themselves that very strength and ability to outstrip their fellows which, later on, placed them in the front rank.

In consequence of our ignorance of what we really are, not knowing at the time we begin the struggle in this present life whether the real man inside has passed through incarnations full of this necessary experience or not, we must not, because of the fancied importance we give ourselves, neglect the *lower knowledge*. There are many pitfalls besetting the road. Perchance we feel a certain degree of illumination, or we are able to see or hear in the astral world, and at once the temptation presents itself to claim to ourselves a spiritual greatness not our own. The possession of such astral acuteness is not high spirituality *per se*, for one might be able, as Buddha declares in the Saddharma-Pundarika, to smell the extraordinary odors arising in ten points of space which are not perceived by ordinary people, or to hear the innumerable and strange voices, sounds, bells, discords and harmonies produced by the whole host of unknown and unseen spirits of the earth, air, water and fire, and still be altogether devoid of spirituality. If we let ourselves then, be carried away by this, it is only a form of pride that precedes a severe fall. Being carried away with it, is at once a proof that we are not master, but are mastered by what is merely a novel experience.

But if we wisely and carefully test all experience, being willing to descend low enough to learn and study so that the instrument may be tuned and perfected, we may avoid the pitfalls, or be able to cross them should they be inevitable, whereas if we are deluded by supposed self-illumination, and run after that to the exclusion of all study, we will perhaps, enjoy a period of excitement and of self-satisfaction, but it will end, and the end will be bitter. As Buddha says: "He who ignores the rotation of mundane existences, has no perception of blessed rest."

The very fact that a man is in the world and has a continual fight with his passions and inclinations, proves that he is not yet in any condition to leave it. And of even the very far advanced, it was

said by those who were near the time of the Upanishads:

"The disciple who by his discrimination has escaped from the triple world, thinks he has reached pure, blessed nirvana; but it is only by knowing all the laws of the lower world, and the universal laws as well, that the immortal, pure, blest nirvana is reached. There is no real nirvana without all-knowingness; try to reach this."

The Path

STAR COLOURS AND ANIMAL MAGNETISM

It is well known that yellow is the complementary of blue, and red of green, color, and it struck me that, relating to this subject, the remarks of Mr. Isaac Sharpless, who is an undoubted authority in astronomical matters, are of some importance.

Writing from Haverford College Observatory, June 3d instant, he says:

"The question of star colors has been receiving attention from the hand of an English gentleman, W. S. Franks. He has examined carefully the colors of a list of 1893 of the brightest stars, with especial reference to the distribution in the heavens of the different colors. He finds 962 white stars, 614 yellow, 168 orange, 10 red, 15 green, 59 blue, 58 purple and 7, for some reason, have no colors given. He finds that the constellations which contain a large percentage of white stars are in or near the Milky Way, and wherever stars are closely associated together; while the yellow and orange stars are most plentiful in large straggling constellations.

"It is well known that a certain kind of spectrum is connected with certain star colors. The yellow stars belong to the class of our sun and include such bright stars as Capella. The white stars, like Vega, have a spectrum of a great number of fine lines, and the red gives a banded spectrum. It has been a favorite theory that the colors indicate the age of the stars, if not in years, at least in development. That the white are the youngest: as they cool they become yellow, then red, and, finally invisible, just as a piece of iron would in cooling down from a white heat. There is much to commend this idea, though, of course, as to the relative ages of the stars we know very little, and some changes appear to be in

the opposite direction. Perhaps there are people to whom the idea of different colors in stars is a novelty. They have a general idea that there are bright points of light overhead, at night, and probably they have observed, in a general way, that some are brighter than others. It will not require a very close watch, however, to add to the knowledge of the sky the additional fact that they are differently colored. Castor and Pollux which now shine in the west in the evening are very evidently diverse, and a careful amateur can go over the heavens and notice among the brighter stars quite a variety.

"But a telescope increases the capacities for this work immensely. Nearly all the very red stars are too faint to be seen by the naked eye, and many which show the strongest contrasts of color are double stars, which require considerable magnifying power to separate them. Blue and green stars are never solitary, but associated with a red or a yellow star, which is nearly always brighter, so that color has something to do with association. There are also sometimes clusters of stars which show great variety of color. Sir John Herschel describes one in the Southern Hemisphere which resembled a mass of colored gems. There is probably a prolific field of discovery yet undeveloped in connection with star colors."

The experiments of Reichenbach and others have shown that from crystals and human bodies emanate not only influences of a positive and negative character — which are also referred to in the PATH at p. 86 — but also that certain colors are seen by sensitives to arise from the human head, eyes, and hands. Now, as animal magnetism is slowly forcing recognition from the scientific world, why are we not justified in giving some credence to the views held by the old Hermetic philosophers, that the human being derives its magnetism and vitality from the stars: that is, that these colors seen by sensitives, are to be directly

traced to the sidereal influences and atmospheres. They gave to each color an appropriate star, and we find curiously enough, that although it is claimed against them that they were ignorant and had no appliances, they, without apparatus, knew that the stars had colors, while to the sun they ascribed life. Now in this century our astronomers tell us, as above, of star colors of great variety and peculiar combination. These are mere hints, however, which I would like more competent men to enlarge upon. — ISAAC MYER.

[Note: — We are personally acquainted with several persons who can see these magnetic colors, and they all agree in the main as to the conditions of health or of temper which accompany them. Mere quick thoughts they see as bright sparks: sensuality seems pink or reddish: while life and wisdom, appear as blue. It is interesting to note also, that in the Hindu system, when Krishna is represented as the life giver, or as the principle of life, he is painted blue, which color Reichenbach found proceeded from the *positive* pole: while the passive mendicant or ascetic of Hindustan, has to wear the yellow robe, which stands for the *negative* pole that emits the yellow ray. It is also rather curious that the ancient Egyptians in their papyri painted wisdom, which is cold, of a yellow color, and the son of life appears in blue. — Ed.]

The Path

A HINDU CHELA'S DIARY : III(1)

(Continued from July number)

"I have always felt and still feel strongly that I have already once studied this sacred philosophy with Kunala, and that I must have been, in a previous life, his most obedient and humble disciple. This must have been a fact, or else how to account for the feelings created in me when I first met him, although no special or remarkable circumstances were connected with that event. All my hopes and plans are centred in him, and nothing in the world can shake my confidence in him especially when several of my Brahmin acquaintances tell me the same things without previous consultation. * * *

"I went to the great festival of Durga yesterday, and spent nearly the whole day looking in the vast crowd of men, women, children and mendicants for some of Kunala's friends, for he once told me to never be sure that they were not near me, but I found none who seemed to answer my ideas. As I stood by the ghaut at the river side thinking that perhaps I was left alone to try my patience, an old and apparently very decrepit Bairagee plucked my sleeve and said: 'Never expect to see any one, but always be ready to answer if they speak to you; it is not wise to peer outside of yourself for the great followers of Vasudeva: look rather within.'

"This amazed me, as I was expecting him to beg or to ask me for information. Before my wits returned, he had with a few steps mingled with a group of people, and in vain searched I for him: he had disappeared. But the lesson is not lost.

" Tomorrow I return to I_____.

"Very wearying indeed in a bodily sense was the work of last week and especially of last evening, and upon laying down on my mat last night after continuing work far into the night I fell quickly sound asleep. I had been sleeping some hour or two when with a start I awoke to find myself in perfect solitude and only the horrid howling of the jackals in the jungle to disturb me. The moon was brightly shining and I walked over to the window of this European modeled house threw it open and looked out. Finding that sleep had departed, I began again on those palm leaves. Just after I had begun, a tap arrested my attention and I opened the door. Overjoyed was I then to see Kunala standing there, once more unexpected.

"Put on your turban and come with me,' he said and turned away.

"Thrusting my feet into my sandals, and catching up my turban, I hurried after him, afraid that the master would get beyond me, and I remain unfortunate at losing some golden opportunity.

"He walked out into the jungle and turned into an unfrequented path. The jackals seemed to recede into the distance; now and then in the mango trees overhead, the flying foxes rustled here and there, while I could distinctly hear the singular creeping noise made by a startled snake as it drew itself hurriedly away over the leaves. Fear was not in my breast for master was in front. He at last came to a spot that seemed bare of trees, and bending down, seemed to press his hand into the grass. I then saw that a trap door or entrance to a stairway very curiously contrived, was there. Stairs went down into the earth. He went down and I could but follow. The door closed behind me, yet it was not dark. Plenty of light was there, but where it came from I cared not then nor can I now, tell. It reminded me of our old weird tales told us in youth of pilgrims going down to the land of

the Devas where, although no sun was seen, there was plenty of light.

"At the bottom of the stairs was a passage. Here I saw people but they did not speak to me and appeared not to even see me although their eyes were directed at me. Kunala said nothing but walked on to the end, where there was a room in which were many men looking as grand as he does but two more awful, one of whom sat at the extreme end.

* * * * *

[Here there is a confused mass of symbols and ciphers which I confess I cannot decipher, and even if I had the ability to do so, I would check myself, because I surmise that it is his own way of jotting down for his own remembrance, what occurred in that room. Nor do I think that even a plain reading of it would give the sense to any one but the writer himself, for this reason, that it is quite evidently fragmentary. For instance, I find among the rest, a sort of notation of a division of states or planes: whether of consciousness, of animated, or of elemental life, I cannot tell; and in each division are hieroglyphs that might stand for animals, or denizens of the astral world, or for anything else — even for ideas only, so I will proceed at the place of his returning.]

"Once more I got out into the passage, but never to my knowledge went up those steps, and in a moment more was I again at my door. It was as I left it, and on the table I found the palm leaves as I dropped them, except that beside them was a note in Kunala's hand, which read:

"'Nilakant — strive not yet to think too deeply on those things you have just seen. Let the lessons sink deep into your heart, and they will have their own fruition. To-morrow I will see you.' * * * *

"What a very great blessing is mine to have had Kunala's

company for so many days even as we went to _____. Very rarely however he said a few words of encouragement and good advice as to how I should go on. He seems to leave me as to that to pick my own way. This is right, I think, because otherwise one would never get any individual strength or power of discrimination. Happy were those moments, when alone at midnight, we then had conversation. How true I then found the words of the Agroushada Parakshai to be:

"Listen while the Sudra sleeps like the dug under his hut, while the Vaysa dreams of the treasures that he is hoarding up, while the Rajah sleeps among his women. This is the moment when just men, who are not under the dominion of their flesh, commence the study of the sciences.' (2)

"The midnight hour must have powers of a peculiar nature. And I learned yesterday from glancing into an Englishman's book, that even those semi barbarians speak of that time as 'the witching hour,' and it is told me that among them 'witching' means to have magic power. * * * *

"We stopped at the Rest House in B — yesterday evening, but found it occupied and so we remained in the porch for the night. But once more I was to be blessed by another visit with Kunala to some; of his friends whom I revere and who will I hope bless me too.

"When every one had quieted down he told me to go with him to the sea which was not far away. We walked for about three quarters of an hour by the seashore, and then entered as if into the sea. At first a slight fear came into me, but I saw that a path seemed to be there, although water was all around us. He in front and I following, we went for about seven minutes, when we came to a small island; on it was a building and on top of that a triangular light. From the sea shore, the island would seem like

an isolated spot covered all over by green bushes. There is only one entrance to go inside. And no one can find it out unless the occupant wishes the seeker to find the way. On the island we had to go round about for some space before we came in front of the actual building. There is a little garden in front and there was sitting another friend of Kunala with the same expression of the eyes as he has I also recognized him as one of those who was in the room underground. Kunala seated himself and I stood before them. We stayed an hour and saw a portion of the place. How very pleasant it is! And inside he has a small room where he leaves his body when he himself moves about in other places. What a charming spot, and what a delightful smell of roses and various sorts of flowers! How I should wish to visit that place often. But I cannot indulge in such idle dreams, nor in that sort of coveteousness. The master of the place put his blessing hand upon my head, and we went away back to the Rest House and to the morrow full of struggles and of encounters with men who do not see the light, nor hear the great voice of the future; who are hound up in sorrow because they are firmly attached to objects of sense. But all are my brothers and I must go on trying to do the master's work which is only in fact the work of the Real Self which is All and in All."

FOOTNOTES:

1. In reply to several inquiries as to the meaning of *Chela*, we answer that it here means an accepted disciple of an Adept. The word, in general, means, *Disciple*. ([return to text](#))
2. See Agrouahada Parakshai. 2d book, 23d dialogue. — [Ed.]. ([return to text](#))

NOTES ON THE CABBALAH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT: II —
Ralston Skinner

Ginsburg and others tell us that Raymond Lully and John Picus de Mirandola had acquired knowledge of the Hebrew and the Cabbalah. Mirandola studied Hebrew and Cabbalistic theology under Jochanan Aleman, who came to Italy from Constantinople, and — "found that there is more Christianity in the Cabbalah than Judaism; he discovered in it proof for the doctrine of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Divinity of Christ, the heavenly Jerusalem, the fall of the angels, the order of the angels" and so on, and so on. "In 1486, when only 24 years old, he published 900 *theses*, which were placarded in Rome, and which he undertook to defend in the presence of all European scholars, whom he invited to the Eternal City, promising to defray their traveling expenses. Among the theses was the following: 'No science yields greater proof of the Divinity of Christ than magic and the Cabbalah.'"

Through Picus de Mirandola, Reuchlin became aware of this phase of Hebrew philosophy or theosophy, as, by a school of the rabbins, a recognized appurtenant to the Hebrew Scriptures. He not only examined into the Cabbalah to satisfy his thirst for facts of literature, but, on investigation, became a convert to the system, — "within two years of beginning to learn the language, published (1494) his *De Verbo Miritico*, and afterwards (1516) with more matured learning, his *De Arle Cabbalistica*." And thus the joint efforts of Mirandola and Reuchlin established a field of literature, of the Cabbalah, which has always flourished, and will continue to flourish so long as our civilization shall last.

It is interesting and useful to place this great fact, but it is a matter of especially great weight and value that the knowledge of

the Cabbalah was sprung upon the world of letters, with, and *as an essential part of* the Reformation itself. Not that the philosophy of the Cabbalah became engrafted into the study and development of Hebrew (and consequently Christian) theosophy; — for, because of lack of knowledge of what the Cabbalah really was, such could not be the case, — but it was entitled so to be, and the assertion of its existence as a real element of Scripture was, even then, so strongly and enduringly made, that, though an unknown quantity except by name, it has ever since stood firmly, and ready to have such claim made good: — with a vitality that has outworn four hundred years of patient waiting.

Of course there was a field of Jewish Cabbalistic literature, — not open, but confined, for the most part, as a kind of sacred mystery, within narrow and restricted limits, even among the Jews themselves. It was of the same nature with what is called, today, The Speculative Philosophy of Free Masonry, an ever seemingly substantive embodiment out of surrounding shadowy mists and mental logs, wherein a doubt always exists whether after all there is in the nebulous matter of the mist itself anything from whence substance may congeal: or, it may, for illustration, be compared to the city of King Arthur, before whose gate Gareth, standing, says: "But these my men — (your city moves so wierdly in the mist), — doubt if the King be King at all, or come from Fairy land: and whether this be built by magic, and by fury kings and queens, or whether there be any city at all, or all a vision." It is necessary to make a brief mention of this literature with its sources: both that these may be known, and that a foundation may be laid for what is stated as to the reality of Cabbalah, and its significance.

There is almost no teaching of the Cabbalah in the English language except the Essay by Christian D. Ginsburg, LL. D., to which we have referred. Dr. Ginsburg says: "It is a system of religious philosophy, or more properly, of theosophy, which has

not only exercised for hundreds of years are extraordinary influence on the mental development of so shrewd a people as the Jews, but has captivated the minds of some of the greatest thinkers of Christendom in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and which claims the greatest attention of both the philosopher and theologian."

It is faintly claimed that some statements applying to Cabbalah are to be found in the Talmud; but apart from this we have: — (1) The Commentary on the Ten Sephiroth, by R. Azariel ben Manachem (1160 - 1238), who was a pupil of Isaac the Blind, and master of the celebrated R. Moses Nachmanides, (2) The Book Sohar (Light), or Midrash, Let there be Light, claimed to have been a revelation from God, communicated through R. Simon ben Jochai, A.D. 70-110, to his select disciples. This book has been pronounced by the ablest critics to have been a pseudograph of the thirteenth century, — the composition of Moses de Leon, who lived in Spain; who, by the admission of his wife and daughter after his death, first published and sold it as the production of R. Simon ben Jochai, and (3) The Book Jetzirah or Book of Creation, — of unknown age and authorship, first mentioned as early as the eleventh century in the Book Chazari, by R. Jehudah Ha Levi, — as the literary sources for the entire system and scope thereof, so far as disclosed, it is from these sources that the entire volume of Cabbalistic literature has had rise and development.

From these sources, and the numberless treatises and expositions thereon, the history of the subject matter and containment of Cabbalah is laid down as follows: It was first taught by God himself to a select company of angels. After the fall the angels taught it to Adam. From Adam it passed to Noah, thence to Abram, the friend of God who carried it to Egypt. Moses, who was learned in all the wisdom of Egypt, was initiated into it from the land of his birth. He covertly laid down the principles of its

doctrines in the first four books of the Pentateuch, but withheld them from Deuteronomy ("this constitutes the former the '*man*' and the latter the '*woman*'"). Moses initiated the seventy elders, and they again passed the sacred and secret doctrine down to the heads (continually imparting the same) of the Church of Israel. David and Solomon were adepts in it. No one dared to write it down till the supposititious Simon ben Jochai, who really lived and taught, as one of the most celebrated doctors, at the time of the destruction of the second temple: and his teachings are claimed to constitute the Book of Sohar, published, as already said, by Moses de Leon of Valladolid, in Spain. But Ben Jochai, or whoever worked under his name, though he wrote and published, as said, covered the true doctrine by veils, so that no one but an initiate, or, as the saying runs, "by the gift of God" could penetrate behind them; — though the veils of the words still plainly held the secret doctrine, to those who could see. The Cabbalah, as an exposition to the Sacred Text of Holy Writ, was claimed to contain the Wisdom of God in every branch and department of His working, — and all terms and descriptions were exhausted to express the ineffable reward to him who might be permitted to penetrate behind the veil, either by initiation or "by the gift of God;" satiating every function of enjoyment, and affording an indescribable bliss, in the ultimate possessions of the Divine conceptions.

More definitely: — The exposition of the system treats of the impersonal First Cause manifesting within the limits of the finite. "Before he gave any shape to this world, before he produced any form, he was alone, without a form and resemblance to anything else. (1) who, then, can comprehend him, how he was before the creation, since he was formless? Hence, it is forbidden to represent him by any form, similitude, or even by his sacred name, by a single letter or a single point; and to this, the words,

'Ye saw no manner of similitude on the day the Lord spake unto you' (Deut. iv. 15) — *i.e.*, ye have nor seen anything which you could represent by any form or likeness, — refer" (Sohar 42 b, 43 a, Sec. AB): — And this shows clearly enough that the supposed sacred names of Scripture do not have reference to the Impersonal First Cause, as its essential designations, but rather to its creations. * * Then — "The creation, or the universe, is simply the garment of God *woven from the Deity's own substance* (The Impersonal manifesting in the cosmos, in modes to be expressed by the sacred names and otherwise). For although, to reveal himself to us, the Concealed of all the Concealed, sent forth the *Ten Emanations* (the Ten Sephiroth) called the Form of God, Form of the *Heavenly-Man*, yet since even this luminous form was too dazzling for our vision, it had to assume another form, or had to put on another garment which consists of the *universe*. The universe, therefore, or the visible world, is a further expansion of the Divine Substance, and is called in the Cabbalah, '*the Garment of God*.'" (Sohar i, 2 a) — "The whole universe, however, was incomplete, and did not receive its finishing stroke till *man* was formed, who is the *acme of the creation*, and the macroscosm uniting in himself the totality of beings, — 'the heavenly Adam,' *i.e.*, the Ten Sephiroth, who emanated from the highest primordial obscurity (The Impersonal First Cause), created the *earthly Adam*" (Sohar ii, 70 b). This is more definitely expressed in another place, where it says: — "Jehovah (for which stands the letter *jod*, or *j* or *i*) descended on Sinai *in fire*" the word for which is *a-sh* fire. Let the *j*, or *i*, the signature for Jehovah, descend in the midst of this word, and one will have *a i sh*, which is the Hebrew word for *man* man; thus *man* became out of the *Divine fire* — "Man is both the import and the highest degree of creation, for which reason he was formed on the sixth day. As soon as man was created every thing was complete, including the upper and nether world, for every thing *is comprised in man*. He unites in

himself all forms." (Sohar iii, 48 a) — "But after he created the form of the Heavenly Man, he used it as a chariot (Mercabah) (wheels, circles) wherein to descend, and wishes to be called by this form, which is the sacred name Jehovah." (Sohar i, 42 b, 43 a, section A B.)

It is to be observed especially, as to the ground work of the Cabbalah, that the first manifestation was in the "*Ten Sephiroth*" or Emanations, so called, out of which came the "*Heavenly Man*"; and the human or earth man represented these Ten Sephiroth in himself. "The lower world is made after the pattern of the upper world; everything which exists in the upper world is to be found as it were in a copy on earth; still the whole is one." (Sohar i, 20 a.)

Thus it is that the compass of the Cabbalah, by Sohar, is idealized in the form of a *man*. This man represented the combination of the Ten Sephiroth, or, as systematically called, *Emanations*, in which as a unity the whole cosmos existed in its segregated detail; and through which all knowledge thereof, physically, psychically and spiritually, was to be had, in passiveness and in activities; — and through which these activities, as of all potencies — as of angels and powers, — had their special existences. These Emanations had names of qualities, as Beauty, Strength, Wisdom, etc., etc., each name being located upon one of nine parts marked out on the form of the man; each of which was called a *Sephira*. The totality of the man being taken as *one*, this added to the nine made ten; and as a number this was the letter *jod*, already spoken of. The locations of these Sephiroth (shown as circles) are united one with another, so that one Emanation may flow into another; one into all, and all into one; — and the 22 letters of the alphabet with the 10 vowel sounds, are found therein, or thereby; and these are called the "*thirty-two ways or canals of Wisdom*"; and as these letters stood also for numbers, there is in this containment every possible mode of expression *by word and number*. The

exposition of the Old Testament, especially the Tora, in the secret or esoteric way, is claimed under this statement; — that is, by numbering the letters of words, and by their permutations and changes of positions; so that this is one of the functions of the Emanations or Sephiroth; and a mighty one for disclosing the Wisdom of God.

The Book Jetzirah deals especially with these letters and numbers: "*By thirty-two paths of secret wisdom*, the Eternal, the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, the living God, the King of the Universe, the Merciful and Gracious, the High and Exalted God, He who inhabiteth eternity, Glorious and Holy is His name, hath created the worldly means of numbers, phonetic language and writing."

The Commentary on the Ten Sephiroth, by R. Azariel Ben Menachem, as its name implies, is directly in consonance with the Sohar.

As to the Book Jetzirah, Dr. Ginsburg says: "The *Book Jetzirah*, which the Cabbalists claim is their oldest document, has really nothing in common with the cardinal doctrines of the Cabbalah. There is not a word in it bearing on the En Soph (Impersonal First Cause), the Archetypal Man," and so on, and so on. But here the doctor is at fault for this reason: — The word "*Sephiroth*" means "*Numbers*" and the *Ten Sephiroth* means the Ten Numbers; and in the Cabbalistic way these are composed out of a geometrical shape. The circle is the first *naught*, but out of this naught develops a straight vertical line, viz: the diameter of this circle. This is the first *One*; and having a first one, from it comes 2 and 3 and 4 and 5 and 6 and 7 and 8 and 9, — the circle or naught and its diameter one, the embracement of all together, forming the comprehensive *Ten*, or Ten Numbers, Ten Sephiroth, Ten Emanations, the Heavenly Wan, the great Jah, of the ineffable

name. Hence the contents of the book Jetzirah are of the very essence of the other two, and all are one.

FOOTNOTE:

1. It is interesting to compare the *Brihadaranyaka-Upamshad*, 4th Brah., with this: "In the beginning this was Self alone, in the shape of a spirit. He looking round, saw nothing but his Self." — [Ed.]
([return to text](#))

The Path

SUFISM: IV — C. H. A. Bjerregaard

The spirit of Sufism is best expressed in the couplet of Katebi:

"Last night a nightingale sung his song, perched on a high cypress, when the rose, on hearing his plaintive warbling, shed tears in the garden, soft as the dews of heaven."

NOTES ON *JELALUDDIN RUM* — Continued:

— Space forbids us to dwell any longer upon the miracles of this wonderful man of whom *Shems Tebreez* once asserted, in Jelal's College, that "whosoever wished to see again the prophets, had only to look on Jelal, who possessed all their qualifications; more especially of those to whom revelations were made, whether by angelic communications, or whether in visions; the chief of such qualities being serenity of mind with perfect inward confidence and consciousness of being one of God's elect. Go and look upon Jelal, if thou wish to comprehend the signification of that saying *the learned are the heirs of the prophets* together with something beyond that, which I will not here specify."

We must add a few passages from Jelal's lectures, etc. These were his last Instructions, "*the best of mankind is he who benefiteth men*" and, "*the best of speech is that which is short and to the purpose.*" Jelal once at a funeral spoke thus: "The ordinary reciters, by their services, bear witness that the deceased lived a Muslim. My singers, however, testify that he was a Muslim, a believer, and a lover of God." He added: "Besides that; when the human spirit, after years of imprisonment in the cage and dungeon of the body, is at length set free, and wings its flight to the source whence it came, is not this an occasion for rejoicings, thanks, and dancings? The soul in ecstasy soars to the presence of

the Eternal; and stirs up others to make proof of courage and self sacrifice. If a prisoner be released from a dungeon and be clothed with honor, who would doubt that rejoicings are proper? So too, the death of a saint is an exactly parallel case." Once, when requested to give a lecture to men of science, he answered: "A tree laden with fruit, had its branches bowed down to the earth therewith. At the time, doubts and gainsayings prevented the gardeners from gathering and enjoying the fruit. The tree has now raised its head to the skies, and beyond. Can they hope, then, to pluck and eat of its fruit?" —

Jelal's chief work, and the reference-book of Sufism, is the *Mesnevi (Mathnawi)* usually known as the *Mesneviyi Sherif, or Holy Mesnevi*. It is truly one of the most famous books of the East, studied and commented upon wherever dogmatic religion has been abandoned for esoteric truth.

From the preface we quote the following:

"This is the book of the Rhymed Couplets (Mathnawi, Mesnevi). It contains the roots of the roots of the roots of the one (one true) Religion (of Islam); and treats of the discovery of the mysteries of reunion and sure-knowledge. It is the Grand Jurisprudence of God, the most glorious Law of the Deity, the most manifest Evidence of the Divine Being. The refulgence thereof "is like that of a lantern in which is a lamp" (1) that scatters beams more bright than the morn. It is the paradise of the heart, with springs and foliage. One of these springs is "the fount named Salsabil" (2) by the brethren of this religious order (3) but, by saints and those miraculously endowed, it is called "the Good Station," (4) and "the Rest Resting place. (5) The just shall eat and drink therein, and the righteous shall rejoice and be glad thereof. Like the Egyptian Nile, it is a beverage for the patient, but a delusion to the people of Pharaoh and to blasphemers; even as God, whose name be

glorified, hath said: "He misleads therewith many, and He guides therewith many; but He misleads not therewith (any), save the wicked." (6)

"It is a comfort to man's breast, an expeller of cares. It is an exposition of the Quran, an amplification of spiritual aliments, and a dulcifier of the disposition; written "by the hands of honorable scribes" (7) who inscribed thereon the prohibition: "Let none touch it save the purified." (8) It is (a revelation) "sent down (from on high) by the Lord of (all) the worlds," (9) which vanity approacheth not from before, nor from behind, (10) which God watches over and observes, he being "the best of a Preserver," (11) and "The Most Compassionate of the merciful ones" (12) unto whom pertain (many) titles, his utmost title being God, whose name be exalted."

Further on he says: "I have exerted myself to enlarge this book of poetry in rhyming couplets, which contains strange and rare narratives, beautiful sayings, and recondite indications, a path for the devout, and a garden for the pious, short in its expressions, numerous in their applications." —

The Mesnevi is said to contain twenty-six thousand six hundred and sixty couplets and a large part of them ought to be cited here, but space forbids. We offer a few selections entirely at random.

The strength of strongest man can merely split a stone;
The Power that informs man's soul can cleave the moon.
If man's heart but untie the mouth of mystery's sack,
His soul soon soars aloft beyond the starry track.
If heaven's mystery divulged should, 'haps become,
The whole world 'twould burn up as fire doth wood
consume.—

Saints' ecstasy springs from a glimpse of God, his pride.
His station's that of intimate. He's bridegroom; God is

bride.

A bride's veiled graces are not seen by groom alone;
Her unveiled charms solely to him in private shown.
In state she first appears before the people all;
Her veil removed, the groom alone is at her call.
Who's not received the gift of knowledge from above,
Will ne'er believe a stock could sigh and moan for love
He may pretend to acquiesce; not from belief;
He says: "Tis so," to scape a name much worse than thief.
All they who're not convinced that God's "Be" is enough,
Will turn away their face; this tale they'll treat as "stuff."
If he (man) from *esse*, reach not *posse's* state, he's *nil*. —
(God) Himself He's veiled in man, as sun behind a cloud.
This seek to comprehend. God knows what mysteries
shroud.

The sun He is; the sun of spirit, not of sky;
By light from Him man lives; — and angels eke, forby. —
The soul it is originates all vital force. —
The Prophet hath assureth us God's the soul of all. —
The world's renewed each moment, though we still remain
In ignorance that permanence can change sustain.
Life, like a river, ceaselessly, is still renewed. —
Each night Thou settest free the soul from trap of flesh,
To scan and learn the hidden records of Thy wish.
Each night the soul is like a bird from cage set free,
To wander. Judge and judgment, then, it does not see.
By night the pris'ner loses sense of bars, of chains;
By night the monarch knows no state, no pomp retains;
The merchant counts no more, in sleep, his gains and loss;
The prince and peasant, equal, on their couches toss.
The Gnostic is so e'en by day, when wide awake:
For God hath said: "Let quietude care of him take."
Asleep to all the things of earth by night, by day,

As pen in writer's hand he doth his guide obey. —
Of this, the Gnostic's privilege, a trace'd suffice
To rob of sleep and reason vulgar souls of ice.
His spirit wanders in the proves of th' absolute.
His soul is easy; body, still, calm, quiet, mute. —
In sleep thou bearest no burden; borne thou art instead.

* * * * *

Know then, thy sleep's a foretaste of what is to come,
From the rapt state of saints arriving at their home.
The saints were well prefigured by the "Sleeper's Seven,"
"Their sleep," "their stretchings," "their awaking" lead to
heaven.—

Each night, in profound sleep our consciousness sinks,
Becomes non-existent; — waves on seashore's brinks. —
The body's a cage and a thorn to the soul.

Hence, seldom are body and soul wholly whole. —
Both men and fairies pris'ners are in earthly cage.—

If lifted could be from our souls the dark veil,
Each word of each soul would with miracles trail. —

The soul unto the flesh is joined, by God's decree,
That it may be afflicted, — trials made to see.

Th' Infinites' lovers finite's worshippers are not
Who seek the finite lose th' Infinite, as we wot,
When finite with the finite falls in love, perforce,
His loved one soon returns to her infinite source. —

In non-existence mirrored, being we may see; —
Annihilate thy darksome self, thy being's pall.

Let thy existence in God's essence be enrolled,
As copper in alchemists' bath is turned to gold.

Quit "I" and "We," which o'er thy heart exert control.
"Tis egotism, estranged from God, that clogs thy soul. —
Discharge thyself of every particle of self;
So shalt thou see thyself pure, free from soil of pelf.

Within thy heart thou'lt see the wisdom of the saints,
Without a book, a teacher, or professor's plaints. —
Thyself * * purge of self. Abstraction thou shall gain. —
Both love and soul are occult, hidden and concealed.
A lover's whole life is but self-sacrifice;
He wins not a heart, save his own heart's the price. —
When love for God is lighted in the human heart,
It fiercely burns; it suffers not effects' dull smart;
— love is love's own sign, giv'n from the highest sphere. —
The heart's with God, — the heart is God, — boundless,
immense!

From all eternity, the figures of all things,
Unnumbered, multitudinous, gleam in hearts' wings.
To all eternity each new-created form
In heart of saint reflected is, most multiform. —
Have patience, thou too, brother, with thy needle's smart.
So shall thou, 'scape the sting of conscience in thy heart.
They who have conquered, — freed themselves from
body's thrall,
Are worshipped in the spheres, the sun, the moon, stars,
all.

Whoever's killed pride's demon in his earthly frame,
The sun and clouds are slaves, to do his bidding, tame.
His heart can lesions give of flaming to the lamp;
The very sun not equals him in ardent vamp. —
The inward hymn that's sung by all the hearts of saints
Commences: "O component parts of that thing *Not*."
Now since they take their rise in this *Not*, negative.
They put aside the hollow phantom where we live.
Ideas and essences become "things" at His word. —
This world's a negative; the positive seek them.
All outward forms are cyphers; search, the sense to know.-
Mankind the songs of fairies never hear at all,

They are not versed in fairies' ways, their voices small. —

"Allah, Allah!" (13) cried the sick man, racked with pain the long night through;

Till with prayer his heart grew tender, till his lips like honey grew.

But at morning came the Tempter; said "Call louder, child of Pain! See if Allah ever hear or answers 'Here am I,' again."

Like a slab, the cruel cavil through his brain and pulses went; To his heart an icy coldness, to his brain a darkness sent.

Then before him stands Elia: says. 'My child, why thus dismayed? Dost repent thy former fervor? Is thy soul of prayer afraid?'

"Ah!" he cried, "I've called so often; never heard the 'Here am I;' And I thought, God will not pity; will not turn on me his eye."

Then the grave Elias answered, "God said, 'Rise, Elias, go Speak to him, the sorely tempted; lift him from his gulf of woe.

Tell him that his very longing is itself an answering cry;

That his prayer, "Come, gracious Allah!" is my answer 'Here am I.'"

— When thy mind is dazed by color's magic round,

All color's lost in one bright light diffused around.

Those colours, too, all vanish from our view by night.

We learn from this, that color's only seen through light.

The sense of colour-seeing's not from light distinct.

So, too, the sudden rainbow of our mind's instinct.

From sunlight, and the like, all outer colours rise;

The inward tints that mark our minds, from God's sunrise,

The light that lights the eye's the light that's in the heart.

Eye's light is but derived from what illumines that part.

The light that lights the heart's the light that comes of God,

Which lies beyond the reach of sense and reason, clod!

By night we have no light; no colour can we see.

Thus, light we learn by darkness, its converse.

Agree! A seeing of the light, perception is of tints;

And these distinguished are through darkness gloomy
hints.

Our griefs and sorrows were by God first introduced,
That joy to sense apparent thence should be reduced
Occult things, thus, by converse, grow apparent, all.
Since God has no converse, apparent He can't fall.
Sight first saw light, and then the colours saw,
From converse converse stands forth, as Frank from Negro.
By converse of the light, distinguish we the light;
A converse 'tis that converse shows unto our sight.
The light of God no converse has in being's bound;
By converse, then, man has not its distinction found.
Our eyes cannot distinguish God, decidedly;
Though He distinguish Moses and the Mount from thee. —

The doctrine, which Jelal was most emphatic about was the
extinguishment of Self, and his teachings are quite characteristic
for him, though the general doctrine is a common one among the
Sufis. *He argues for simplicity.* He tells us a story about a dispute
between Chinamen and Greeks before the Sultan, as to who is the
more skilful of the two nations, in the art of decoration. The
Chinese ask for and get thousands of colours and work hard,
while the Greeks ask for no color; they only polish their front,

"Effacing every hue with nicest care,"

and when the Sultan came to examine the relative merit of
Chinese gorgeous-ness and Greek simplicity,

"Down glides a sunbeam through the rifled clouds.
And, lo the colours of that rainbow house
Shine, all reflected on those glassy walls
That face them, rivalling: The sun hath painted
With lovelier blending, on that stony mirror
The colours spread by man so artfully. —

Know them. O friend! such Greeks the Sufis are,
Having one sole and simple task, to make
Their hearts a stainless mirror for their God.

(To be continued.)

FOOTNOTES:

1. Quran xxiv, 35. ([return to text](#))
2. *ibid*, lxxvi, 18. ([return to text](#))
3. The Mevlevi or dancing devishes. ([return to text](#))
4. Quran xix, 74. ([return to text](#))
5. *ibid*, xxv, 26. ([return to text](#))
6. *ibid*, ii 24. ([return to text](#))
7. *ibid*, lxxx, 15. ([return to text](#))
8. *ibid*, lvi, 78. ([return to text](#))
9. *ibid*, lvi, 79. ([return to text](#))
10. *ibid*, xli, 42. ([return to text](#))
11. *ibid*, xii, 64. ([return to text](#))
12. *ibid*, vii, 150. ([return to text](#))
13. Free transl. by J. Freeman Clark. ([return to text](#))

THE SINGING SILENCES — *Julius*

Theosophists may be interested in an experience which I have named as above; "Singing" — because of a peculiar resonance which I then hear: "Silences" — because this resonance only reaches me in moments of retirement and silence.

Occurring throughout a life-time, at infrequent and remote interval, they have, since I became a Theosophist, increased until they embrace all isolated moments. They consist of a resonance difficult to describe, but resembling the vibrant note of a distant locomotive, resounding in the night atmosphere of a mountain gorge, and partaking somewhat of that melodious wail caused by running the moistened finger around the rim of a glass.

Sometimes, though rarely, a low orchestral harmony unites briefly with this monotone. Unable to find any word which conveyed this cadence, I now discover that the word "*Aum*," (hitherto unknown to me,) does so exactly, the A sound being the opening note, which prolongs itself into the M, or closing sound, when the keynote is then struck over again. Thus the "Singing Silences" mainly consist of innumerable repetitions of the word "*Aum*," distinctly and musically uttered, having a resonant or vibrant quality, and a measured rise and fall, such as all sound assumes if one alternately closes and uncloses the ear. If the analyst will alternately inhale air with the mouth and expel it with the nostrils, he will gain a fair idea of this sound minus its musical vibration.

It is, moreover, invariably accompanied by a sensation of physical repose, even peace, and a perfect mental quiescence which falls about me like an enfolding mantle. The frequency of these moments has greatly increased since my attention has been

specifically turned to them. Hitherto, beyond a momentary curiosity as to their nature, I attached no importance to their occurrence; the very rarity caused them to be easily forgotten in the whirl of every day life; I admitted to myself with surprise, however, that my innumerable pleasures, my keen enjoyments, shrank to nothing before the deep delight of these brief but peculiar moments, and I applied to them the opening lines of Faber's hymn to music.

Reading the article on "Aum" in the April "PATH" I was startled by such passages as this: "There is, pervading the whole universe, a homogeneous resonance, sound, or tone, which acts, so to speak, as the awakener or vivifying power, stirring all the molecules into action." I then called to mind various facts connected with Sound, as for instance, that a regiment marching over a bridge is ordered to "break step," lest the regular footfall strike the "co-efficient of vibration," which would destroy the bridge: also that the measured trot of the smallest dog will cause a perceptible vibration in a wire bridge, no matter what its size. Moreover, the monotonous sound of the railroad, in time changes the texture of the car wheels and axles from fibrous into crystalline, with consequent fracture.

In Reichenbach's "Researches on Magnetism" we find this statement. * * * "The following laws prevail in nature. A. There resides in matter a peculiar force, hitherto overlooked, which, when the crystalline form has been assumed, is found acting in the line of the axes."

Since then, the homogeneous tone acts upon all the molecules of creation, may not this singing resonance cause such a transformation of brain energy as to vivify or awaken it in time, to the True, or Central Idea? We have seen that Sound, so to speak, polarizes certain particles of matter attracting them to the

earth, the great magnet, from which they came; it confers upon other particles this same magnetic power, as in the case of crystallization; it awakens similar tones, as when several untouched harps vibrate in harmony when the musical key note is struck upon one alone. Why then may not the thought awakened by a fixed musical sound be in time attracted to the real source of that sound, of all sound? And as thought causes a disturbance among the molecules of the brain, some sound, however aerial, must accompany this vibration: does not my brain then answer this singing resonance with the note homogeneous to all the ethereal space?

In the article from "THE PATH" before quoted, I find the following lines. "Having taken the Bow, the great weapon (Om), let him place on it the arrow (the Self), sharpened by devotion; * * * Brahman is called the aim. It is to be hit by a man who is not thoughtless." The "Singing Silences" are superinduced by meditation, thought, devotion: the closest imitation of them possible to the human voice consists in chanting, half aloud, the word "Aum," over and over, as heretofore described. Do those Yogees who repeat "Aum" thousands of times daily, follow this practice in order to produce the resonance, or homogeneous tone, and to calm the mind, (as they claim to do,) by means of the harmonious monotony thus engendered? True, it fails to lead them to the higher knowledge, but is this not because the mental condition is self induced, like the delusive trances of self mesmerization? On the other hand, if (as they claim again,) it throws them into a trance like state or crystallization of thought, is not this because it is after all, in some measure, akin to the natural resonance? The idea herein advanced would thus seem to be further supported, since this mechanical repetition of "Aum," and its sedative power, is as the power of the microcosm, faintly outlining that of the macrocosm, (or real resonance,) to lead

towards the calm which incubates the dawning thought and leads towards the true Illuminated State. "THE PATH" goes on to state that we are "led by the resonance, which is not the Divine Light itself, towards that Radiance which is Divine; the resonance is only the outbreathing of the first sound of the entire Aum."

This constant and peculiar singing, provocative as it is of a peaceful abstraction so great as to exclude all outer things and thoughts, seems to induce a state which draws the hearer into the border lands of Spirit. Works on eastern travel and foreign witnesses, alike affirm that many fakirs repeat "Aum," and also "Rama," thousands of times, merely because they are told that such a thing is useful, while others do it with the mind fixed on realizing the True. Studious investigation always reveals a deep philosophy underlying religious forms, from which there is no reason to suppose this one to be exempt.

Listening attentively to the "Singing Silence," I fall, after a brief space, into an unbroken and dreamless sleep which lasts for hours; hearing, without listening, I experience a sensation of physical refreshment and mental placidity. It came to me uncalled for, unnoticed, unrecognized; when finally a sense of pleasure fastened upon my mind, I idly accepted it, but without questioning, as a curious personal peculiarity. It was only when, giving myself up to thoughts of higher things, I met it upon the threshold of meditation, found it daily recurring, daily growing in distinctness and power, that I recognized it as a possible psychical experience. As I never strove to produce it at the outset, so I never attempt to increase or evoke it now; I should not know how to set about doing so. *It influenced me*; I have no control whatever over it. It comes as it wills, and is not subject to my command.

Is this then one of the practical significances or uses of "the word Om, as expressed in tone?" Does this bell-like resonance have

such an effect upon the molecules of the human body, (including those of the brain,) as to polarize them in time to The Spirit? If there are those who doubt the existence of a great undercurrent of universal tone, described by "THE PATH" as Nada Brahma,— the divine resonance upon which depends the evolution of the visible from the invisible, — they will at least grant its probability when they consider that this has been admitted by some of the greatest intellects of the world, many of whom firmly believed in the "music of the spheres." Plato taught it. Maximus Tyrius says that "the mere proper motion of the planets must create sounds, and as the planets move at regular intervals, these sounds must be harmonious." The Encyclopedia Britannica says, "the origin of musical sounds consists in the regular, periodic vibration of some surface in contact with the air, whereby motion is imparted to the air. The loudness or intensity of the note depends on the magnitude of the motion or pitch." The regular motions of the planets of our system, as well as those of known moving stars, such as Sirius, may well be accompanied by a rhythmical sound arising from the ether waves thus set in motion, That we do not hear it, may be due to the density of our atmosphere, yet it may be none the less transmitted along the ether waves and heard by the inner ear of those whose sense is developed. Pythagoras was the first philosopher to suggest this idea, which is mentioned by Shakespeare:

"There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young eyed cherubims:
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But while this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it."

He also speaks of it again in Pericles.

"Kepler's idea of the universe was essentially Pythagorean and Platonic. He thought that the planetary movements were related to musical intervals." (Cyclo. Brit.) Montaigne, Milton, Donne, Pope, Newton, Tycho-Brahe and others believed in the "music of the spheres." Faber beautifully attributed it to the vibration caused by the shooting rays of light on their journey earthward:

"Thou art fugitive splendors made vocal
As they glanced from that shining sea."

All are agreed that the idea has come down to us from the earliest times.

Finally, if this resonance exists as the great undertone of nature, it is probable, natural and consistent that it should be a stepping stone towards reaching Spirit, since harmony and accord are vitally necessary to our progress in either the physical or the psychical world. The effect of harmonious sound on the moral nature of man has received much scientific attention in relation to its influence over the insane. The Rev. R. H. Haweis speaks of it in "Music and Morals," as "the much neglected study of Musical Psychology." His remarks are greatly to our present point. What has Nature done for the musician? She has given him sound. * * Thoughts are but wandering spirits that depend for their vitality upon the magnetic current of feeling. Emotion is often weakened by association with thought, whereas thoughts are always strengthened by emotion. I have endeavored to * * * to show that there is a region of abstract emotion in human nature; * * * that, this region of emotion consisted of infinite varieties of mental temperature that upon these temperatures or atmospheres of the soul depended the degree, and often the kind of actions of which at different times we were capable. * * Who will deny that the experience of such soul-atmospheres must leave a definite impress upon the character? * * * But if, as we have maintained,

music has the power of actually creating and manipulating these mental atmospheres, what vast capacities, for good or evil must music possess! * * * The Bible itself pays a tribute to the emotional effect and power of changing the soul's atmosphere possessed by even such a primitive instrument as David's Harp. "When the evil Spirit from God was upon Saul, then David took an harp, and played with his hand. So Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil Spirit departed from him." (1 Sam. xvi, 23.) I have no doubt whatever that the acknowledged influence of music over the insane might be far more extensively used; indeed if applied judiciously to a disorganized mind, it might be as powerful an agent as galvanism in restoring healthy and pleasurable activity to the emotional regions. Who can deny then, if such a mysterious command as this is possessed by music over the realm of abstract emotion, that music itself must be held responsible for the manner in which it deals with that realm, and the kind of succession, proportion and degrees of the various emotional atmospheres it has the power of generating.

Testimony upon these various points might be multiplied, but is not the above sufficient to indicate a possibility at least that these "Singing Silences" are closely allied to "Nada Brahma," the omnipresent sound, the vibration caused perhaps by the speeding of Light, (which is the first Divine Thought.) from the Central Sun, and in the mighty harmony of its coming, awakening and vivifying all things?

"I guess, by the stir of this music
What raptures in heaven can be.
Where the sound is Thy marvellous stillness.
And the music is light out of Thee."

MUSINGS ON THE TRUE THEOSOPHIST'S PATH: I — *American Mystic*

"The way of inward peace is in all things to conform to the pleasure and disposition of the Divine Will. Such as would have all things succeed and come to pass according to their own fancy, are not come to know this way; and therefore lead a harsh and bitter life; always restless and out of humor, without treading the way of peace."

Know then Oh Man, that he who seeks the hidden way, can only find it through the door of life. In the hearts of all, at some time, there arises the desire for knowledge. He who thinks his desire will be fulfilled, as the little bird in the nest, who has only to open his mouth to be fed; will very truly be disappointed.

In all nature we can find no instance where effort of some kind is not required. We find there is a natural result from such effort. He who would live the life or find wisdom can only do so by continued effort. If one becomes a student, and learns to look partially within the veil, or has found within his own being something that is greater than his outer self, it gives no authority for one to sit down in idleness or fence himself in from contact with the world. Because one sees the gleam of the light ahead he cannot say to his fellow "I am holier than thee" or draw the mantle of seclusion around himself.

The soul develops like the flower, in God's sunlight, and unconsciously to the soil in which it grows. Shut out the light and the soil grows damp and sterile, the flower withers or grows pale and sickly. Each and every one is here for a good and wise reason. If we find partially *the why* we are here, then is there the more reason that we should by intelligent contact with life, seek in it

the farther elucidation of the problem. It is not the study of ourselves so much, as the thought for others that opens this door. The events of life and their causes lead to knowledge. They must be studied when they are manifested in daily life.

There is no idleness for the Mystic. He finds his daily life among the roughest and hardest of the labors and trials of the world perhaps, but goes his way with smiling face and joyful heart, nor grows too sensitive for association with his fellows, nor so extremely spiritual as to forget that some other body is perhaps hungering for food.

It was said by one who pretended to teach the mysteries "It is needful that I have a pleasant location and beautiful surroundings." He who is a true Theosophist will wait for nothing of the sort, either before teaching: or what is first needful, learning. It would perhaps, be agreeable, but if the Divine inspiration comes only under those conditions, then indeed is the Divine afar from the most of us. He only can be a factor for good or teach how to approach the way, who forgetting his own surroundings, strives to beautify and illumine those of others. The effort must be for the good of others, not the gratifying of our own senses, or love for the agreeable or pleasant.

Giving thought to self will most truly prevent and overthrow your aims and objects, particularly when directed toward the occult.

Again there arises the thought "I am a student, a holder of a portion of the mystic lore." Insidiously there steals in the thought "Behold I am a little more than other men, who have not penetrated so far." Know then oh, man, that you are not as great even as they. He who thinks he is wise is the most ignorant of men, and he who begins to *believe* he is wise is in greater danger than any other man who lives.

You think, oh, man, that because you have obtained a portion of occult knowledge, that it entitles you to withdraw from contact with the rest of mankind. It is not so. If you have obtained true knowledge it forces you to meet all men not only half way, but more than that to seek them. It urges you not to retire but, seeking contact, to plunge into the misery and sorrow of the world, and with your cheering word, if you have no more (the Mystic has little else) strive to lighten the burden for some struggling soul.

You dream of fame. We know no such thing as fame. He who seeks the upward path finds that all is truth; that evil is the good gone astray. Why should we ask for fame? It is only the commendation of those we strive to help.

Desire neither notice, fame or wealth. Unknown you are in retirement. Being fameless you are undisturbed in your seclusion, and can walk the broad face of the earth fulfilling your duty, as commanded, unrecognized.

If the duty grows hard, or you faint by the way, be not discouraged, fearful or weary of the world. Remember that "Thou may'st look for silence in tumult, solitude in company, light in darkness, forgetfulness in pressures, vigor in despondency, courage in fear, resistance in temptation, peace in war, and quiet in tribulation."

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HERMES TRISMEGISTUS — *Isaac Myer*

THE FOURTH STATE OF MATTER DESCRIBED IN THE TABLET

That a tablet, now called the SMARAGDINE, was found there is no doubt. Its discovery is attributed by tradition to an *isarim* or initiate, who it is said, took it from the dead body of Hermes — this could not have been the Egyptian god Thoth — which was buried at Hebron, in an obscure ditch. The tablet was held between the hands of the corpse. Some authors say that it was of emerald, which I do not believe; it probably was of green strass or paste, an imitation of emerald, in the manufacture of which the Egyptians excelled. Be it as it may, the contents evidently refer to that subtile body, called by the great scientist Sir William Thompson, "the luminiferous aether," — to that mysterious, invisible to us, some-thing, in which the matter-atoms float, the *azoth* of the Hermetic philosophers, the *astral light* of the occultists, the *akasa* of the Hindus; which physical science attempts to grasp, comprehend and sometimes use, under the name of electricity, magnetism, heat, light, etc; which is experimentally made visible, in one of its forms, by means of Professor Crooke's "radiant matter" and which he terms the fourth state of matter. It permeates all things, going through flesh and blood, and steel and glass, the diamond and sapphire, with the facility of water through a net. A translation of this tablet is:

(1)

"It is true without falsehood, certain and very veritable, that that which is below, is as that which is above, and that that which is on high, is as that which is below, so as to perpetuate the miracles of all things.

And as all things have been and come from One, by the mental

desire of One, so all things have been produced from that One only by adaptation.

The Sun (Osiris) is thence the father, and the Moon (Isis) the mother. The Air, its womb, carries it thence, and the Earth is its nurse.

Here is the producer of all, the talisman of all the world.

Its force (or potentiality) is entire, if it is changed into the Earth, you separate the Earth from the Fire, the subtile from the gross. Sweetly, but with great energy, it mounts from the Earth to the Heaven, and again descends to the Earth with powerful energy, and receives the potentiality of the superior and inferior things.

You have, by this means, the light (or fire) of the whole universe. And upon account of this, all obscurity itself, with that, will fly entirely thence.

In this is the energy the strongest of all energy, for it vanquishes all subtile things and penetrates all the solid things.

Thus the world was created. From this will be and will go out admirable adaptations, of which the medium is here.

And because of these reasons I am called Hermes Trismegistus, possessing the three divisions of the philosophy of the universe.

It is complete, this that I have said of the operation of the Sun."

The reader must take note, that the fire referred to here, is not the perceptible fire, but the hidden occult fire, which is concealed in all things, and only becomes evident through a tearing asunder of the atoms. The fire, which we see, is the black fire, the other the unseen, is the white fire. So the ancient Hebrew philosophy says, the Tablets of the Law given to Moses, were written by the Deity with black fire on white fire. It is referred to but concealed in the

Maasey B'reshith, the great occult book of which is the Book of Genesis.

FOOTNOTE:

1. The emerald table is from the collection commencing with Le Miroirs d'Alquimie de Jean de Mehun, philosophe, tres — excellent. Traduict de Latin en Francois, A Paris, 1613, pp. 36 - 39, to which is also attached, the Petit Commentaire de L'Hortulain, philosophe, dict des Jardins maritimes, sur la Table d'Esmerande d'Hermes Trismegiste pp. 42 - 64. ([return to text](#))

[The Path](#)

A HINDU CHELA'S DIARY: IV

(Continued)

"I have been going over that message I received just after returning from the underground room, about not thinking yet too deeply upon what I saw there, but to let the lessons sink deep into my heart. Can it be true — must it not indeed be true — that we have periods in our development when rest must be taken for the physical brain in order to give it time as a much less comprehensive machine than these English college professors say it is, to assimilate what it has received, while at the same time the real brain — as we might say, the spiritual brain — is carrying on as busily as ever all the trains of thought cut off from the head. Of course this is contrary to this modern science we hear so much about now as about to be introduced into all Asia, but it is perfectly consistent for me.

"To reconsider the situation: I went with Kunala to this underground place, and there saw and heard most instructive and solemn things. I return to my room, and begin to puzzle over them all, to revolve and re-revolve them in my mind, with a view to clearing all up and finding out what all may-mean. But I am interrupted by a note from Kunala directing me to stop this puzzling, and to let all I saw sink deep into my heart. Every word of his I regard with respect, and consider to hold a meaning, being never used by him with carelessness. So when he says, to let it sink into my 'heart,' in the very same sentence where he refers to my thinking part — the mind — why he must mean to separate my heart from my mind and to give to the heart a larger and greater power.

"Well, I obeyed the injunction, made myself, as far as I could,

forget what I saw and what puzzled me and thought of other things. Presently, after a few days while one afternoon thinking over an episode related in the *Vishnu Purana* (1) I happened to look up at an old house I was passing and stopped to examine a curious device on the porch; as I did this, it seemed as if either the device, or the house, or the circumstance itself, small as it was, opened up at once several avenues of thought about the underground room, made them all clear, showed me the conclusion as vividly as a well demonstrated and fully illustrated proposition, to my intense delight. Now could I perceive with plainness, that those few days which seemed perhaps wasted because withdrawn from contemplation of that scene and its lessons, had been with great advantage used by the spiritual man in unraveling the tangled skein, while the much praised brain had remained in idleness. All at once the *flash* came and with it knowledge. (2) But I must not depend upon these flashes, I must give the brain and its governor, the material to work with.

"Last night just as I was about to go to rest, the voice of Kunala called me from outside and there I went at once. Looking steadily at me he said: 'we want to see you,' and as he spoke he gradually changed, or disappeared, or was absorbed, into the form of another man with awe-inspiring face and eyes, whose form apparently rose up from the material of Kunala's body. At the same moment two others stood there also, dressed in the Tibetan costume; and one of them went into my room from which I had emerged. After saluting them reverently, and not knowing their object, I said to the greatest,

"'Have you any orders to give?'

"'If there are any they will be told to you without being asked,' he replied, 'stand still where you are.'

"Then he began to look at me fixedly. I felt a very pleasant sensation as if I was getting out of my body. I cannot tell now what time passed between that and what I am now to put down here. But I saw I was in a peculiar place. It was the upper end of — at the foot of the — range. Here was a place where there were only two houses just opposite to each other, and no other sign of habitation; from one of these came out the old fakir I saw at the Durga festival, but how changed, and yet the same: then so old, so repulsive; now so young, so glorious, so beautiful. He smiled upon me benignly and said:

"Never expect to see any one, but always be ready to answer if they speak to you; it is not wise to peer outside of yourself for the great followers of Vasudeva: look rather within.'

"The very words of the poor fakir!

"He then directed me to follow him.

"After going a short distance, of about half a mile or so, we came to a natural subterranean passage which is under the — range. The path is very dangerous; the River — flows underneath in all the fury of pent up waters, and a natural causeway exists upon which you may pass; only one person at a time can go there and one false step seals the fate of the traveller. Besides this causeway, there are several valleys to be crossed. After walking a considerable distance through this subterranean passage we came into an open plain in L—K. There stands a large massive building thousands of years old. In front of it is a huge Egyptian Tau. The building rests on seven big pillars each in the form of a pyramid. The entrance gate has a large triangular arch, and inside are various apartments. The building is so large that I think it can easily contain twenty thousand people. Some of the rooms were shown to me.

"This must be the central place for all those belonging to the —— class, to go for initiation and stay the requisite period.

"Then we entered the great hall with my guide in front. He was youthful in form but in his eyes was the glance of ages.* * The grandeur and serenity of this place strikes the heart with awe. In the centre was what we would call an altar, but it must only be the place where focuses all the power, the intention, the knowledge and the influence of the assembly. For the seat, or place, or throne, occupied by the chief —— the highest —— has around it an indescribable glory, consisting of an effulgence which seemed to radiate from the one who occupied it. The surroundings of the throne were not gorgeous, nor was the spot itself in any way decorated — all the added magnificence was due altogether to the aura which emanated from Him sitting there. And over his head I thought I saw as I stood there, three golden triangles in the air above — Yes, they were there and seemed to glow with an unearthly brilliance that betokened their inspired origin. But neither they nor the light pervading the place, were produced by any mechanical means. As I looked about me I saw that others had a triangle, some two, and all with that peculiar brilliant light."

[Here again occurs a mass of symbols. It is apparent that just at this spot he desires to jot down the points of the initiation which he wished to remember. And I have to admit that I am not competent to elucidate their meaning. That must be left to our intuitions and possibly future experience in our own case.]

"14th day of the new moon. The events of the night in the hall of initiation gave me much concern. Was it a dream? Am I self deluded? Can it be that I imagined all this? Such were the unworthy questions which flew behind each other across my

mind for days after. Kunala does not refer to the subject and I cannot put the question. Nor will I. I am determined, that, come what will, the solution must be reached by me, or given me voluntarily."

"Of what use to me will all the teachings and all the symbols be, if I cannot rise to that plane of penetrating knowledge, by which I shall my self, by myself, be able to solve this riddle, and know to discriminate the true from the false and the illusory? If I am unable to cut asunder these questioning doubts, these bonds of ignorance, it is proof that not yet have I risen to the plane situated above these doubts. * * * Last night after all day chasing through my mental sky, these swift destroyers of stability — mental birds of passage — I lay down upon the bed, and as I did so, into my hearing fell these words:

"'Anxiety is the foe of knowledge; like unto a veil it falls down before the soul's eye; entertain it, and the veil only thicker grows; cast it out, and the sun of truth may dissipate the cloudy veil.'

"Admitting that truth; I determined to prohibit all anxiety. Well I knew that the prohibition issued from the depths of my heart, for that was master's voice, and confidence in his wisdom, the self commanding nature of the words themselves, compelled me to complete reliance on the instruction. No sooner was the resolution formed, than down upon my face fell something which I seized at once in my hand. Lighting a lamp, before me was a note in the well known writing. Opening it, I read:

"'Nilakant. It was no dream. All was real, and more, that by your waking consciousness could not be retained, happened there. Reflect upon it all as reality, and from the slightest circumstance draw whatever lesson, whatever amount of knowledge you can. Never forget that your spiritual progress goes on quite often to yourself unknown. Two out of many hindrances to memory are

anxiety and selfishness. Anxiety is a barrier constructed out of harsh and bitter materials. Selfishness is a fiery darkness that will burn up the memory's matrix. Bring then, to bear upon this other memory of yours, the peaceful stillness of contentment and the vivifying rain of benevolence." (3) * * * * *

[I leave out here, as well as in other places, mere notes of journeys and various small matters, very probably of no interest.]

"In last month's passage across the hills near V—, I was irresistibly drawn to examine a deserted building, which I at first took for a grain holder or something like that. It was of stone, square, with no openings, no windows, no door. From what could be seen outside, it might have been the ruins of a strong, stone foundation for some old building, gateway or tower. Kunala stood not far off and looked over it, and later on he asked me for my ideas about the place. All I could say, was, that although it seemed to be solid, I was thinking that perhaps it might be hollow.

"'Yes,' said he, 'it is hollow. It is one of the places once made by Yogees to go into deep trance in. If used by a chela (a disciple) his teacher kept watch over it so that no one might intrude. But when an adept wants to use it for laying his body away in while he travels about in his real, though perhaps to some unseen, form, other means of protection were often taken which were just as secure as the presence of the teacher of the disciple. 'Well,' I said, 'it must be that just now no one's body is inside there.'

"'Do not reach that conclusion nor the other either. It may be occupied and it may not.'

"Then we journeyed on, while he told me of the benevolence of not only Brahmin Yogees, but also of Buddhist. No differences can be observed by the true disciple in any other disciple who is perhaps of a different faith. All pursue truth. Roads differ but the

goal of all remains alike."

* * * "Repeated three times: 'Time ripens and dissolves all beings in the great self, but he who knows into what time itself is dissolved, he is the knower of the Veda.'

"What is to be understood, not only by this, but also by its being three times repeated?

"There were three shrines there. Over the door was a picture which I saw a moment, and which for a moment seemed to blaze out with light like fire. Fixed upon my mind its outlines grew, then disappeared, when I had passed the threshold. Inside, again its image came before my eyes. Seeming to allure me, it faded out, and then again returned. It remained impressed upon me, seemed imbued with life and intention to present itself for my own criticism. When I began to analyze it, it would fade, and then when I was fearful of not doing my duty or of being disrespectful to those beings, it returned as if to demand attention. Its description:

"A human heart that has at its centre a small spark — the spark expands and the heart disappears — while a deep pulsation seems to pass through me. At once identity is confused, I grasp at myself; and again the heart reappears with the spark increased to a large fiery space. Once more that deep movement; then sounds (7); they fade. All this in a picture? Yes! for in that picture there is life; there might be intelligence. It is similar to that picture I saw in Tibet on my first journey, where the living moon rises and passes across the view. Where was I? No, not afterwards! It was in the hall. Again that all pervading sound. It seems to bear me like a river. Then it ceased, — a soundless sound. Then once more the picture; here is Pranava. (4) But between the heart and the Pranava is a mighty bow with arrows ready, and tightly strung for use. Next is a shrine, with the Pranava over it, shut fast, no

key and no keyhole. On its sides emblems of human passions. The door of the shrine opens and I think within 1 will see the truth. No! another door? a shrine again. It opens too and then another, brightly flashing is seen there. Like the heart, it makes itself one with me. Irresistible desire to approach it comes within me, and it absorbs the whole picture.

"Break through the shrine of Brahman; use the doctrine of the teacher." (5)

[There is no connection here of this exhortation with any person, and very probably it is something that was said either by himself, in soliloquy, or by some voice or person to him.

I must end here, as I find great rents and spaces in the notes. He must have ceased to put down further things he saw or did in his real inner life, and you will very surely agree, that if he had progressed by that time to what the last portions would indicate, he could not set down his reflections thereon, or any memorandum of facts. We, however, can never tell what was his reason. He might have been told not to do so, or might have lacked the opportunity.

There was much all through these pages that related to his daily family life, not interesting to you: records of conversations; wordly affairs; items of money and regarding appointments, journeys and meetings with friends. But they show of course that he was all this time living through his set work with men, and often harassed by care as well as comforted by his family and regardful of them. All of that I left out, because I supposed that while it would probably interest you, yet I was left with discretion to give only what seemed to relate to the period marked at its beginning, by his meetings with M—, and at the end by this last remarkable scene, the details of which we can only imagine. And likewise were of necessity omitted very much that is sufficiently

unintelligible in its symbolism to be secure from revelation. Honestly have I tried to unlock the doors of the ciphers, for no prohibition came with their possession, but all that I could refine from its enfolding obscurity is given to you.

As he would say, let us salute each other and the last shrine of Brahman; Om, hari, Om! Trans]

FOOTNOTES:

1. [An ancient Hindu book full of tales as well as doctrines. — [Ed.] " ([return to text](#))
 2. These *flashes* of thought are not unknown even in the scientific world, as, where in such a moment of lunacy, it was revealed to an English scientist, that there must be iron in the sun; and Edison gets his ideas thus. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))
 3. The careful student will remember that Jacob Boehme speaks of the "harsh and bitter anguish of nature which is the principle that produces bones and all corporification." So here the master, it appears, tells the fortunate chela, that in the spiritual and mental world, anxiety, harsh and bitter, raises a veil before us and prevents us from using our memory. He refers, it would seem, to the other memory above the ordinary. The correctness and value of what was said in this, must be admitted when we reflect that, after all, the whole process of development is the process of *getting back the memory of the past*. And that too is the teaching found in pure Buddhism as well also as in its corrupted form. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))
 4. The mystic syllable OM. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))
 5. There is some reference here apparently to the Upanishad, for they contain a teacher's directions to break through all shrines until the last one is reached. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))
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The Path

KARMA

The child is the father of the man, and none the less true is it:

"My brothers! each man's life
The outcome of his former living is;
The bygone wrongs brings forth sorrows and woes
The bygone right breeds bliss."

* * * *

"This is the doctrine of Karma."

But in what way does this bygone wrong and right affect the present life? Is the stern nemesis ever following the weary traveler, with a calm, passionless, remorseless step? Is there no escape from its relentless hand? Does the eternal law of cause and effect, unmoved by sorrow and regret, ever deal out its measure of weal and woe as the consequence of past action? The shadow of the yesterday of sin, — must it darken the life of to-day? Is Karma but another name for fate? Does the child unfold the page of the already written book of life in which each event is recorded without the possibility of escape? What is the relation of Karma to the life of the individual? Is there nothing for man to do but to weave the chequered warp and woof of each earthly existence with the stained and discolored threads of past actions? Good resolves and evil tendencies sweep with resistless tide over the nature of man and we are told:

"Whatever action he performs, whether good or bad, every thing done in a former body must necessarily be enjoyed or suffered."

Anugita, cp III.

There is good Karma, there is bad Karma, and as the wheel of life

moves on, old Karma is exhausted and again fresh Karma is accumulated.

Although at first it may appear that nothing can be more fatalistic than this doctrine, yet a little consideration will show that in reality this is not the case. Karma is twofold, hidden and manifest, Karma is the man that is, Karma is his action. True that each action is a cause from which evolves the countless ramifications of effect in time and space.

"That which ye sow ye reap." In some sphere of action the harvest will be gathered. It is necessary that the man of action should realize this truth. It is equally necessary that the manifestations of this law in the operations of Karma should be clearly apprehended.

Karma, broadly speaking may be said to be the continuance of the nature of the act, and each act contains within itself the past and future. Every defect which can be realized from an act must be implicit in the act itself or it could never come into existence. Effect is but the nature of the act and cannot exist distinct from its cause. Karma only produces the manifestation of that which already exists; being action it has its operation in time, and Karma may therefore be said to be the same action from another point of time. It must, moreover, be evident that not only is there a relation between the cause and the effect, but there must also be a relation between the cause and the individual who experiences the effect. If it were otherwise, any man would reap the effect of the actions of any other man. We may sometimes appear to reap the effects of the action of others, but this is only apparent. In point of fact it is our own action

" * * None else compels

None other holds you that ye live and die."

It is therefore necessary in order to understand the nature of Karma and its relation to the individual to consider action in all its aspects. Every act proceeds from the mind. Beyond the mind there is no action and therefore no Karma. The basis of every act is desire. The plane of desire or egotism is itself action and the matrix of every act. This plane may be considered as non-manifest, yet having a dual manifestation in what we call cause and effect, that is the act and its consequences. In reality, both the act and its consequences are the effect, the cause being on the plane of desire. Desire is therefore the basis of action in its first manifestation on the physical plane, and desire determines the continuation of the act in its karmic relation to the individual. For a man to be free from the effects of the Karma of any act he must have passed to a state no longer yielding a basis in which that act can inhere. The ripples in the water caused by the action of the stone will extend to the furthest limit of its expanse, but no further, they are bounded by the shore. Their course is ended when there is no longer a basis or suitable medium in which they can inhere; they expend their force and are not. Karma is, therefore, as dependent upon the present personality for its fulfillment, as it was upon the former for the first initial act. An illustration may be given which will help to explain this.

A seed, say for instance mustard, will produce a mustard tree and nothing else; but in order that it should be produced, it is necessary that the co-operation of soil and culture should be equally present. Without the seed, however much the ground may be tilled and watered, it will not bring forth the plant, but the seed is equally in-operative without the joint action of the soil and culture.

The first great result of Karmic action is the incarnation in physical life. The birth seeking entity consisting of desires and tendencies, presses forward towards incarnation. It is governed

in the selection of its scene of manifestation by the law of economy. Whatever is the ruling tendency, that is to say, whatever group of affinities is strongest, those affinities will lead it to the point of manifestation at which there is the least opposition. It incarnates in those surroundings most in harmony with its Karmic tendencies and all the effects of actions contained in the Karma so manifesting will be experienced by the individual. This governs the station of life, the sex, the conditions of the irresponsible years of childhood, the constitution with the various diseases inherent in it, and in fact all those determining forces of physical existence which are ordinarily classed under the terms, "heredity," and "national characteristics."

It is really the law of economy which is the truth underlying these terms and which explains them. Take for instance a nation with certain special characteristics. These are the plane of expansion for any entity whose greatest number of affinities are in harmony with those characteristics. The incoming entity following the law of least resistance becomes incarnated in that nation, and all Karmic effects following such characteristics will accrue to the individual. This will explain what is the meaning of such expressions as the "Karma of nations" and what is true of the nation will also apply to family and caste.

It must, however, be remembered that there are many tendencies which are not exhausted in the act of incarnation. It may happen that the Karma which caused an entity to incarnate in any particular surrounding, was only strong enough to carry it into physical existence. Being exhausted in that direction, freedom is obtained for the manifestation of other tendencies and their Karmic effects. For instance, Karmic force may cause an entity to incarnate in a humble sphere of life. He may be born as the child of poor parents. The Karma follows the entity, endures for a longer or shorter time, and becomes exhausted. From that point,

the child takes a line of life totally different from his surroundings. Other affinities engendered by former action express themselves in their Karmic results. The lingering effects of the past Karma may still manifest itself in the way of obstacles and obstructions which are surmounted with varying degrees of success according to their intensity.

From the standpoint of a special creation for each entity entering the world, there is vast and unaccountable injustice. From the standpoint of Karma, the strange vicissitudes and apparent chances of life can be considered in a different light as the unerring manifestation of cause and sequence. In a family under the same conditions of poverty and ignorance, one child will be separated from the others and thrown into surroundings very dissimilar. He may be adopted by a rich man, or through some freak of fortune receive an education giving him at once a different position. The Karma of incarnation being exhausted, other Karma asserts itself.

A very important question is here presented: Can an individual affect his own Karma, and if so to what degree and in what manner?

It has been said that Karma is the continuance of the act, and for any particular line of Karma to exert itself it is necessary that there should be the basis of the act engendering that Karma in which it can inhere and operate. But action has many planes in which it can inhere. There is the physical plane, the body with its senses and organs; then there is the intellectual plane, memory, which binds the impressions of the senses into a consecutive whole and reason puts in orderly arrangement its storehouse of facts. Beyond the plane of intellect there is the plane of emotion, the plane of preference for one object rather than another: — the fourth principle of the man. These three, physical, intellectual,

and emotional, deal entirely with objects of sense perception and may be called the great battlefield of Karma. (1) There is also the plane of ethics, the plane of discrimination of the "I ought to do this, I ought not to do that." This plane harmonizes the intellect and the emotions. All these are the planes of Karma or action what to do, and what not to do. It is the mind as the basis of desire that initiates action on the various planes, and it is only through the mind that the effects of rest and action can be received.

An entity enters incarnation with Karmic energy from past existences, that is to say the action of past lives is awaiting its development as effect. This Karmic energy presses into manifestation in harmony with the basic nature of the act. Physical Karma will manifest in the physical tendencies bringing enjoyment and suffering. The intellectual and the ethical planes are also in the same manner the result of the past Karmic tendencies and the man as he is, with his moral and intellectual faculties, is in unbroken continuity with the past.

The entity at birth has therefore a definite amount of Karmic energy. After incarnation this awaits the period in life at which fresh Karma begins. Up to the time of responsibility it is as we have seen the initial Karma only that manifests. From that time the fresh personality becomes the ruler of his own destiny. It is a great mistake to suppose that an individual is the mere puppet of the past, the helpless victim of fate. The law of Karma is not fatalism, and a little consideration will show that it is possible for an individual to affect his own Karma. If a greater amount of energy be taken up on one plane than on another this will cause the past Karma to unfold itself on that plane. For instance, one who lives entirely on the plane of sense gratification will from the plane beyond draw the energy required for the fulfillment of his desires. Let us illustrate by dividing man into upper and lower nature. By directing the mind and aspirations to the lower plane,

a "fire" or centre of attraction, is set up there, and in order to feed and fatten it, the energies of the whole upper plane are drawn down and exhausted in supplying the need of energy which exists below due to the indulgence of sense gratification. On the other hand, the centre of attraction may be fixed in the upper portion, and then all the needed energy goes there to result in increase of spirituality. It must be remembered that Nature is all bountiful and withholds not her hand. The demand is made, and the supply will come. But at what cost? That energy which should have strengthened the moral nature and fulfilled the aspirations after good, is drawn to the lower desires. By degrees the higher planes are exhausted of vitality and the good and bad Karma of an entity will be absorbed on the physical plane. If on the other hand the interest is detached from the plane of sense gratification, if there is a constant effort to fix the mind on the attainment of the highest ideal, the result will be that the past Karma will find no basis in which to inhere on the physical plane. Karma will therefore be manifested only in harmony with the plane of desire. The sense energy of the physical plane will exhaust itself on a higher plane and thus become transmuted in its effects.

What are the means through which the effects of Karma can be thus changed is also clear. A person can have no attachment for a thing he does not think about, therefore the first step must be to fix the thought on the highest ideal. In this connection one remark may be made on the subject of repentance. Repentance is a form of thought in which the mind is constantly recurring to a sin. It has therefore to be avoided if one would set the mind free from sin and its Karmic results. All sin has its origin in the mind. The more the mind dwells on any course of conduct, whether with pleasure or pain, the less chance is there for it to become detached from such action. The *manas* (mind) is the knot of the heart, when that is untied from any object, in other words when

the mind loses its interest in any object, there will no longer be a link between the Karma connected with that object and the individual.

It is the attitude of the mind which draws the Karmic cords tightly round the soul. It imprisons the aspirations and binds them with chains of difficulty and obstruction. It is desire that causes the past Karma to take form and shape and build the house of clay. It must be through non-attachment that the soul will burst through the walls of pain, it will be only through a change of mind that the Karmic burden will be lifted.

It will appear, therefore, that although absolutely true that action brings its own result, "there is no destruction here of actions good or not good. Coming to one body after another they become ripened in their respective ways." — Yet this ripening is the act of the individual. Free will of man asserts itself and he becomes his own saviour. To the worldly man Karma is a stern Nemesis, to the spiritual man Karma unfolds itself in harmony with his highest aspirations. He will look with tranquility alike on past and future, neither dwelling with remorse on past sin nor living in expectation of reward for present action.

FOOTNOTE:

1. See *Bhagavad-Gita* where the whole poem turns upon the conflict in this battle field, which is called the "sacred plain of *Kurukshetra*," meaning, the "body which is acquired by Karma."

[Ed.] ([return to text](#))

The Path

SUFISM: V — *C. H. A. Bjerregaard*

(Continued)

In Two Parts: Part I texts; Part II Symbols

PART II — SYMBOLS.

It must have become clear to our readers, that the sweet and peaceful sentiments of the couplet of Katebi, placed as motto over our first part, are the expressions of at least one side of the inner life of Sufism. But, if we listen more closely, we shall hear the plaintive note of the nightingale more distinct and perceive more readily the gloom of the cypress; both of them, like the soul of man, bewail in melancholy our disunion from Deity. That, too, is another side of Sufism, which now has been illustrated, and we have given enough quotations to show, that the highest aim of the Sufi is to attain self-annihilation by losing his humanity in Deity.

So far the direct teachings as they lie on the surface of our quotations. The grand undercurrents are the relations of The Universal Self and The Individual Self. The expression "Self" has not been used, but "God" and "Soul" because of the peculiarity of the exoteric forms of current Mohammedan Theology, which the Sufi-Doctors find themselves bound to observe.

We have yet to quote the Sufi poets Hafiz, Jami, Nizami, Attar and others, but as their teachings are veiled under symbols, they naturally find their place in this our second part, and shall be treated fully toward the end. We will begin with the more ecstatic features of practical Sufism, with the Dervishes, the Moslem saints, and thus develop the *subjective* forms of Sufism. We shall come to appreciate the use of a ritualistic service and ascetic practices, when we see these framed in close harmony with the

laws of Nature and conducive to Union with Self.

Where we use the phrase The Personal, our readers will understand it as the *subjective* equivalent for the objective "Self."

An historic study of the rise of Sufism out of original asceticism, will afford us an excellent view of the evolution of Sufism itself as well as of all other forms of Mysticism. Hence we must devote some space to it.

It must undoubtedly be maintained that asceticism and monastic life are entirely inconsistent with Mohammedanism, and in fact Mohammed himself was far from anything like it, and constantly preached against it, advocating an active life and an aggressive religion.

But neither Mohammed nor his followers could stem the tide of ascetic influences from the East, from Buddhism: nor from the West, from Christianity. These two religious systems had existed for centuries and were both characterized by monastic institutions, and missionary spirit. But, much deeper than these individual influences lies the power of a new historic cycle beginning about a century after Mohammed, just at the time we find the greatest number of Islam saints, with a distinctive monastic cast. The era is characterized by a new civilization in the West, and a consolidation of the Eastern conquests. The Mohammedan power encircles Christendom and threatens to destroy both Church and Christianity. In the East itself a terror of existence befell the minds of men and has left the strongest impressions in the writings of such men as Ata Salami and Hasan, &c.

Even in Mohammed's lifetime an attempt was made to engraft the elements of the contemplative life upon his doctrine. The facts are

well known. One evening, after some more vigorous declamations than usual on the prophet's part — he had taken for his theme the flames and tortures of hell — several of his most zealous companions, among whom the names of Omar, Ali, Abou-Dharr, and Abou-Horeirah are conspicuous, retired to pass the night together in a neighbouring dwelling. Here they fell into deep discourses on the terrors of divine justice, and the means to appease or prevent its course. The conclusion they came to was nowise unnatural. They agreed that to this end the surest way was to abandon their wives, to pass their lives in continued fast and abstinence, to wear hair-cloth, and practice other similar austerities: in a word, they laid down for themselves a line of conduct truly ascetic, and leading to whatever can follow in such a course. But they desired first to secure the approbation of Mohammed. Accordingly, at break of day, they presented themselves before him, to acquaint him with the resolution of the night, as well as its motives and purport; but they had reckoned without their host. The prophet rejected their proposition with a sharp rebuke, and declared marriage and war to be far more agreeable to the Divinity than any austereness of life or mortification of the senses whatever, and the well known passage of the Quran: "O true believers, do not abstain from the good things of the earth which God permits you to enjoy," revealed on this very occasion, remains a lasting monument of Mohammed's disgust at this premature outbreak of ascetic feeling. This lesson and many others of a similar character, for the time being, checked any and all appearance of declared forms of asceticism, but could not prevent the ultimate triumph of the truer and better parts of human nature. "Fate" would have it, that within his own family, lie hidden the germs, destined in after ages, down to the present day, and probably as long as Islam shall exist, to exert the mightiest influence in the Mohammedan world.

Ali, Mohammed's cousin, and Ali's son *Hasan*, his grandson *Zein el Abidin*, and after them *Djaufar es Sadik*, *Mousa el Kadhim*, *Ali er Ridha*, and others of their race, were members of a family which became the very backbone of asceticism. They were successively looked up to by individual ascetics as the guides and instructors in word and deed of self-denial and abnegation.

In the *Menaqibu 1 Arafin* (the Acts of the Adepts) it is related that the Prophet one day recited to Ali in private the secrets and mysteries of the "Brethren of Sincerity" enjoining him not to divulge them to any of the uninitiated, so that they should not be betrayed; also, to yield obedience to the rule of implicit submission. For forty days, Ali kept the secret in his own sole breast, and bore therewith until he was sick at heart. As his burden oppressed him and he could no more breathe freely, he fled to the open wilderness, and there chanced upon a well. He stooped, reached his head as far down into the well as he was able; and then, one by one, he confided those mysteries to the bowels of the earth. From the excess of his excitement, his mouth filled with froth and foam. There he spat out into the water of the well, until he had freed himself of the whole, and he felt relieved. After a certain number of days, a single seed was observed to be growing in that well. It waxed and shut up, until at length a youth, whose heart was miraculously enlightened on the point, became aware of this growing plant, cut it down, drilled holes in it, and began to play upon it airs, similar to those now performed by the dervish lovers of God, as he pastured his sheep in the neighbourhood. By degrees, the various tribes of Arabs of the desert heard of this flute-playing of the shepherd, and its fame spread abroad. The camels and the sheep of the whole region would gather around him as he piped, ceasing to pasture that they might listen. From all directions, the nomads flocked to hear his strains, going into ecstasies with delight, weeping for joy and

pleasure, breaking forth in transports of gratification. The rumor at length reached the ears of the Prophet, who gave orders for the piper to be brought before him. When he began to play in the sacred presence, all the holy disciples of God's messenger were moved to tears and transports, bursting forth with shouts and exclamations of pure bliss, and losing all consciousness. The Prophet declared that the notes of the shepherd's flute were the inspiration of the holy mysteries he had confided in private to Ali's charge.

Thus it is that, until a man acquires the sincere devotion of the linnnet-voiced flute-reed, he cannot hear the mysteries of "The Brethren of Sincerity" in its dulcet notes, or realize the delights thereof; for "faith is altogether a yearning of the heart, and a gratification of the spiritual sense."

In regard to "The Brethren of Sincerity" mentioned above it can be said that the Mohammedans in the East know perfectly well that there exists on earth, among the initiated a secret hierarchy which governs the whole human race, infidels as well as believers, but that their power is often exercised in such a manner that the subjects influenced by it know not from what person or persons its effects proceed.

In this hierarchy the supreme dignity is vested in the *Khidr*. This is a man indeed, but one far elevated above ordinary human nature by his transcendent privileges. Admitted to the Divine Vision, and possessed in consequence of a relative omnipotence and omniscience on earth; visible and invisible at pleasure; freed from the bonds of space and time; by his ubiquitous and immortal powers appearing in various forms on earth to uphold the cause of truth; then concealed awhile from men; known in various ages as Seth, as Enoch, as Elias, and yet to come at the end of time as the Mahdi; this wonderful being is the centre, the prop,

the ruler, the mediator of men of ascetic habits and retirement, and as such he is honoured with the name of *Kothb*, or axis, as being the spiritual pole round which and on which all move or are upheld. Under him are the *Aulia*, or intimate friends of God, seventy-two in number (some say twenty-four), holy men living on earth, who are admitted by the Kothb to his intimate familiarity, and who are to the rest the sources of all doctrine, authority, and sanctity. Among these again one, pre-eminent above the rest, is qualified by the vicarious title of *Kothb- ez-zaman*, or axis of his age, and is regarded as the visible depository of the knowledge and power of the supreme Kothb — who is often named, for distinction's sake, *Kothb el-Atkab*, or axis of the axes — and his constant representative amongst men. But as this important election and consequent delegation of power is invisible and hidden from the greater number even of the devotees themselves, and neither the Kothb- ez-zaman nor the *Aulia* carry any outward or distinctive sign of dignity and authority, it can only be manifested by its effects, and thus known by degrees to the outer world, and even then rather as a conjecture than as a positive certainty.

On the authority of the famous saint of Bagdad, Aboo-Bekr el Kettanee, E. W. Lane (1) states that the orders under the rule of this chief are called *Omud* (or *Owtad*), *Akhyar*, *Abdal*, *Nujaba*, and *Nukaba*, naming them according to their precedence, and remarks that perhaps to these should be added an inferior order called *Ashab ed-Darak*, that is "Watchmen" or "Overseers." The *Nukaba* are three hundred and reside in El-Gharb (Northern Africa to the West of Egypt): the *Nujaba* are seventy and reside in Egypt; the *Abdal* are forty and are found in Syria; the *Akhyar* are seven and travel about the earth; the *Omud* are four and stand in the corners of the earth. The members are not known as such to their inferior unenlightened fellow-creatures, and are often

invisible to them. This is most frequently the case with the Kothb, who, though generally stationed at Mekka, on the roof of the Kaaba, is never visible there, nor at any of his other favorite stations, yet his voice is often heard at these places.

Let us add that their great power is supposed to be obtained by self-denial, implicit reliance upon God, from good genii and by the knowledge and utterance of "the most great name."

Eflaki, the historian, has given us the links of a spiritual series, through whom the mysteries of the dervish doctrines were handed down to and in the line of Jelaludin er Rumi.

Ali communicated the mysteries to the Imam Hasan of Bara, who died A.D. 728. Hasan taught them to Habib, the Persian † A.D. 724) who confided them to Dawud of the tribe Tayyi † A.D. 781) who transmitted them to Maruf of Kerkh † A.D. 818); he to Sirri († A.D. 867) and he to the great Juneyd († A.D. 909). Juneyd's spiritual pupil Shibli († A.D. 945) taught Abu-Amr Muhammed, son of Ilahim Zajjaj († A.D. 959) and his pupil was Abu-Bekr, son of Abdullah of Tus, who taught Abu-Ahmed Muhammed, son of Muhammed Al-Gazzali († A.D. mi), and he committed those mysteries to Ahmed el-Khatibi, Jelal's great-grandfather, who consigned them to the Imam Sarakhsi († A.D. 1175). Sarakhsi was the spiritual teacher of Jelal's father Baha Veled, who taught the Sayyid Burhanu-d-Diu Termizi, the instructor of Jelal. — -We shall now proceed with the history.

(To be continued.)

Please note the following correction of previous article: Footnote, page 143, August No. of the PATH should read "Free translation by J. Freeman Clarke."

FOOTNOTE:

1. Arabian Soc. in the Middle Ages. — D'Ohsson describing the Turkish Dervishes gives another account. ([return to text](#))

The Path

RETICENCE OF MAHATMAS AND EVOLUTION OF THE INDIVIDUAL — *Julius*

Members of the Theosophical Society and the general public have alike manifested a wide divergence of opinion both as regards the fundamental aim of the Society, and its adaptation to individual cases. To get a right view of these points, it is first absolutely necessary that the Society should be considered as a whole, and to remember that like every movement in the physical or spiritual world, it must be governed by the great law of Evolution. This is its primal Cause, and the evolution of the individual its primary work. It is not, as its history shows, an ephemeral institution, to last for a given period, like a hospital, or a society to benefit animals, or poor children, or fallen women. It is a spoke of the universal wheel of Evolution. When the world contained a body of persons sufficiently developed on the spiritual plane, they naturally formed a nucleus, from which rays presently diverged to various parts of the globe. Stimulating centres of energy which are constantly expanding through the individual efforts of their members. What is true of the whole body is true also of its component parts, and each individual, in mental capacity and psychical conditions is precisely what his previous experience, or his evolutionary ratio entitles him to be. Only by means of ever increasing effort on his own part, can he invigorate these powers.

In founding the Theosophical Society, it was hoped that the united labors of all for each and of each for all, might result in so much enlightenment and expansion of individuals as the friction of many minds, all directed to one issue, should through the correlation of moral forces afford. Hence the Society was based upon the idea of Universal Brotherhood.

There are at present two classes of persons who misinterpret this aim of the Society. The first class is variously composed of — (A) those persons who suppose the Society to be solely devoted to a large phase of the subject, such as the progressive development of the entire body of the present race, or to the united interests of great masses of people, leaving the individual altogether alone in the up-hill path of his own spiritual development. (B) Various persons in different parts of the world who have seen fit, coincidentally with giving in their adherence to the idea of Universal Brotherhood, to ridicule it as "a mere sham" or "a pure formula" or "an Utopian impossibility:" the wavering incredulity of every such person arises no doubt from individual or constitutional peculiarity. (C) Such as suppose this basic idea to be an elastic declaration which may always be used as a shield to ward off the unpopular or chaffing accusation of an interest in Mysticism. (D) Those who base their denial of universal brotherhood upon the very sensible rule requiring applicants for initiation to have endorsement from active fellows of the Society. "If you make distinctions you are not universal," is the cry of these last.

All the above persons will sooner or later discover that the Society as a whole progresses through the spiritual advancement of individual members. If the individual retrogrades, the common welfare is minus so much; if he progresses, it is plus so much, and when many rise all are presently lifted as by specific gravity, into a higher plane. For this reason not only the exoteric and much slandered founders of the Society, but also the hidden and real founders have always given much of their time and thought to individuals. At the same time they have unceasingly insisted upon the necessity for individual efforts, that each member might develop himself. This is the true meaning of Evolution. It is not the expansion of the man by means of an external force acting

upon inert tissue, but an impulse from within outward and upward, enhanced by the cumulative effect of previous impulses, and further assisted by such favoring environment as his condition may permit him to assimilate.

It is in this final respect that the second class under consideration have erred. They demand greater extraneous aid for the individual. Such persons, having joined the Society and asserted their belief in the existence of Mahatmas, or Adepts, or highly advanced human beings, have after a time uttered complaints because they had no personal communications from these Great Beings, while they feel such attentions to be their due. These persons have said, — "We have declared our belief in these wise and holy Men; we have joined the Society, but we have not been favored with any proofs directly from them." Such persons require a letter under seal, projected in a phenomenal manner through the air or otherwise. Nothing short of this will satisfy them, and if they do not get it, they are likely to leave the fold of the Society, as they themselves intimate. Their complaint, in general terms, is that the Mahatmas are reticent, altogether too reticent to suit their requirements. They say that it is declared that certain other persons have received such evidence in the shape of letters, and they cite Messrs. Sinnett, Olcott, Damodar, Hume, Madame Blavatsky and several Hindus as the favored recipients. The complainants then state that their aspirations, their need, their merit, equal that of these persons, that they are, to put it roughly, "every bit as good." Some who do not say as much, think it, and a general outcry arises of, — "Why do we not get such letters as proofs? Are we not justified in ascribing undue reticence to the Mahatmas?" When in addition it is said that some others have seen the Mahatmas, or heard their voices and received gifts from them, the injured ones reiterate the complaint, — "Why are the Mahatmas so reticent? This attitude

has finally become that of the press and the public at large, so that the question presents itself, — "Are the Mahatmas unduly reticent?"

The solution of this question is bound up in the subject of the "Evolution of the Individual." As regards the general evolution, the Mahatmas cannot be thus accused, for had we their knowledge of the whole, so as to be able to feel and know what all minerals, plants, animals and men feel collectively, we should see that in this department Mahatmas are never accused even in thought of withholding either knowledge, favor or blessing. The whole moves by law (which law includes the Mahatmas themselves), and as a whole recognizes this law and knows no possible departure from it.

As heretofore stated, the work of the Theosophical Society lies within the department of individual evolution, and just as its sphere may only be enlarged through the constant labors of its members, so every individual follows the same law, *will he, nil he*. The Mahatmas are not reticent. They can justly be no more than the favoring environment to the individual soul. They give to each human well just the water it can hold: to overflow it would be waste. It has been well said that the human mind, like the atmosphere, has its saturation point. To realise when we have reached this point is the first step on the path of self-knowledge: to strive to expand our boundaries by incessant study and observation, carries us leagues further on our way. Those who journey thus have neither time nor desire for complaint. We enter into this life through our parents, subject to law. From one mystery we pass, ignorant of the future, into another mystery: lessons are learned in each. So is the soul born into the higher life and becomes by degrees acquainted with its mysteries. Through each order of life runs the law of natural selection. "A man is a method, a progressive arrangement, a selecting principle," says

Emerson. As the man chooses the friends and the pursuits best adapted to him, so by the law of spiritual dynamics is the soul attracted to just such food as it can assimilate, to the influences necessary to its present development. If the individual mind fails to grasp this idea and to see that we ourselves, (and not the Mahatmas,) create our own possibilities, how far less fitted is it to profit usefully by the very opportunities it demands. The gratification of curiosity, the quickening of interest in personalities or phenomena as such, are not growths of the soul, nor can they advance the evolution of the individual. The Mahatmas do not withhold us from Truth, but we ourselves. When we come to be a part of it, we shall know it: when we come to live in its laws, who can shut us away from it? The upright heart cries, — "Mine is mine, if the universe deny me, and not all the Mahatmas combined can convey to me one truth in which I am not ready to dwell. The Spirit communicates itself; the Masters but interpret the vision, as soothsayers the dreams of Kings. I am a king when the Spirit exalts me, made so by the super-royal act. I will not covet borrowed robes, nor whine as a beggar for charities, but wait until I am come into mine own estate. Then the Wise Ones will teach me how to rule it." The heart that chooses in truth this noble part, has felt already the quickening touch of the Divine. Like Jove of old, it bids the earth-bound waggoner abate his cries, and put first his own shoulder to the wheel.

Let complainants therefore reflect how ignorant they are of their own capacity to understand psychological data, and how necessary it is that they should first develop themselves in that direction. A ray of light may shoot by us unseen and unknown, to be lost in the further space, for want of the timely interposition of a reflective surface. Or it may stream directly into the eye, and even so may still be lost, should the eye lack the power to receive

the impression. Thus an attempt at direct communication or illumination may be and often is frustrated for lack of the perceptive eye and soul. Shall we expect to receive these at other hands, as by a miracle, when we know well that we never fully profit by any experience which we have not lived out for ourselves. Who amongst us has not seen a child reject with impatience the teachings of his elders, and presently return home brimful of wonder and dogmatism over the very same fact which some companion had knocked into him? The strong soul must be self delivered. Amongst our number there are indeed those who have the spiritual eye in part, and the Mahatmas, desirous to arouse it more fully, now and then project a beam of wisdom which the eye fails to receive and it passes on to those who are better fitted to absorb it. "No man can learn what he has not preparation for learning, however near to his eye is the object. A chemist may tell his most precious secrets to a carpenter, and he shall never be the wiser, — the secret he would not utter to a chemist for an estate. God screens us evermore from premature ideas. Our eyes are holden that we cannot see things that stare us in the face, until the hour arrives when the mind is ripened; then we behold them, and the time when we saw them not is like a dream." (1)

Let us then press forward to this harvest time, neither asking for help, nor doubting that it is at hand though unseen, and remembering above all that what we consider reticence, or silence on the part of the Mahatmas, is often but a higher order of speech which we do not as yet understand, and to whose golden accents untiring endeavor alone can give the key.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Emerson. ([return to text](#))

The Path

WHAT IS THE "THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY"? — F. Hartmann

AN OPINION IN REGARD TO WHAT IT OUGHT TO BE.

[BY A MEMBER.]

I am often asked by strangers who have heard some accounts of the doings of the Theosophists: What is the Theosophical Society, and what is its purpose? Some believe it to be a sect, in which no opinion is suffered to exist unless it is first sanctioned by certain "Headquarters" or "Boards of Control"; others believe it to be a school for occultism and witchcraft; others think that it is a new form of Buddhism, coming under some disguise to overthrow Christianity, while some of those who do not belong to the Christian church suspect it of being an effort to spread Christian doctrines among them by clothing them in some new and more acceptable form. Nearly everyone of such inquirers sees in the T. S. only a bug-bear, and there are all sorts of opinions except the right one prevailing about it.

To all such objections I can only answer by showing to them the printed "Rules of the Theosophical Society," where under the head "Objects of the Society," it says: "*The Society represents no particular religious creed, interferes with no man's caste, is entirely unsectarian and includes professors of all faiths.*" This sounds so beautifully, that people who have been accustomed all their life to cling to creeds and dogmas and "recognized authorities" are unable to believe that it can be true. Moreover the objectors have heard of "Boards of Control," of "Presidential Orders," of "Official Organs," etc., and all these things have such an air of sectarianism, that they seem to be hardly compatible with the spirit of freedom, so loudly proclaimed by the T. S. It is asked: What has a "Board of Control" to control? Who enforces

obedience to presidential orders? Does the official organ promulgate the dogmas of the sect; and if not, what then is the use of these things? It seems therefore time that we should once more consider what the T. S. is, or what it ought to be.

It must be plain to every lover of truth, that, however great the progress may be, which modern civilization has made in regard to the material and temporal welfare of man, the world is still far from having attained physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual perfection. Disease and crime, suffering and death, poverty, tyranny and ignorance are still in existence, and although there are many organized bodies, whose purpose it is to do good and to cure the ills of humanity, still the majority of such bodies are hampered to a certain extent by old beliefs, usages, creeds and superstitions, their activity is not sufficiently free, because their opinions are not free; they may benefit a certain class of humanity, but not all mankind; they know perhaps a part of the truth, but not all of it; their charity extends over a small circle, but not over the whole world. The root of all evil is ignorance, with its children, superstition, fear, crime and disease; the only remedy against ignorance is to spread the knowledge of truth.

There have been at all times men and societies, willing to spread *that which they believe to be the truth*, by all means which were at their command, whether fair or foul; there have been people ready to force their opinions in regard to the truth upon others, by the power of the sword, the faggot, the rack and the fire; but the truth cannot be spread in this manner. Real knowledge of the good, the beautiful and the true can only be attained by obtaining the knowledge of self, and the knowledge of self must grow in every individual in the course of his development. It can no more be implanted by others or be forced upon another, than a tree be made to grow by pulling its trunk. The object of the true Theosophist is therefore to attain self-knowledge, and to employ

the knowledge which he possesses, for the purpose of accomplishing the greatest good.

There is perhaps not a single country upon the face of the earth, in which may not be found a number of persons, who desire to obtain self-knowledge, to find the truth by means of a free and unrestricted investigation, and to employ their knowledge for the benefit of humanity. There are persons who desire to see true progress in the place of stagnation, knowledge in the place of accepted but still dubious opinions, wisdom in the place of sophistry, universal love and benevolence in the place of selfishness. Such men and women may be found here and there, and each one acts in the way he considers the best. Some work by means of the school, others by means of the pulpit; some teach science, others influence the sense of the beautiful and true by their works of art, others speak the powerful language of music: but the most advanced of these give an example to others by their own Christlike conduct in the affairs of every-day life.

The great majority of such persons, interested in the welfare of humanity, live isolated although they may be residing in crowded cities; for they find few who share their mode of feeling and thought and who have identical objects in view. They are often living in communities where little more but selfishness, the greed for money-making or perhaps bigotry and superstition are found. They are isolated and without the support of those who sympathize with their ideas; for although one universal principle unites all those who have the same object in view: still their persons are unknown to each other and they seldom find means for mutual intercourse and exchange of thought.

Now let us suppose that in each country a center of communication were to be established, by means of which such persons could come into contact with each other, and that at each

such center a journal or newspaper were to be established, by means of which such persons could exchange their thoughts; — not a center from which supreme wisdom was to be dispensed and from whence dogmas were to be doled out for the unthinking believers; but a center through which the thought of the members of the society could freely flow; and we could then have an ideal "Theosophical Society." Such a center would resemble a central telephone station to which all the different wires extend, and it would require a trustworthy servant at the office to connect the wires and to attend to the *external* affairs connected with the affairs of the office; but if such a "telephone operator" would attempt to interfere with the messages running over the wires, and to assume an authority to say what kinds of opinions should be wired and what messages should be suppressed; if he were to assume the role of a dictator and permit only such messages to pass over the wires as would be in harmony with his own ideas; then the object of the center of communication would come to nought: we would again have papal dictates and presidential orders in the place of liberty of thought and speech, and there would be an end of the object and purpose of the society.

But on the other hand, if every unripe mind were to be permitted to have his effusions printed at the expense of the society, and to teach things which perhaps a few months afterwards, having learned to know better, he would be sorry to think that they had ever seen the light, such a proceeding would throw discredit upon the society and be moreover altogether impracticable.

Our "telephone operator" should therefore be a man possessed of the greatest circumspection and discrimination, and while he should never interfere with the expression of any opinion, no matter how much opposed the latter may be to his own opinion, he should at the same time be permitted to cut down the messages sent over his wires to certain limits and to present

them, if necessary, in a more suitable form.

As regards the liberty of speech, it would be an absurdity if such a society were to attempt to prescribe to any of its members what kind of opinions or dogmas he should express; because whatever opinions he may pronounce, they could never be regarded as being the opinions of the society as a whole; for the society as such "*represents no particular creed" and "is entirely unsectarian."* If in spite of this solemn assertion anyone chooses to believe that the opinions publicly expressed by a member of the society represent the creed of the society, such an unfortunate circumstance can only be deplored, but will do no serious harm. On the other hand if a "president" or "board of control" should attempt to preside over more important things than merely over the meetings of the members, and if a "board of control" would attempt to control the conscience and the opinions of the member instead of merely exercising its control over the external affairs of the Society: and if an "official organ" would attempt to postulate what ought and what ought not to be believed by the members of the society, such a proceeding would be in direct opposition to the spirit, the object and the purpose of that society, and in contradiction to the principles upon which it was founded: and while it should be the object of every lover of truth to assist the growth of a true "Theosophical Society," and to maintain its purity of principle, it should also be his aim to suffocate in the germ everything that is opposed to liberty and freedom of speech.

I beg every member of the Theosophical Society to well consider these points, for upon their consideration and decision, depends the solution of the question, whether the Theosophical Society shall end in a farce, or whether it shall be the great movement which it was intended to be.

APOLLONIUS AND THE MAHATMAS: I

The journey to India made by the great adept, Apollonius, of Tyana, was a special interest for us modern students of occultism. The story of this journey, related in the life of Apollonius by Philostratus, has been held by many to be a fable, and Mr. Tredwell, in his laudable work, omits any account of it. To an earnest Theosophist, however, the internal evidence of the narration is too strong to be resisted, although it is told at third hand probably with the adornments, which an accomplished Greek author thought needful for the requisite grace of style.

Apollonius may perhaps be said to have been the Master whose mission was to set the temples in order for the departure of the glorious classic era. Born in the same century as Jesus of Nazareth, nowhere did the teachings of the two, so far as it appears, come into open contact, although the fame of the former spread far and wide in Europe, Asia and Africa during his lifetime. It is said, however, that although no creed bears his name, his work in the world was nevertheless immense and his teachings have, in many unperceived ways, influenced millions of human beings down to the present day.

Apollonius was still a young man when he went to India, but even then he was famous for his wisdom. He had been sent, as a boy of fourteen years, to school in Tarsus by his wealthy father, but he did not like the ways of that city and he was allowed to remove to Aegae, also in Sicily, where he studied the great philosophers and was specially drawn to the teachings of Pythagoras. At the age of sixteen he fully adopted the Pythagorean life and held firmly to it ever after, letting his hair grow long, eating no flesh, and drinking no wine, and wearing no clothing made of animal products. He

took up his abode in the temple of Asclepius, and thousands were attracted thither by the wisdom of the wonderfully beautiful youth. Grown to manhood, he made a vow of silence and spoke not a word for five years. Then for a time he taught in Antioch. When asked how the wise man should treat questions of learning, he replied: "Like the law-giver. For the law-giver must make that, of whose truth he has convinced himself, into commandments for the multitude."

He now conceived the idea of a journey to India to meet the wise men known as Brahmins and Hyrkanians. He afterwards told the Egyptian Gymnosophists that his thoughts were directed to them in his youth, but his teacher pointed out to him that in India lived the men who stood nearest the source of wisdom, and from whom the Egyptians themselves derived their light. His seven disciples in Antioch had not the courage to undertake the journey with him, and he departed with two of his family servants, "one for writing rapidly and the other finely," according to Philostratus. At Ninus he was joined by Damis the Ninivite. This young Assyrian was thenceforth his devoted disciple, accompanying him on all his many journeys throughout his long career. It is to Damis that we chiefly owe the detailed accounts of the doings of the Master thenceforward. We are thereby enabled to see Apollonius in his daily life; in his various deeds and actions, his familiar sayings recorded as he talks with his faithful companion about the common sights and occurrences around them. The picture is therefore exceptionally intimate, and the man himself is brought near to us as well as his divine teachings. When Damis was reproached for writing down such trifles about his master, and compared with a dog devouring the crumbs from a table, he replied: "When the gods are feasting they doubtless have servants who take care that no crumbs of ambrosia are lost."

A year and eight months were spent in Babylon, where King

Bardanus, who was a friend of wisdom, received Apollonius with great honors. Considerable intercourse was had with the Magi; he learnt something of them and also taught them something. Damis was forbidden to accompany him in his visits to them, but he said that Apollonius visited them at noon and at midnight. Once Damis asked "What are the Magi?" and was answered, "They are indeed wise, but not in everything." The King became ill, and Apollonius spoke so much and so divinely about the soul that the monarch said to those around: "Apollonius not only relieves me of concern for the Kingdom, but also for Death."

Apollonius, in departing, refused all gifts, but the King provided him with camels and all things needful for the journey. When the King asked what he would bring him from India he replied, "A joyful gift, O King! For if intercourse with the men there makes me wiser, I shall come back to thee better than I now am."

Upon this the King embraced him and said: "May'st thou but come: for this gift is great."

They crossed what they called the Caucasus mountains, separating India and Medea. May it not be that from this ancient designation we get the name of the Caucasian race, rather than from what is now known as the Caucasus? This would make the place of origin identical with that commonly ascribed to the Aryans.

Crossing the Indus they soon came to Taxila, which they called the capital of India. It is difficult to trace out their exact course, the present names of most geographical features being quite different from the designations given by Damis. It would probably require a thorough Occultist to tell just what places they did visit. King Phraotes was the ruler at Taxila, and in him Apollonius found an initiate. The latter was struck with the modest simplicity of the monarch's surroundings on entering the

palace, and inferred that he must be a philosopher. The King told Apollonius the course which a youth took who proposed to dedicate himself to the pursuit of Wisdom. When he had reached his 18th year he had to cross the Hyphasis river to those men who had attracted Apollonius to India. Beforehand, however, he had to make his intention publicly known, in order that he might be restrained in case he was not pure. To be pure one had to be without blemish in respect to father and mother, and moreover with an upright ancestry for three generations. If without fault in this respect the youth himself was then examined as to whether he had a good memory, whether he was naturally inclined to uprightness or would only have it appear so, whether given to drink or gluttony, of boastful habits, evil or foolish ways, whether obedient to father, mother and instructors, and finally if he had made no evil use of the bloom of his youth. "Since wisdom stands in great esteem here," said the King, "and is honored by the Indians, it is of great moment that those who seek to devote themselves unto it should be carefully examined and made to undergo thousand-fold tests."

(Concluded in December.)

The Path

SUFISM: VI — C. H. A. Bjerregaard

In Two Parts: — Part I, Texts; Part II, Symbols.

PART II — SYMBOLS.

The practical expounders and preachers of Sufism are the Dervishes, the monks of Islam.

Zaous Abou Add er-Rahman, of Persian origin, but born in Yemen, led the way. He had passed his early youth in the society of Zein el Abidin, the son of Hasan, and grandson of Ali, and the first of that family who in life and writing professed the mystical ideas and austere practices, which ever afterwards distinguished the race. Abou-Horeirah, the devoutest of Mohammed's own companions, and EbnAbbas were also his masters. He took up his abode at Mecca, the center of religious feeling, and soon Zaous' influence began to appear among the crowd of pilgrims from all parts of the Mohammedan empire; they began to imitate his long prayers, his fasts, and extreme poverty, and above all his open contempt for all worldly dignity and rank, and many adopted the peculiarity of his dress, the long and patched garment and the high woollen cap, both of which later became so characteristic of the Sufi.

One of his most distinguished followers was *Hasan Yesar*, like Zaous, of Persian origin, but born in Arabia, in Medinah. Having received his liberty (he was born after his mother had become a slave of Omm Salma, one of the numerous wives of the Prophet), he retired to Basra, on the Persian Gulf, a town known for its attachment to the family of Ali and their doctrines, and henceforth a stronghold of the ascetic sect. His life proved the truth and strength of his doctrines, and Basra was now their

headquarters.

Malik Ebn Dinar, a Persian, and a slave by birth, known for his love of manual labor, poverty and humility, next appears as chief among the ascetics of his age.

Omar Abou Othman, was a disciple of Hasan Yesar and also an inhabitant of Basra. Hasan Yesar described him as one worthy of angels and prophets for preceptors and guides, one who never exhorted save to what he had first put in practice, nor deterred from anything except what he himself inviolably abstained from. He was a vigorous asserter of man's free-will.

About the same time *Omar Abou Durr at Coufa* and *Sofein Abou Abd Allah* displayed similar examples of austerity and virtue, and so did *Hammad Abou Ismail*, son of the celebrated Abou Hanifah, *Abd Allah Merouji*, and *Mohammed Ebn es Semmak*.

But whether at Mecca or at Basra, the various ascetics already mentioned, and the many not mentioned; whatever personal influence they exercised, and virtues they possessed, they did not form a particular and distinct association or brotherhood. No common rule united them, nor did they group themselves around any superior or chief, as yet.

But the next prominent man among them was not only a remarkable man as an ascetic, but also the father and founder of all the numerous Dervish family. His name was *Fodheil Abou Ali Zalikani*. He was born of Persian parents and spent his youth as a highway robber. One night he had scaled the walls of a house where the girl of whom he was enamored dwelt, and concealed on the roof, awaited the moment to descend and gratify his passion. But while thus occupied he heard a voice repeating the well-known verse of the Quran: "Is it not high time for those who believe to open their hearts to compunction?" "Lord, it is high

time indeed," replied Fodheil; and leaving the house, as well as his evil design, he retired to a half-ruined caravansarai not far off, there to pass the rest of the night. Several travellers were at the moment lodged in the caravansarai, and, concealed by the darkness, he overheard their conversation: "Let us start on our journey," said one; and the others answered: "Let us wait till morning, for the robber Fodheil is out on the roads." This completed the conversion of the already repentant highwayman. He advanced towards the travellers, and, discovering himself to them, assured them that henceforth neither they nor any others should have aught to fear from him. He then stripped himself of his weapons and worldly gear, put on a patched and tattered garment, and passed the rest of his life in wandering from place to place, in the severest penitence and in extreme poverty, sometimes alone, sometimes with numerous disciples, whom he took under his direction, and formed into a strict and organized brotherhood. But with all his austerity of life, his prolonged fasts and watchings, his ragged dress and wearisome pilgrimages, he preferred the practice of interior virtue and purity of intention to all outward observances, and used often to say that "he who is modest and compliant to others, and lives in meekness and patience, gains a higher reward by so doing than if he fasted all his days, and watched in prayer all his nights." At so high a price did he place obedience to a spiritual guide, and so necessary did he deem it, that he declared: "Had I a promise of whatever I should ask in prayer, yet would I not offer that prayer save in union with a superior." But his favorite virtue was the love of God in perfect conformity to his will, above all hope and fear. Thus when his only son — whose virtues resembled his father's — died in early age, Fodheil was seen with a countenance of unusual cheerfulness; and being asked by his intimate disciple Ragi Abou Ali, afterwards Kadhi of the town of Rei, the reason therefore, he answered: "It was God's good pleasure, and it is therefore my

good pleasure also." We must notice one more of his famous sentences: "Much is he beguiled who serves God from fear or hope, for this true service is for mere love;" and, speaking of himself: "I serve God because I cannot help serving Him for very love's sake."

Fodheil died in the year 187 of the Hegira. His disciple was *Ibrahim Ebn Adhem*, son of noble parents and also a Persian by birth, and he is an example upon the forbearance under injury and reluctance to have their right manifested, so prominent amongst the disciples of Fodheil.

After the death of Fodheil the supreme direction of the brotherhood was vested in *Bishar el Hafi*, a native of Meron and inhabitant of Bagdad. When young he had, like Fodheil, led a reckless life, till one day walking in the streets he saw written on a piece of paper, torn and trampled on by the feet of the passers-by, the name of God. He picked it up and, having cleaned it to the best of his ability, took it home and placed it out of the reach of further profanation. The same night he heard a voice saying to him; "Bishar, thou has honored my name. I will accordingly render thy name honorable in this world and in that to come." He awoke from sleep a changed man, and began a new life of penance and virtue. The name Hafi signifies *barefoot*. He walked barefooted. His greatest trial was from the veneration of man: "O God," he used to say, "save me from this honor, the requital of which may perchance be confusion in another life."

Our space forbids us to dwell upon the Egyptian ascetics who helped to lay the foundation for the future Sufism. We pass by them and dwell mainly with the Persian representatives.

About this time — the beginning of the fourth century — two events occurred of greatest importance in the history we are narrating. The Samanide princes had gained ascendancy in the

empire over the Abbaside Caliphs. All the princes of the Samanide race were remarkable for their piety and patronage of learning. *Nasser Ebn Ahmed*, signalized himself by his love of retirement and religious meditation. He founded an oratory at Bokhara which soon became the resort of the now numerous ascetics, and soon other similar institutions arose throughout the country and *the dervishes of the East now look on them their permanent name and manner of life.*

The other event which characterized this era was the outbreak of open heterodoxy among the ascetics. Hitherto they had concealed their tenets and practices, opposed as they were to the prevailing system, much after the fashion of Ali Zein el Abidin, grandson of the famous Ali, grand-master of the secret order:

"Above all things I conceal the precious jewel of my knowledge,
Lest the uninitiated should behold it, and be bewildered;
Ah, how many a rare jewel of this kind, should I openly display it,
Men would say to me: "Thou art one of the worshippers of idols;
And Zealous Muslims would set my blood at price,
Deeming the worst of crimes an acceptable and virtuous action."

After these ascetics had learned their strength from their union they began to take part in politics and worked zealously with that party that wished to overthrow the family and religion of Mohammed and place Ali and mysticism in their stead. They accordingly soon had martyrs in their ranks. Thus died at Bagdad the famous *Hosain Abou Meghith el Halladj*. To his school belonged the three giants of learning and piety: Abd-el-Kadir el Ghilani, Mohi ed Din Ebn-Aarabi el Moghrebi, and Omar Ebn el

Faridh. We pen a few of his words:

"I am He whom I love, and He whom I love is I;
We are two spirits, inhabiting one outward frame:
And when you behold me, you behold Him,
And when you behold Him, you behold us twain."

He taught the freedom of the human will and wrote the following satire on the predestinarian system of Islam:

What can man do, if the decrees of predestination
surround him,
Binding him in his every state? answer me, O learned
professor.
He (*i.e.*, as if He, that is God) cast him into the ocean, bound
hand and foot, and then said to him,
Woe to you, woe to you, should you get wet with the
water."

He it is who thus in his verse addresses God:

"I love Thee with a twofold love, the love of friendship,
And the love grounded on this alone, that Thou art worthy
of it.
Cut as to that my love which is the love of friendship,
It is a love which leaves me no thought for any save Thee;
And as to the love of Thee according to Thy worthiness,
O raise from betwixt us the veil, that I may behold Thee.
Nor is any praise due to me either for this or for that (love),
But to Thee alone the praise both for this and that."

Halladj's three famous disciples gave their names to the three principal brotherhoods among the Mohammedans, and their work remains to this day.

Abd-el-Kadir el Ghilani was a Persian by birth and resided at

Bagdad. Nobody doubted that he was the Kothb of his time, and as such he announced himself in his ecstatic state, though ordinarily he strove to conceal himself under the veil of a mean and despicable appearance. He founded the order of the Qadiriya which association counted in its ranks some of the greatest names among Eastern mystics and poets. The doctrine of the order was that of Hosein el Halladj, whom he taught the order to look upon as their master, though their doctrine was commonly veiled under a seemingly orthodox terminology. They subsist to this day and are counted among the most prominent.

M. D'hosson in his celebrated work on the Ottoman empire traces the origin of the Faquirs to the time of Mohammed in the following manner: In the first year of the Hegira, forty-five citizens of Mecca joined themselves to many others from Medina. They took an oath of fidelity to the doctrines of their Prophet, and formed a sect or fraternity, the object of which was to establish among themselves a community of property, and to perform every day certain religious practices in a spirit of penitence and mortification. To distinguish themselves from other Mohammedans, they took the name of Sufis. This name, which later was attributed to the most zealous partisans of Islam, is the same still in use to indicate any Muselman who retires from the world to study, to lead a life of pious contemplation, and to follow the most painful exercises of an exaggerated devotion. To the name of Sufi they added also that of Faquir, because their maxim was to renounce the goods of the earth, and to live in an entire abnegation of all worldly enjoyments, following thereby the words of the Prophet: "Poverty is my pride." Following their example, *Abu Bakr and Ali* established, even during the lifetime of the Prophet and under his own eyes, religious orders, over which each presided, with Zikrs or peculiar religious exercises, established by them separately, and a vow taken by each of the

voluntary disciples forming them. On his decease, Abu Bakr made over his office of president to one *Salman l-Farisi*, and Ali to *al-Hasann l-Basri*, and each of these charges were consecrated under the title of *Khalifah*, or successor. The two first successors followed the example of the Khalifahs of Islam, and transmitted it to their successors, and these in turn to others, the most aged and venerable of their fraternity. Some among them, led by the delirium of the imagination, wandered away from the primitive rules of their society, and converted, from time to time, these fraternities into a multitude of religious orders. * * * It was about A. H. 49 (A. D. 766) that the Shaikh Ahvan, a mystic renowned for his religious fervor, founded the first regular order of the Faquirs, now known as the Alwaniyah.

The Bastamiyah, the Nagshbandiyah, and the Bakhtashiyah descend from the original order established by Abu Bakr. All the others come from Ali.

THE FAQUIRS OR DERVISHES.

The Arabic word *Faqir* signifies *poor*, poor in the sense of being in need of mercy, poor in the sight of God. The Persian equivalent *Darvish* is derived from *dar* "a door" — those who "beg from door to door."

The dervishes are, as stated before, the *practical* expounders of Mohammedanism. They are divided into two great classes, the *be Shara* (with the law), or those who govern their conduct according to the principles of Islam: and the *be Shara* (without the law), or those who do not rule their lives according to the formal principles of any religious creed, although they call themselves Muslims. To the latter, the Sufis principally belong. These Faquirs are called either *Azad*, the free, or *Majnub* the absorbed. The former shave their beards, whiskers, eyebrows, etc., and live a life of celibacy.

Every school and every brotherhood has its own distinctive teachings and technicalities, and its peculiar practices and observances, its saints and doctors, great men and founders.

A student will also readily discover a different character in Arabic and Persian Sufism. The Arabic being nearer to Christianity takes up much from it, but moulds it in its peculiar way; the Persian being nearer the traditions of Zoroaster and in immediate contact with Manichaeism, naturally borrows from thence. Thus the "pantheistic" tendencies, such as Divine absorption, universal manifestation of the Deity under the seeming appearances of limited forms, the final return of all things to the unity of God, a tendency to regard matter as evil, the reprobation of marriage, etc. — these were ideas that rose from Persian soil, while the ideas of a radiant Divinity mediating between the supreme fountain-head of Being and the created world: of an all-prevailing Spirit of love; of detachment from the world: of poverty, humility, etc., were more akin to Christian belief.

Still Saadis' description applies to all: "The outward tokens of a dervish are a patched garment and a shaven head; and the inward signs, those of being alive in the spirit, and dead in the flesh: — 'not he who will sit apart from his fellow-creatures at the door of supplication with God: and, if he shall reject his prayer, will stand up in disobedience; or if a mill-stone come rolling down a mountain, he is not intelligent in the ways of providence, that would rise to avoid it.'"

"The ritual of the Dervishes is gratitude and praise, worship and obedience, contentment and charity, and a belief in the unity and providence of God, having a reliance on and being resigned to his will, confident of his favour, and forbearant of all: whosoever is endowed with these qualifications is in truth a dervish, notwithstanding he be arrayed in gorgeous apparel: whereas, the

irreligious and hypocritical vainboaster, sensualist, and whore monger, who turn days into nights in his slavish indulgences, and converts nights into days in his dreams of forgetfulness; who eats whatever falls in his way, and speaks whatever comes uppermost, is a profligate, though clothed in the sackcloth of a saint. —"

The dervishes differ, says A. Vambery, (1) from each other only by the manner in which they demonstrate their enthusiasm; still the more we penetrate towards the East, the greater is the purity with which they have been preserved. In Persia the dervishes play a much more important part than in Turkey, and in Central Asia, isolated as it has been from the rest of the world for centuries, this fraternity is still in full vigor, and exercises a great influence upon society.

According to A. Vambery, the *Bektashi*, *Mevlevi*, and *Rufai* orders are principally found in Turkey; the *Kadrie* and *Djelali* in Arabia; the *Oveisi* and the *Nurbakhchi Nimetullahi* in Persia; the *Khilali* and *Zahibi* in India, and the *Nakishbendi* and *Sofi* (a recent order) in Central Asia.

According to Th. P. Hughes (2) the following are the chief orders of Faqirs met with in North India: (1) The *Naqshbandia*, the followers of Khwajah Pir Mohammed Naqshband, and are a very numerous sect; they usually perform the Zikr-i-Khafi (3) or the silent devotion. (2) The *Qadiria* sprung from the celebrated Sayyid Abdul Qadir, surnamed Pir Dustagir, whose shrine is at Bagdad. They practice both forms of the Zikr. Most of the Sunni Moulavis of the north-west frontier of India are members of this order. In Egypt it is most popular among the fisherman. (3) The *Chishtia* are followers of Banda Nawaz, whose shrine is at Calburgah; they are partial to vocal music, for the founder of the order remarked, that singing was the food and support of the soul. They perform the Zikr-i-Jali. (4) The *Jalalia* founded by Sayyid Jalal-ud-din of

Bokhara; they are met with in Central Asia. Religious mendicants are often of this order. (5) The *Sarwardia* are popular in Alganistan and comprise many learned men. They are the followers of Hasan Bisri of Basra, near Bagdad. These five are all ba-Shara Faqirs.

The be-Shara Faqirs are very numerous. The most popular order is that of the *Mudaria*, founded by Zinda Shah Murdar of Syria, whose shrine is at Mukanpur, in Oudh. From these have sprung the *Malang* Faqirs who crowd the bazaars of India. They wear their hair matted or tied in a knot. The *Rafia* order is also a numerous one in some parts of India. They practice the most severe discipline and mortify themselves by scourging.

The secrets of the dervish orders cannot be learned. An initiation is described in Lane's Society in the Middle Ages and the following is another.

The following is the account of the admission of Tewekkul Beg into the order of the Qadiriya-faqirs, one of the four most prominent ones, by Moolla Shah, a Saint and poet of some celebrity, who died in the year of the Hegira 1072 (1661-62 of our era), at Lahore, where his shrine was reared by the Princess Fatima, daughter of Shah-Jihan. Tewekkul is himself the narrator:

"Having been introduced, by means of Akhond Molla Mohammed Say'd into the intimate circle of Molla Shah, my heart through frequent intercourse with the Sheikh was filled with a burning desire of reaching the sublime goal [of the mystical science], and I no longer found sleep by night nor rest by day * * I passed the whole of that night without being able to shut my eyes, and betook myself to reciting a hundred thousand times the one hundred and twelfth chapter of the Qoran. I accomplished this in several days. It is well known that in this chapter of the Qoran the great Name of God is contained, and that through the power of

that Name, whoever recites it a hundred thousand times may obtain all that he desires. I conceived then the wish that the Master should bestow his affection upon me. And, in fact, I convinced myself of the efficacy of this means, for hardly had I finished the hundred thousandth recitation of this chapter of the book of God, when the heart of the Master was filled with sympathy for me, and he gave order to Senghin Mohammed, his vicar, to conduct me on the following night to his presence. During that whole night he concentrated his mind upon me, while I directed my meditation upon my own heart; but the knot of my heart was not unloosed. So passed three nights, during which he made me the object of his spiritual attention, without any result being manifested. On the fourth night Molla Shah said, 'This night Molla Senghin and Salih Beg, who are both very susceptible to ecstatic emotions, will direct their whole mind upon the neophyte.' They obeyed this order, while I remained seated the whole night, my face turned towards Mecca, at the same time concentrating all my mental faculties upon my own heart. Towards daybreak, a little light and brightness came into my heart, but I could distinguish neither form nor color. After morning prayer I presented myself, and the two persons I have just mentioned, before the Master who saluted me and asked them what they had done to me. They replied: 'Ask him, himself.' Then, addressing me, he told me to relate to him my impressions. I said that I had seen a brightness in my heart; whereupon the Sheikh became animated, and said to me: 'Thy heart contains an infinity of colors, but it is become so dark that the looks of these two crocodiles of the infinite ocean [the mystic science] have not availed to bestow upon it either brightness or clearness; the moment is come when I myself will show thee how it is enlightened.' With these words he made me sit in front of him, while my senses were, so to speak, inebriated, and ordered me to reproduce within me his appearance. Then, having blindfolded

me, he bade me concentrate all my mental faculties upon my heart. I obeyed, and in an instant, by the divine favor and the spiritual assistance of the Sheikh, my heart was opened. I saw then within me something like a cup, turned upside down: and this object having been turned up again, a feeling of illimitable happiness filled my whole being. I said to the Master, 'This cell, where I am sitting before you — I see a faithful reproduction of it within me, and it seems as if another Tewekkul Beg were seated before another Molla Shah.' He answered, 'It is well; the first vision which presents itself to thy view is the figure of the Master.'* * * He next bade me uncover my eyes, which I did, and I then saw him, by the material organ of vision, seated in front of me. Again he made me bandage them, and I perceived him by my spiritual vision, seated in front of me just the same. Full of wonder I cried out, O my Master, whether I look with my bodily eyes or my spiritual vision, it is always you that I see. Meanwhile I saw advance towards me a dazzling figure, and upon my telling the Master of it, he bade me ask the apparition its name. In my spirit I put to it that question, and the figure answered me by the voice of the heart, 'My name is Abd Alkadir Glilany.' I heard this answer by my spiritual ear. The Master then advised me to pray the Saint to give me his spiritual help and succor. I made this petition; and the apparition said to me, 'I had already granted to thee my spiritual assistance; hence it is that the knots of thy heart have been loosed.' Full of deep gratitude, I imposed on myself the obligation of reciting every Friday night the whole Qoran in honor of this great Saint, and for two whole years I never neglected this practice. Molla Shah then said, 'The spiritual world has been shown to thee in all its beauty: remain there seated, effacing thyself completely in the marvels of this unknown world.'

"I obeyed strictly the directions of my Master, and, day by day, the

spiritual world became more and more unveiled before me. The next day I saw the figures of the Prophet and his chief Companions, and legions of Saints and Angels passed before my inner vision. Three months passed in this manner, after which the sphere where all color is effaced opened before me, and then all the figures disappeared. During all this time the Master ceased not to explain to me the doctrine of the union with God and of mystical intuition. But, nevertheless, the Absolute Reality would not show itself to me. It was not until after a year that the knowledge of the Absolute Reality, in its relation with the conception of my own existence came to me. The following verses revealed themselves at that moment to my heart, whence they passed unbidden to my lips: —

'That this corruptible frame was other than water and dust
I knew not: the powers of the heart and the soul and the
body I knew not,
Woe is me! that so much of my life without Thee has for
ever fled from me.
Thou wert I; but dark was my heart: I knew not the secret
transcendent.'

"I submitted to Molla Shah this poetical inspiration, and he rejoiced that the idea of the union with God was at last manifested to my heart: and addressing his disciples, he said: 'Tewekkul Beg has heard from my mouth the words of the doctrine of the union with God, and he will never betray the mystery. His inner eye is opened; the sphere of color and images is shown to him, and at last the sphere where all color is effaced has been revealed to him. Whoever after having passed through these phases of the union with God, has obtained the Absolute Reality, shall no more be led astray, whether by his own doubts or by those which sceptics may suggest to him.'"

(To be continued)

FOOTNOTES:

1. Intell. Obs. Vol. 7. ([return to text](#))
2. Notes on Mohammedanism. ([return to text](#))
3. The Zikrs will be described in next number of *The Path*. ([return to text](#))

The Path

MUSINGS ON THE TRUE THEOSOPHIST'S PATH: II — *American Mystic*

"Work as those work who are ambitious. — Respect life as those do who desire it. — Be happy as those are who live for happiness." — *Light on the Path*.

We are tried in wondrous ways, and in the seemingly unimportant affairs of life, there often lie the most dangerous of the temptations.

Labor, at best, is frequently disagreeable owing either to mental or physical repugnance. When he who seeks the upward path, begins to find it, labor grows more burdensome, while at the time, he is, owing to his physical condition, not so well fitted to struggle with it. This is all true, but there must be no giving in to it. It must be forgotten. He *must work*, and if he cannot have the sort he desires or deems best suited to him, then must he take and perform that which presents itself. It is that which he must needs. It is not intended either, that he do it to have it done. It is intended that he work as if it was the object of his life, as if his whole heart was in it. Perhaps he may be wise enough to know that there is something else, or that the future holds better gifts for him, still this also must to all intents be forgotten, while he takes up his labor, as if there were no to-morrow.

Remember that life is the outcome of the Ever-Living. If you have come to comprehend a little of the mystery of life, and can value its attractions according to their worth; these are no reasons why you should walk forth with solemn countenance to blight the enjoyments of other men. Life to them is as real, as the mystery is to you. Their time will come as yours has, so hasten it for them, if you can by making life brighter, more joyous, better.

If it be your time to fast, put on the best raiment you have, and go forth, not as one who fasts, but as one who lives for life.

Do your sighing and crying within you. If you cannot receive the small events of life and their meanings without crying them out to all the world, think you that you are fitted to be trusted with the mysteries?

The doing away with one or certain articles of diet, *in itself*, will not open the sealed portals. If this contained the key, what wise beings must the beasts of the field be, and what a profound Mystic must Nebuchadnezar have been, after he was "turned out to grass!"

There are some adherents of a faith, which has arisen in the land, who deem it wise to cast away all things that are distasteful to them; to cut asunder the ties of marriage because they deem it will interfere with their spiritual development, or because the other pilgrim is not progressed enough. Brothers, there lives not the man who is wise enough to sit as a judge upon the spiritual development of any living being. He is not only unwise but blasphemous who says to another: "Depart! You impede my exalted spiritual development."

The greatest of all truths lies frequently in plain sight, or veiled in contraries. The impression has gone abroad that the Adept or the Mystic of high degree, has only attained his station by forsaking the association of his fellow creatures or refusing the marriage tie. It is the belief of very wise Teachers that all men who had risen to the highest degrees of Initiation, have at some time passed through the married state. Many men, failing in the trials, have ascribed their failure to being wedded, precisely as that other coward, Adam, after being *the first transgressor* cried out "It was Eve."

One of the most exalted of the Divine Mysteries lies hidden here — therefore, Oh Man, it is wise to cherish that which holds so much of God and seek to know its meaning; not by dissolution and cutting asunder, but by binding and strengthening the ties. Our most Ancient Masters knew of this and Paul also speaks of it. (Ephesians v. 32.)

Be patient, kindly and wise, for perhaps in the next moment of life, the light will shine out upon thy companion, and you discover that you are but a blind man, claiming to see. Remember this, that you own not one thing in this world. Your wife is but a gift, your children are but loaned to you. All else you possess is given to you only while you use it wisely. Your body is not yours, for Nature claims it as her property. Do you not think, Oh Man, that it is the height of arrogance for you to sit in judgment upon any other created thing, while you, a beggar, are going about in a borrowed robe?

If misery, want and sorrow are thy portion for a time, be happy that it is not death. If it is death be happy there is no more of life.

You would have wealth, and tell of the good you would do with it. Truly will you lose your way under these conditions. It is quite probable, that you are as rich as you ever will be, therefore, desire to do good with what you have — and *do it*. If you have nothing, know that it is best and wisest for you. Just so surely as you murmur and complain just so surely will you find that "from him that hath not, shall be taken even that which he hath." This sounds contradictory, but in reality is in most harmonious agreement. Work in life and the Occult are similar; all is the result of your own effort and will. You are not rash enough to believe that you will be lifted up into Heaven like the Prophet of old — but you really hope some one will come along and give you a good shove toward it.

Know then, Disciples, that you only can lift yourselves by your own efforts. When this is done, you may have the knowledge that you will find many to accompany you on your heretofore lonely journey; but neither they or your Teacher will be permitted to push or pull you one step onward.

This is all a very essential part of your preparation and trial for Initiation.

You look and wait for some great and astounding occurrence, to show you that you are going to be permitted to enter behind the veil; that you are to be Initiated. It will never come. He only who studies all things and learns from them, as he finds them, will be permitted to enter, and for him there are no flashing lightnings or rolling thunder. He who enters the door, does so as gently and imperceptibly, as the tide rises in the nighttime.

Live well your life. Seek to realize the meaning of every event. Strive to find the Ever Living and wait for more light. The True Initiate does not fully realize what he is passing through, until his degree is received. If you are striving for light and Initiation, remember this, that your cares will increase, your trials thicken, your family make new demands upon you. He who can understand and pass through these patiently, wisely, placidly — may hope.

The Path

POETICAL OCCULTISM: I — S. B. J.

SOME ROUGH STUDIES OF THE OCCULT LEANINGS OF THE POETS

I.

In the *Bhagavid-Gita* and the *Upanishads* it is held that:

Ishwara, the Lord of all things, dwells in the heart of every mortal being, and from that place causes the illusions of the world to appear to man as reality.

Light on the Path dwells upon the necessity of understanding your own heart: It tells us to seek for the source of evil there, where it lives, as fruitfully in the heart of the devoted disciple as in that of the man of desire, and that your heart is the profoundest mystery of all the great obscurities.

Longfellow felt this when, in *The Beleaguered City*, he sang: —

I have read, in the marvelous heart of man,
That strange and mystic scroll,
That an army of phantoms vast and wan
Beleaguer the human soul.

This verse occurs to him in connection with the old story that the City of Prague was once beleaguered by a vast phantom army, which camped down on the opposite bank of the river, and he likens the human heart to Prague. Here, in the city dwells Ishwara, who, while thus imprisoned, is beleaguered by the vast army — the phantoms of all the acts and thoughts of the person in this and other lives. Occultism declares with the poet, that the heart is a mystic scroll; it is a veritable field also, in which are sown many seeds that may lie unnoticed, not only during one life,

but often for many many incarnations, but sure to blossom forth one day under favoring circumstances. And as they begin to grow, they evoke the phantoms of the deeds that sowed them, and those ghostly hosts sweep round the soul in its prison house.

In *Resignation*, Longfellow wrote: "There is no death! What seems so is transition."

This is one of the propositions of Occultism. The poet was writing upon the death of the physical body of a girl much beloved, and was considering the change which in common life is known as "death." But the followers of the Wisdom Religion know that this terrible change is not really death, is not in any sense the moment of decease of even the physical man. The visible being is a congeries of energies or elements which are by no means all dead when the person breathes his last, nor when the body is consigned to the grave. It is only the transition, as Longfellow says, of the informing spirit, to another sphere of action.

The same view is taken in the *Atharva Veda*, where it says, "Everything is transformed. Life and death are only modes of transformation, which rule the vital molecule from plant up to Brahma himself."

The occult philosophy considers as death, only that process, and period, of separation between *all* the various elements of one's lower human and animal nature; so that, in the case of suicides and other sudden and premature deaths, what occultists know as "death," extends over a long period of time. The moment called death by the world, is only the time of separation between the body and the life principle, which the Hindus call *jiva*; this is the moment when the transition begins.

Goethe was a profound student of occultism. Its influence is to be traced throughout his works, and a leading motive in many of his

dramas is the dominance over the lives of men of that power which we call *Karma*. His masterpiece, *Faust*, upon which a library of commentaries has been written, can only be truly read in the light of Occultism. *Faust* comes to an end with the following "Mystic Chorus" sung by the assembled Hosts of Heaven:

All that's impermanent
Is but a likeness.
The Unattainable
Here findeth witness;
The Indescribable,
Here is it done;
The Ever-womanly
Leadeth us on.

A wealth of occult meaning is packed into these eight closing lines of the grand drama, which is designed to depict the course of the soul from Heaven, through earth, back to Heaven. All that is impermanent, or of the earth, belonging to the realm of matter, is but a likeness, or symbol, designed for the instruction of man, who must learn to read the lesson if he is to progress. The Unattainable in the desires of those on and of the earth finds witness, or comes to pass, in the realization of all aspirations in the life beyond. The indescribable is done there, because man in the flesh has no senses adequate to comprehend those things pertaining to a higher plane of existence. The Ever-womanly is that which makes progress of the soul possible — the feminine principle which attracts the masculine, or pure spirit, to its opposite pole and thereby causes it to manifest itself. It is by these successive manifestations that the individual is carried forward, enriched by the experience which only thus, through the attraction of the Ever-womanly, or eternal feminine principle, is attained. So the Ever-womanly, or that whereby God the spirit is made manifest in matter, is the means to lead the soul of man on

its course through the grandest possibilities of the Universe to the most exalted heights of the Indescribable. Wordsworth, in his *Ode on Immortality*, says:

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's stay,
 Had had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar.
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory, do we come
 From God, who is our home.
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing boy;
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows —
 He sees it in his joy.
The youth, who daily farther from the east
 Must travel, still is nature's priest.
And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended;
At length the man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

It is very clear here that Wordsworth is setting down the theory of "Re-incarnation." For he says the soul had elsewhere its setting; in order to set elsewhere, it must have had elsewhere an existence. He also refers, quite as curiously as do Whitman and Whittier, to a coming from the east, as if he had memories of a previous life in some oriental land where such ideas prevailed.

Shelley in *Prometheus Unbound*, sings:

Man, O not men! a chain of linked thought,
Of love and might to be divided not,

Compelling the elements with adamant stress;
As the sun rules, even with a tyrant's gaze,
The unquiet republic of the maze
Of Planets, struggling fierce towards heaven's free
wilderness.

Man, one harmonious soul of many a soul,
Whose nature is its own divine control,
Where all things flow to all, as rivers to the sea;
Familiar acts are beautiful through love;
Labor and pain and grief, in life's green grove,
Sport like tame beasts, — none knew how gentle they could
be!

In the foregoing verses, the doctrine of Brotherhood is enunciated. Shelly refers to humanity as one, composed of its many units, — the one-life running through all; and also, in the first two lines, to the fact admitted by occultism, but sneered at by science, and dogmatic theology, that this "chain of linked thought," compels the elements, and actually affects the course and destiny of the world. That is, that the Karma of the physical world, indissolubly bound up in that of the individuals upon it, is moulded and concentrated by the force of men's thoughts and lives. To carry this out in one direction, we say that esoteric theosophy teaches that the inclination of the earth's axis is made greater or less by the influence of the wickedness or goodness of the people upon the earth, thus bringing down what the people call evils, such as glacial disturbances, cyclones, earthquakes and other vicissitudes of earthly life. However fanciful this theory may appear, it remains for us quite true; and as the scientific world has no reason to give for the inclination of the axis, or for the precession of the equinoxes, we are entitled to hold an opinion where they have none. For the devout Christian this theory ought to have merits, if he chooses to remember that

Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed for their wickedness. They grew so horribly bad that fire was brought upon them either from heaven or beneath. If it ever happened, it must have been a cyclic disturbance. Science pooh-poohs it. Did it take place, then it was the culminating point for the dynamic power of the evil deeds and thoughts of the inhabitants.

In many places in the Christian bible, reference is made to the crying out to the Lord of the blood of the slain. Now as blood has no power to cry out, we must try in some way to make sense of these expressions, and the only way is by giving to the thoughts which produce deeds of violence, a dynamic power. It would then be easy to attribute to the blood the ability to cry out for justice, instead of saying that the deeds of blood require compensation.

But when blood is shed, elemental spirits pour in to the spot, drawn there by the emanations arising from it, and they become important factors in this supposed "calling out of the blood from the ground." Being strengthened by the human exhalations, they are a new force composed not only of the thoughts of the murdered, but also of the despair, hate and revenge of the slain. Science of course of this knows nothing, and cares less. She cannot tell how long this new force, thus compounded of elementals, blood, and the thought of slayer and his victim, will last. But the God of the Christians knew all about this. In Genesis, Ch. iv, Verse 10, He says to Cain:

"What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand."

The blood furnishes the *occasion*, the thoughts of each give it *force*, and the elementals give it a *voice* to call on God.

The Path

THE CORNER STONE — *J. D. Buck*

Tradition relates that in the building of King Solomon's temple there was a stone of such peculiar shape that the workmen could find no place for it, though it was regularly cut and with great care, and contained the *sign* of the Master. When the temple was near completion a place was found for the stone which the builders had through ignorance rejected. It was the *Keystone* of the *Royal Arch*.

Those who have opened the halls of learning to this generation have given a foundation stone, and repeatedly declared that no other foundation can endure, that the floods of time and the storms of passion will surely sweep with the besom of destruction every superstructure not founded on this rock. And yet there are those who wear the garb of fellow-crafts, and claim the wages of workmen, who not only reject this stone but ridicule it, and laugh it to scorn. The result is manifest in the confusion of the workmen, and it will presently become manifest that those who thus reject the cornerstone of Theosophy are brothers of the shadow literally, rather than Sons of Light; they will find no designs on the tracing-board, and they will be accused of murdering the "widow's son."

The time for wages will surely come, and even they who have come in at the ninth hour and labored faithfully in the vineyard will receive due wages.

The corner stone of Theosophy is distinctly stated to be *Universal Brotherhood*. A firm belief in this principle is required of every candidate for membership in the Theosophical Society. This is the sole requirement for affiliation, it is made plain, and no one can plead ignorance of this one requirement. To claim fellowship in

the society, and ignore or repudiate its cardinal doctrine is not only the most pronounced hypocrisy, but works in every way to the injury of the individual and the society. Those therefore who are not ashamed to repudiate this cardinal principle ought in all fairness to retire from the society, and direct their energies into more congenial channels.

But aside from explicit repudiation of this principle of Brotherhood there is too often a tacit disregard of its requirements. It has been charged against the Society, that in the enunciation of this simple doctrine, they have announced nothing new, and it may at once be answered that it is not claimed as a novelty, but an *actuality*. And yet it is too often the case, that the application of this principle of universal brotherhood reaches no further than to the admission to membership in the T. S. of persons of either sex, and of every creed, color, and nationality, while in the relations of members and the necessary work of the society, the principle of brotherhood is too often practically ignored. It may therefore be profitable to inquire into the reasons assigned by the Masters for giving out to the world at this time their priceless treasures, and the purpose for which the Theosophical Society was instituted, though these purposes have been time and again stated, in plain English, and are printed in the rules and by-laws of the society, as well as in every application for membership. The misinterpretation of these plain declarations leads to constant disappointment, and hinders the legitimate work of the Society.

We have been repeatedly told that the Masters are no respecters of persons. They have on every occasion persistently and consistently refused to teach occultism to individuals. They have stated over and over again the terms on which anyone can gain their notice, or hope to advance in spiritual knowledge or power, viz: by working unselfishly and unceasingly for the advancement

of the Brotherhood of man. This is the plan on which the masters work. Whatsoever they have given out has been designed for the elevation and well-being of the *whole human race*.

They have chosen such agents or assistants as were available for the promulgation of their doctrines, and they have distinctly stated, that not for this generation alone, but more especially for the coming Yuga, do they labor, like wise husbandmen, sowing now the seed for future harvests.

The meaning of Universal Brotherhood, and the mission of the Theosophical Society become thus perfectly plain, and we can misinterpret only at our peril. The masters have said, work with us, and become a part of us, and sharers with us.

Creeds and sects are innately selfish, dividing mankind into selfish circles of conceited and selfish men. Creeds are crumbling; replace them with universal benevolence, toleration, charity, justice — in one word, BROTHERHOOD. He, therefore, who repudiates brotherhood, denies all. He who forgets charity, kindness, forbearance, forgiveness, has no right to call himself a Theosophist. We should have charity for everything but for uncharitableness. Let those who will in the face of all this, strive for occult power. Let them in spite of constant warning force, if they can, themselves into the astral plane, to be driven back in everlasting terror by the "Demon of the Threshold," or end their days in an Asylum for the Insane, but let them look for no assistance or protection from the Masters.

Pure and undefiled Theosophy leads man only to higher planes of thought and life. It puts him in possession of the true philosopher's stone, by enabling him to convert the energies of life, into higher uses, for the welfare and elevation of his race. It teaches him neglect of no common duty or obligation, and it nowhere holds out the inducement that a Mahatma can be

evolved by some secret hocus-pocus out of a mountebank. The mountebanks will presently denounce Mahatmas and repudiate theosophy, but they will prove as powerless to stay the tide of truth as to achieve mahatmahood. They may deceive the foolish and unwary, and console themselves with the company of Coloumb, Hodgson & Co., but those who have accepted in deed and in truth the simple doctrine of universal brotherhood *with all that it implies*, will possess their souls in patience and perfect trust, for they have heard the music of BATH COL.

The Path

THE SOCIETY OF THE ROSICRUCIANS

A ROUGH SKETCH OF THEIR FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES.

The following are in outline the fundamental doctrines of the Brothers of the Rosy Cross. He who fulfills the required conditions, may find all necessary information in the "Book of Initiation," and they say that when he is ready he finds with ease, a guide who, through his *higher self* instructs and directs him infallibly.

It is understood that the Society desires to be truly spiritual and asks no fees, but it seeks as members only those who are practical workers in the cause of humanity. But it is a secret body, not from fear of enemies, but in order to spread the truth, unimpeded by the war of opinions. The truth being eternal, is not subject to opinion, but to those who are able to see, it stands revealed in its own light.

1. The *Universe* as a whole is a *Unity*, having only *one*, eternal, universal and fundamental cause for its existence. All the multifarious forms, essences, powers or principles, are not originally self-existent, but are merely various manifestations of that one and universal cause. They are various modes of one original activity, and their shapes or organisms are the products of that activity, working upon different planes of existence and in various stages of evolution.

2. This cause, being eternal, unlimited and infinite, is beyond the power of the intellectual comprehension of any mortal and limited being. Its presence may be perceived everywhere, but in its highest aspect it can fully be known only to itself. Beings lower than itself, may intuitively feel its presence, but cannot

intellectually know it, until they have risen up to its own level on the plane of existence. To avoid circumlocution, we call that eternal (spiritual) principle in its highest aspect "*God*" or "*Brahm*"; both words signifying originally "Good." (1)

3. In this eternal and universal cause, the center or fountain of *All*, is contained potentially everything existing in the Universe. It is itself, germinally or in a more or less developed state contained in everything that exists, It forms the (spiritual) center of every living organism, and life itself is only a mode of manifestation of its own power. It is the cause and the architect of every form; it builds the form which it in habits, from that center, by the power of its own (consciously or unconsciously active) *will* and *thought*, and by the means offered by eternal nature, the latter being itself a product of previous states of its own existence and eternal action.

4. The highest form of activity of this principle requires for its perfect expression, perfect means. The perfect cannot manifest its perfection in an imperfect organism. The place which a being occupies on the ladder of evolution, depends on the progress which that divine principle, acting in the center of each being, has made in evolving an organism, adapted to its manifestation.

5. The most perfect organism for the manifestation of the divine and universal principle in its highest aspect, of which we know, is the (spiritual) organism of Man. In this organism, this divine principle, after having attained *sensation* and *consciousness* in the lower forms of nature, may acquire (spiritual) *self-consciousness* and *self-knowledge*, evolving what is called the individual *mind*, with all its powers and faculties, for (spiritual) perception and *real knowledge* or wisdom.

6. The (ordinarily) visible so called physical body of man is not the *real* Man, but merely a more or less imperfect representation

of the real, or "inner man," whose sphere of activity may extend as far as the sphere of his mind; in other words — as far as the power of his (spiritual) perception. The "inner man" is a reality, which after having attained — by the power of self differentiation — an individual existence, will retain its individuality, after the physical forms, which it has occupied for the purposes of evolution during its life upon a planet, have been disintegrated and changed into other forms.

7. Every being continues to exist in its essence after the (physical) form which expressed its essential character, has dissolved and disappeared; but as long as it has not acquired (spiritual) self-consciousness and self-knowledge, it is forced, after a time of rest, to reappear in a new form (mask or personality), to resume the process of its further development. (2) After the divine principle in man has attained individual (spiritual) self-consciousness and self-knowledge, it requires no more embodiments in (physical) forms, and may, harmoniously united with the *All*, continue to exist as a self-conscious intelligence.

8. The attainment of spiritual self-consciousness and self-knowledge and the necessarily resulting perfection, therefore involves the attainment of immortality, and the latter can only be acquired by acquiring the former. Only that which is perfect remains; the imperfect is continually subject to change.

9. Although the individual human monad, without (spiritual) self-consciousness and knowledge, may arrive at that state of perfection in the slow course of its evolution, extending perhaps over many millions of years, nevertheless there is no necessity to wait until nature may, perhaps slowly and unaided, accomplish her object, but she may be assisted by the individual will and effort of those who know how to proceed.

10. The *first* necessary requirement for all who desire perfection,

is therefore *to know* the laws that rule in the visible and invisible universe, and the attainment of the knowledge involves a study of the constitution of the *Universe* and of the constitution of (the soul of) *Man*.

11. From knowledge springs power, but those who possess knowledge, will be in the possession of something that will not benefit them, unless they desire to put it to some practical use. The *second* requirement is therefore *to will*, and as an individual will, deviating from the direction of the will of universal good, or acting in opposition to the latter, is evil, and can only bring final destruction upon him that exercises it, consequently the will of the individual must act in accordance with the universal will of God.

12. To act evil is for the majority of men far easier than to do good. Good will and desires to become useful must be made to accomplish some work. To overcome the resistance of evil and to put good into practice requires energy, courage and effort, and the *third* necessary requirement is therefore *to dare* to practice the good which we know and desire.

13. But as a power, after it has once been obtained, may be employed for good or for evil purposes, and as it is not desirable that persons with evil inclinations and tendencies, should be taught the way to prolong their personal existence after the dissolution of their physical form, because their existence would cause the infliction of injury upon others, and expose themselves to a long, slow and painful final disintegration; therefore, the deepest secrets of the Rosicrucians, and the way to the practical application of the secret knowledge, should be taught only to those who are good and pure to a degree sufficient to warrant that the mysteries communicated and revealed to them, may not be misapplied. The *fourth* necessary requirement for the

Rosicrucian is, therefore, *to be silent*, in regard to that which it is not expedient to speak.

FOOTNOTES:

1. These words are continually giving rise to misunderstandings and misinterpretations, because nearly every one has a different opinion of what is "Good." ([return to text](#))
2. See Bhagavad-Gita, c. 6. ([return to text](#))

The Path

HINDU SYMBOLISM: I — *Isaac Myer*



The student of Hindu metaphysical religious philosophy, will find most of its important formulations, veiled under a mystical symbolism; to understand which, is a key to the hints in the Upanishads and other esoteric writings.

We propose to give those interested, a series of illustrations from Hindu drawings with descriptions; in the latter, our study of the Kabbalah has been of great assistance.

The figure is a symbolical representation of Brahman (neuter) intertwined in Itself. (1) It is the highest deity of the Hindus, the principle of the universe; the representation is, of It, at the immediate instant of Its revealing Itself in the emanation of the universe, and before Its entrance into any kind of matter and before Its self renunciation. It symbolises the God — dawn between the pauses of emanative creation, its preservation, and the dissolution of created forms. Wrapped in Its cloak-sphere, Brahman conducts Its toe into Its mouth, perhaps to make, an eternal circle of Itself, perhaps to signify the union of the *linga* and *yoni*, perhaps to indicate the retrogression of Itself into Itself,

or may be the eternity and unfathomableness of Its nature, plunged in the contemplation of Its own essence. Compare with this the great figure of Neith or Typhe, the Heaven goddess of the Egyptian Zodiac of Dendera. Brahman (neuter) or Para-brahma, i.e. the Great Brahma, as an unrevealed deity, has neither temple or image in India. It is in effect considered in Itself without form or figure, but exteriorly It manifests Itself in many figures and symbols. It is the unit and the multiplied in all, at the same instant, smaller than an atom, it is greater than the whole universe, which cannot contain it, and is ineffable and inexpressible in Its essence. The ancient Hindus say of it in the Vedas: — "Brahman is eternal, the being above all others, revealing Itself in felicity and joy. The universe is Its name, Its image, but that first existence, which contains all in Itself, is the soul really existing. All the phenomena have their cause in Brahman, It is not limited by time or space, is imperishable, is the soul of the world and of each particular existence." * * * "That universe is Brahman, it comes from Brahman, exists in Brahman, and it will return to Brahman."

"Brahman, the Being existing in Itself, is the form of all wisdom and of all the worlds without end. All the worlds are made only one with It, because they are through Its Will. That eternal Will is innate in all things. It reveals Itself in the emanation (or creation), in the preservation, and in the destruction (which is also a re-creation), and in the movements and forms, of Time and Space." The Atharva-Veda says: — "All the gods are in (Brahman) as cows in a cow-house. In the beginning Brahman was this (universe). It created gods. Having created gods, It placed them in these worlds, viz: Agni in this world, Vayu in the atmosphere, and Surya in the sky. (2) And in the worlds which are yet higher, It placed the gods which are still higher. Then Brahman proceeded to the higher sphere." This is explained by a commentator to be Satyaloka, (3)

the most excellent limit of all the worlds. In the "Taittiriya Brahmana" it is; "Brahman generated the gods, Brahman (generated or emanated) this entire world. Within It are all these worlds. Within It is the entire universe. It is Brahman who is the greatest of beings. Who can vie with It." Brahman (neuter) is the only real eternal true essence; when It passes in to actual manifested existence It is called Brahma; when It develops Itself in the universe It is called Vishnu, and when It again dissolves Itself into simple being, It is called Siva; all the other deities are only symbols or manifestations of the eternal neuter Brahman. (4)

The Vishnu Purana says: "Glory to Brahman, who is addressed by that mystic word AUM, (5) who is associated eternally with the triple universe (heaven, sky, earth), and who is one with the four Vedas. Glory to Brahman, who both in the destruction and renovation of the universe is called the great and mysterious cause of the intellectual principle, who is without limit in time or space, and exempt from diminution and decay, etc. To that supreme Brahman be for ever adoration."

In its highest development, the doctrine of the Vedas is a rational and philosophical pantheism, combined with the most ideal, pure, and absolute monotheism, that the mind can conceive. The doctrines as to Brahman (neuter) in their higher conceptions, are similar in many respects to the exalted ideas as to the Ain Soph or Non Ego, of the Kabbalah.

Brahman, the Eternal, in Itself, Being, goes out of Its profundity in Its eternity, to emanate the universe of all the things, and undeniably establishes that great law of production, through the opposition and yet a harmonious blending, as to which, all nature offers everywhere a similitude, evidence, and image. Its first emanation is the creating energy, force or potentiality, which

manifests Itself in Time, the mother and the matrix of the existences, that is the Sakti, Para Sakti or Maya, the first virgin and first female or plasticity, containing all in germ, symbolized by the Yoni. Its spouse, the spiritualizing, the man-type, is symbolized by the Lingam.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Taken from the *Glauben, Wissen und Kunst der alten Hindus*, etc., von Niklas Muller, Erster Band, Mainz, 1822. ([return to text](#))
 2. Fire, Aether, Light. ([return to text](#))
 3. *Satya-Loka*, the place, world, or region of Truth. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))
 4. See *Indian Wisdom* by Monier Williams, p. 12 ([return to text](#))
 5. This occurs at the beginning of prayers, etc., as our word AMeN occurs at the end. It is so sacred that none must hear it pronounced. Originally its three letters typified the three Vedas, afterwards it became a mystical symbol of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva in unity; See further as to AUM *supra*. ([return to text](#))
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The Path

THE COMMON SENSE OF THEOSOPHY — *Mohini M. Chatterji*

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It is difficult to break down the Chinese wall of misconceptions with which all new movements of thought become more or less completely surrounded. The assimilation by the public mind of ideas which lie outside its mechanically-regulated every-day life is a slow process, which the vigour of the constitution does not justify. For all movements, which possess any vitality at all, always provoke to an unusual degree of activity the imaginative faculties of their opponents. More or less fantastic caricatures of the aims and methods of a struggling movement are generated by an unconscious process of invention, fathered upon the movement, and then knocked down with solemn pomposity. At the end of the achievement, when the invader of orthodox indolence and respectable indifference is found to gain ground in the midst of the dust-storm of misrepresentations, a wondering sneer is directed against personalities who have not had the decency and good sense to die at the command of their antagonists. The Theosophical movement has proved no exception to this general rule. Oppositions against it are generally but attempts to remove this disturber of established ease by finding some excuse for ignoring its existence. False issues are raised in every direction, and a candid examination of the truths that Theosophy embodies is evaded in the confusion. It is a profitless task to hunt the brood of Error which, like the giants of Norse folk-lore, sally forth at night to slay and devour, but melt into thin air when surprised by a ray of sunlight. Kicking at nothing is an exhausting process. Unmindful of this, many, in the words of the author of *Religio Medici*, have "rashly charged the

troops of Error, and remained as trophies unto the enemies." It is therefore proposed to set forth a "plain, unvarnished" statement of what Theosophy really is, and of the work in which the Theosophical Society is engaged, and leave the decision to the common sense of the reader. The transcendental metaphysics of Theosophy will be but slightly touched upon here. For fuller information the inquirer is referred to sources indicated by the publications of the Theosophical Society and the writings of the Theosophists of the day.

What, then, is Theosophy? Numberless are the misconceptions to which the word has given rise. Etymology does not throw any great light on it. The interpretation of "God-wisdom" can be spread over a very large area. Without following the history of the word, it may be stated that the chief exponents of the present revival of Theosophy take it to mean Wisdom-religion. Their interpretation, while open to no great philological objection, is sufficiently precise for all literary purposes. Theosophy from this standpoint is synonymous with Truth — the Truth that has been clothed in various garbs of religion; it also implies that this Truth is attainable by a natural development of wisdom, without the intervention of supernatural means. Thus it will be seen that Theosophy does not attach infallibility to any particular system of revelation, but maintains that under suitable conditions Truth reveals itself to every individual. The sun shines equally on all; the crystal reflects it; the clod of earth does not. Yet Theosophy sets great value on all systems of revelation, looking upon them as finger-posts which indicate the direction in which Truth is to be sought, although it declines to accept them as invitations to surrender personal inquiry. This tenet of Theosophy is founded upon the consideration that Truth is the result of real experience, and does not consist in the transfer of intellectual symbols from one person to another. To speak about Truth is one thing, and to

perceive it is quite another. It is a fact of common experience that the most accurate and elaborate description of, say, a flower is by no means an efficient substitute for a visual contact with it, although the description has an abundant value of its own. Hence individual consciousness is consistently upheld as the only criterion of Truth, but this consciousness derives material help in its development and expansion by the study of the experiences of others. Thus Theosophy teaches that *personal exertion is the only means by which progress can be achieved*. But in the effort for growth the ultimate unity of consciousness must not be ignored. Individuals are not distinct crystals, placed side by side, but the varied manifestations of one unchanging universal consciousness. As light from one single source produces the appearance of different lights by reflection from a number of surfaces, so this universal consciousness, remaining itself unchanged, produces endless individualities, which in the course of their evolution reach perfection by recognising this essential unity. According to Theosophical thinkers this doctrine forms the fundamental truth upon which all religions are based; it is the final consummation of all philosophical thought and the crowning experience of all practical mysticism.

The search for this truth, and the practical realization of it are not considered as mere gratification of intellectual curiosity, but as the very *summum bonum* of evolutionary progress. It is the Nirvana of the Buddhists, the Moksha of the Brahmins, and not very different from the Beatific Vision of the Christians. When this condition, or rather want of condition, is realized in consciousness, pain is forever extinguished. Nirvana is by no means the annihilation of consciousness, but its rest in the infinite plenitude of being. Needless to discuss the Nihilist view of Buddhism which some scholars of ability have brought forward; suffice it to say, that the Theosophists on this point share the

responsibility of their opinion with many names of great eminence. Nirvana is the extinction of all pain because, being the ultimate unity of all being, it cannot be the playground of those contending forces which alone produce pain.

Proceeding upon this basis, the essential features of Theosophy can be thrown into relief by determining its relations to Religion and Science. As the Science of Religion, it looks upon the different systems of faith as so many languages seeking to express the truth about man, his origin, nature, and destiny, as well as his relations to the surrounding world of objects. But, as a word or phrase is nothing but a sound in the absence of experience of the object connoted, so the proper comprehension of religious symbology can be acquired only by realizing the truths that underlie it. From the Theosophic standpoint the different systems of religion appear as like various forms evolved by the peculiarities of time, place, and other special causes, to embody the bodiless truth.

It is necessary to guard against a misconception which may arise here. Theosophy is not eclecticism, which is a mosaic, while Wisdom-Religion is an organic whole. Theosophy is like an abstract mathematical formula of which each religion is a particular application. It does not select bits from all religions and piece them together according to some fanciful standard of symmetry. But being the inner truth itself, Theosophy regards religions as various descriptions of that truth. It will no more recognise antagonism between religions than the linguist will condemn the description of the same thing in different languages because of peculiarities of idiom and grammar. Theosophy is not hostile to any religion, but is bound, in the interest of truth, to oppose the tyranny of ecclesiastical forms on individuals. Humanity, in the course of its evolution, produces individuals who outstrip the generality in the realization of truth, and are thus enabled to perceive the capabilities of the truth to be

manifested within a certain period of time. To help the masses struggling blindly for the light of truth, these teachers of mankind construct a symbology of words and emblems to represent the truth. But, as acquisition of wisdom is a change in the quality of the consciousness of the acquirer, and not merely a surface expansion of it, the symbology, though eminently useful, is not in itself spiritual knowledge, and can never be converted into it except when "inwardly digested." The physical process of digestion supplies a striking analogy in this matter. Food, assimilated by different organisms, follows their original differences. Spiritual food, on assimilation, partakes of the peculiarities of the individual, and two individuals cannot be exactly identical, whether physically or otherwise. A contrary supposition would violate the *lex parsimoniae*, in nature. Consequently, Theosophy is the uncompromising supporter of the freedom of individual conscience. On the other hand, it condemns a selfish desire for self-development as wrong, on account of its violation of the essential unity of being. One of the greatest Theosophists of the world, Gautama Buddha, declared, "Let the sins of the Kali Yuga (1) fall upon me, and let the world be redeemed." This noble saying found an echo in the Christian Apostle, who would be anathema from Christ if he could save the world thereby.

Nor has Theosophy any antagonism to the scientific spirit. Claiming to be the religion of Truth, it must show itself to be the most exact of all exact sciences. According to it truth cannot be dissociated from real experience; the mere intellectual form of it can never be the truth any more than the word man can be the human being. It opposes the dogmatisms of science which deny independent reality to facts of mental experience because of their eminently unscientific character. If there be no operation of thought matter itself will disappear. The contrary of this —

existence of matter without relation to a conscious knower — has never been experienced. Therefore matter and consciousness are both eternal or neither. Further, it rejects the mechanical theory of the universe on account of its unreasonableness. If consciousness is derivable from unconsciousness, a fundamental law of reason becomes stultified. Unconsciousness is the negation of consciousness, and therefore an affirmation of the absence of all relations to consciousness is its essential property. How, then, can it be related to consciousness so as to produce it? If the atoms themselves are considered conscious the difficulty is not removed. For consciousness must be associated with the notion of I, and if this egoism is to be postulated for each atom it is inexplicable how a man, composed of myriads of atoms, possesses yet a single indivisible notion of I. It is clear therefore that there is in nature a principle of consciousness whose units are not atoms but individualities, and as the principle is eternal its units must also be so. For the ocean cannot be salt unless the quality of saltiness inhered in every one of its drops. Theosophy for these, among other reasons, holds against materialism that the individuality in man is immortal. In this, however, it does not maintain that the present body, emotion or thought of a man will as such abide forever, but that the unit of consciousness which is now manifested as the man, will never undergo any change in essence. For change, independent of consciousness, is unthinkable. It is in fact the unchangeableness of consciousness that by comparison renders the conception of change a reality. In ordinary language no doubt such phrases as the "growth and development of consciousness" are in use, but strictly speaking it is the basis in which the consciousness inheres that changes, the phrases in question being of the same character as those which ascribe motion to the sun in relation to the earth. Moreover, if one unit of consciousness were to change in essence, that is, become annihilated, the same liability must attach to all other

units, and we shall be driven to hold that the principle of consciousness in nature is destructible, while matter which cannot exist in its absence is indestructible. From the indestructibility of individual consciousness, and its relations to matter, two important deductions follow. First, that this relation, which is perpetually changing, changes according to a definite law. The products of the change are bound each to each in a definite way. What is now is not wholly unrelated to what was before. This is a matter of experience, and in fact experience is based upon it. Without the law of causation experience would be impossible, on whatever plane we take experience — mental or physical. Thus by the application of the law of causation to our being, it follows that the experience of pleasure and pain in the present must be the necessary consequence of causes generated in the past. A contention may here be raised that it is a fact of experience that many sufferings and enjoyments come to us of which we are not conscious of having generated the causes. But it is without any real force. What connection is there between *our* consciousness of a cause and its power to produce effect? If we receive in the system malarious germs, the disease is not prevented because we were unconscious of the reception. Whatever you sow the same you reap, whether you are conscious of the sowing or not. The law of causation, thus applied to personal experience of suffering and enjoyment, is called by the Brahmins and Buddhists the Law of Karma.

The second deduction hinges on to the first and forms with it a harmonious whole. If the individual consciousness is immortal, and its experiences are governed by the Law of Karma, then it follows that so long as all causes, capable of producing effects on the present plane of life, are not exhausted, and the generation of similar causes is not stopped, the individual consciousness will remain connected with the experience of earthly-existence. Thus

the ego successively incarnates itself on this earth until it has collected all experiences that life on this planet can offer. The doctrine of reincarnation is taught by all religions of the world, Christianity not excepted. In the Gospel of St. Matthew it is declared in no uncertain tone that John the Baptist was the incarnation of Elias (chap xvii. 12, 13). It is not intended fully to discuss the scientific and metaphysical bases of the doctrine of reincarnation, as the subject has been adequately dealt with in a recent Theosophical publication. (2) But it will not be out of place to consider the ethical objection which is so frequently brought forward against the doctrine. Is it just that a person should experience pleasure or pain for acts done in a previous life of which no recollection is preserved? The argument thus implied is based upon the confusion of the two different meanings of the word justice as applied to the regulation of human affairs, and to the operation of natural laws. Human beings are admittedly imperfect in knowledge, and it is required for the well-being of society that all its members should feel confident that they are not liable to arbitrary punishment. For this reason it is necessary that before inflicting punishment the grounds for it should be disclosed. But justice, as affecting the operation of natural laws, is a totally different thing. The workings of nature being invariably governed by the law of Causation are not amenable to conditions which depend upon admitted inability to apply that law without failure. The moral amelioration, which it is fancied that a knowledge of the precise cause of our sufferings would produce, is more than compensated for by the numberless incentives to good, which gratitude and other similar motives supply.

The teachings of Theosophy from the standpoint of common sense can be briefly summed up thus: —

1. That there is a principle of consciousness in man which is immortal.

2. That this principle is manifested in successive incarnations on earth.
3. That the experiences of the different incarnations are strictly governed by the law of causation.
4. That as each individual man is the result of a distinct causal necessity in nature, it is not wise for one man to dominate the life and action of another, no matter what their relative development may be. On the other hand it is of paramount importance that each individual should ceaselessly work for the attainment of the highest ideal that he is capable of conceiving. Otherwise, pain will arise from the opposition of the real and the ideal. Be as perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect.
5. That for the above reasons it is wise and just to practise the most ungrudging toleration towards all our fellow-creatures.
6. That as absolute unity of all nature subsists forever, all self-centred actions are bound to end in pain to the actor on account of their opposition to this fact. The foundation of morals must therefore lie in the feeling of Universal Brotherhood of Man.
7. That the harmony of the unit with the whole is the only condition which can remove all pain, and as each individual represents a distinct causal operation of nature, this harmony is attainable only through the individual's own exertions.

The Theosophical Society is an organization having for its object the study of truth upon the most unsectarian basis, and as a result of such study it believes that the truths enumerated above are, if generally accepted, calculated greatly to benefit the age. It is necessary, however, to add that there are many members in the Society, earnest in the pursuit of truth, who are not prepared to subscribe to all these doctrines without further thought and

study; but all are agreed as to the ethical principles involved therein. The chief aim of the Theosophical Society is "to form the nucleus of a universal Brotherhood of mankind without distinction of race, color or creed." The basis of brotherhood, which the Theosophical Society considers scientific has already been adverted to. The Theosophic brotherhood does not limit the freedom of individual development. It requires nothing from its members but a desire to recognise the unity of the human family as a natural fact which cannot be ignored with impunity, and a living conscious feeling of which is sure to lead to the highest development of the individual.

The Theosophical Society is convinced that the most efficacious means for the study of truth is furnished by the ancient religious and philosophical systems of the world, as they are free from the disturbing influences by which contemporary forms are surrounded. The Society therefore earnestly labours to promote an appreciative study of Eastern philosophy, built up by generations of Theosophists, as affording easy access to the Wisdom-Religion of the world.

Further, the Society seeks to combat materialism by the investigation of abnormal phenomena which afford a practical demonstration of the existence of a Psyche in man and to lead to a proper comprehension of the laws which underlie those phenomena. Theosophists do not believe in supernaturalism, and discard the notion of miracles as involving an unreasonable limitation of the possibilities of nature. The views of the leading Theosophists with regard to this subject are to be found very ably expounded in Madame Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled*, and Mr. Sinnett's *Esoteric Buddhism*. All Theosophists, whether in perfect agreement with these views or not, look upon them as opening immense vistas of thought on subjects which are as important as they are neglected.

In conclusion, it is to be clearly stated that the Theosophical Society is composed of a body of earnest students and inquirers, and not of dogmatic teachers. But naturally a large number of members hold convictions in common on many points. Yet in each case the final authority comes from no external source but from within.

"There is no religion higher than Truth," is the motto of the Society.

FOOTNOTES:

1. *I.e.*, The present age of spiritual blindness ([return to text](#))
2. See "Transactions of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society, " No. 5. ([return to text](#))

The Path

THEORIES ABOUT REINCARNATION AND SPIRITS — H. P. Blavatsky

Over and over again the abstruse and mooted question of Rebirth or Reincarnation has crept out during the first ten years of the Theosophical Society's existence. It has been alleged on *prima facie* evidence, that a notable discrepancy was found between statements made in "*Isis Unveiled*" Vol. I, 351-2, and later teachings from the same pen and under the inspiration of the same master. (1)

In *Isis*, it was held, — reincarnation is denied. An occasional return, only of "depraved spirits" is allowed. "Exclusive of that rare and doubtful possibility, *Isis* allows only three cases — abortion, very early death, and idiocy — in which reincarnation on this earth occurs." ("C. C. M." in *Light*, 1882.)

The charge was answered then and there as every one who will turn to the *Theosophist*, 1882, can see for himself. Nevertheless, the answer either failed to satisfy some readers or passed unnoticed. Leaving aside the strangeness of the assertion that *reincarnation* — *i.e.*, the serial and periodical rebirth of *every* individual *monad* from *pralaya* to *pralaya* (2) is denied in the face of the fact that the doctrine is part and parcel and one of the fundamental features of Hinduism and Buddhism, the charge amounted virtually to this: the writer of the present, a professed admirer and student of Hindu philosophy, and as professed a follower of Buddhism years before *Isis* was written, by rejecting reincarnation must necessarily reject KARMA likewise! For the latter is the very *corner-stone* of Esoteric philosophy and Eastern religions: it is the grand and one pillar *on which hangs the whole philosophy of rebirths*, and once the latter is denied, the whole

doctrine of Karma falls into meaningless verbiage.

Nevertheless, the opponents without stopping to think of the evident "discrepancy" between charge and fact, accused a Buddhist by profession of faith of denying reincarnation hence also by implication — Karma. Adverse to wrangling with one who was a friend and undesirous at the time, to enter upon a defence of details and internal evidence — a loss of time indeed, — the writer answered merely with a few sentences. But it now becomes necessary to well define the doctrine. Other critics have taken the same line, and by misunderstanding the passages to that effect in *Isis* they have reached the same rather extraordinary conclusions.

To put an end to such useless controversies, it is proposed to explain the doctrine more clearly.

Although, in view of the later more minute renderings of the esoteric doctrines, it is quite immaterial what may have been written in "*Isis*" — an encyclopedia of occult subjects in which each of these *is hardly sketched* — let it be known at once, that the writer maintains the correctness of every word given out upon the subject in my earlier volumes. What was said in the *Theosophist* of August, 1882, may now be repeated here. The passage quoted from it may be, and is, most likely "incomplete, chaotic, vague, perhaps clumsy, as are many more passages in that work the first literary production of a foreigner who even now can hardly boast of her knowledge of the English language." Nevertheless it is quite correct, so far as that collateral feature of reincarnation is therein concerned.

I will now give extracts from *Isis* and proceed to explain every passage criticised, wherein it was said that "a few *fragments* of this mysterious doctrine of reincarnation *as distinct from* metempsychosis" — would be then presented. Sentences now

explained are in italics.

"Reincarnation *i.e.* the appearance of the same individual, *or rather of his astral monad, twice on the same planet* is not a rule in nature, it is an exception, like the teratological phenomenon of a two-headed infant. It is preceded by a *violation of the laws of harmony of nature*, and happens only when the latter *seeking to restore its disturbed equilibrium, violently throws back into earth-life the astral monad which had been tossed out of the circle of necessity by crime or accident.* Thus in cases of abortion, of infants dying before a certain age, and of congenital and incurable idiocy, nature's original design to produce a perfect human being, has been interrupted. Therefore, while the gross matter of each of these several entities is suffered to disperse itself at death, through the vast realm of being, *the immortal spirit and astral monad of the individual — the latter having been set apart to animate a frame and the former to shed its divine light on the corporeal organization — must try a second time to carry out the purpose of the creative intelligence,* (Vol. I p. 351.)

Here the "astral monad" or body of the deceased personality — say of John or Thomas — is meant. It is that which, in the teachings of the Esoteric philosophy of Hinduism, is known under its name of *bhoot*; in the Greek philosophy is called the *simulacrum* or *umbra*, and in all other philosophies worthy of the name is said, as taught in the former, to disappear after a certain period more or less prolonged in *Kama-loka* — the Limbus of the Roman Catholics, or *Hades* of the Greeks. (3) It is "a violation of the laws of harmony of nature" though it be so decreed by those of *Karma* — every time that the astral monad, or the *simulacrum* of the personality — of John or Thomas — instead of running down to the end of its natural period of time in a body — finds

itself (a) violently thrown out of it by whether early death or accident; or (b) is compelled in consequence of its unfinished task to re-appear, (*i.e. the same astral monad wedded to the same immortal monad*) on earth again, in order to complete the unfinished task. Thus "it must try a second time to carry out the purpose of creative intelligence" or *law*.

If reason has been so far developed as to become active and discriminative there is no (4) (*immediate*) *reincarnation* on this earth, for the three parts of the triune man have been united together, and he is capable of running the race. But when the new being has not passed beyond the condition of Monad, or when, as in the idiot, the trinity has not been completed on earth and therefore cannot be so after death, the immortal spark which illuminates it, has to re-enter on the earthly plane as it was frustrated in its first attempt. Otherwise, the mortal or astral, and the immortal or divine souls, *could not progress in unison and pass onward to the sphere above*. (5) (*Devachan*). Spirit follows a line parallel with that of matter; and the spiritual evolution goes hand in hand with the physical.

The Occult Doctrine teaches that: —

(1) There is no *immediate* reincarnation on Earth for the Monad, as falsely taught by the Reincarnationists Spiritists; nor is there any second incarnation at all for the "*personal*" or *false* Ego — the *perisprit* — save the exceptional cases mentioned. But that (a) there are re-births, or periodical reincarnations for the immortal Ego — ("Ego" during the cycle of re-births, and *non*—Ego, in Nirvana or Moksha when it becomes *impersonal* and *absolute*); for that Ego is the root of every new incarnation, the string on which are threaded, one after the other, the false personalities or illusive bodies called men, in which the Monad-Ego incarnates

itself during the cycle of births; and (b) that such reincarnations take place not before 1,500, 2,000, and even 3,000 years of Devachanic life.

(2) That *Manas* — the seat of *Jiv*, that spark which runs the round of the cycle of birth and rebirths with the Monad, from the beginning to the end of a Manvantara, — is the real *Ego*. That (a) the *Jiv* follows the divine monad that gives it spiritual life and immortality into Devachan, — that therefore, it can neither be reborn before its appointed period, nor reappear on Earth *visibly* or *invisibly* in the *interim*; and (b) that, unless the fruition, the spiritual aroma of the *Manas* — or all these highest aspirations and spiritual qualities and attributes that constitute the higher SELF of man become united to its monad, the latter becomes as *Non* existent; since it is *in esse* "impersonal" and *per se* Ego-less, so to say, and gets its spiritual colouring or flavour of Ego-tism only from each *Manas* during incarnation and after it is disembodied, and separated from all its lower principles.

(3) That the remaining four principles, or rather the — $\frac{1}{2}$ — as they are composed of the terrestrial portion of *Manas* of its Vehicle *Kama-Rupa* and *Lingha Sarira*, — the body dissolving immediately, and *prana* or the life principle along with it, — that these principles having belonged to the *false* personality are unfit for Devachan. The latter is the state of Bliss, the reward for all the undeserved miseries of life, (6) and that which prompted man to sin, namely his terrestrial passionate nature can have no room in it.

Therefore the non-reincarnating principles are left behind in *Kama-loka*, firstly as a material residue, then later on as a reflection on the mirror of Astral light. Endowed with *illusive* action, to the day when having gradually faded out they disappear, what is it but the Greek *Eidolon* and the *simulacrum* of

the Greek and Latin poets and classics?

"What reward or punishment can there be in that sphere of disembodied human entities for a *foetus* or a human embryo which had not even time to breathe on this earth, still less an opportunity to exercise the divine faculties of its spirit? Or, for an irresponsible infant, whose senseless monad remaining dormant within the astral and physical casket, could as little prevent him from burning himself as any other person to death? Or again for one idiotic from birth, the number of whose cerebral circumvolutions is only from twenty to thirty per cent, of those of sane persons, and who therefore is irresponsible for either his disposition, acts, or for the imperfections of his vagrant, half-developed intellect." (*Isis*, vol. I, p. 352.)

These are then, the "exceptions" spoken of in *Isis*, and the doctrine is maintained now as it was then. Moreover, there is no "discrepancy" but only *incompleteness* — hence, misconceptions arising from later teachings. Then again, there are several important mistakes in *Isis* which, as the plates of the work had been *stereotyped* were not corrected in subsequent editions.

One of such is on page 346, and another in connection with it and as a sequence on page 347.

The discrepancy between the first portion of the statement and the last, ought to have suggested the idea of an evident mistake. It is addressed to the spiritists, *reincarnationists* who take the more than ambiguous words of Apuleius as a passage that corroborates their claims for their "spirits" and reincarnation. Let the reader judge (7) whether Apuleius does not justify rather *our* assertions. We are charged with denying reincarnation and this is what we said there and then in *Isis*!

"The *philosophy* teaches that nature *never leaves her work unfinished; if baffled at the first attempt, she tries again.*

When she evolves a human embryo, the intention is that a man shall be perfected — physically, intellectually, and spiritually. His body is to grow, mature, wear out, and die; his mind unfold, ripen, and be harmoniously balanced: his divine spirit illuminate and blend easily with the inner man. So human being completes its grand cycle, or the "circle of necessity," until all these are accomplished. As the laggards in a race struggle and plod in their first quarter while the victor darts past the goal, so, in the race of immortality, some souls outspeed all the rest and reach the end, while their myriad competitors are toiling under the load of matter, close to the starting point. Some unfortunates fail out entirely and lose all chance of the prize: some retrace their steps and begin again."

Clear enough this, one should say. Nature baffled *tries again*. No one can pass out of this world, (our earth) without becoming perfected "*physically, morally and spiritually.*" How can this be done, unless there *is a series of rebirths* required for the necessary perfection in each department — to evolve in the "circle of necessity," can surely never be found in one human life? and yet this sentence is followed without any break by the following parenthetical statement: "This is what the Hindu dreads above all things — *transmigration and reincarnation*; only on other and inferior planets, never on this one!!!"

The last "sentence" is a fatal mistake and one to which the writer pleads "*not guilty.*" It is evidently the blunder of some "reader" who had no idea of Hindu philosophy and who was led into a subsequent mistake on the next page, wherein the unfortunate word "planet" is put for cycle. "*Isis*" was hardly, if ever, looked into after its publication by its writer, who had other work to do;

otherwise there would have been an apology and a page pointing to the *errata* and the sentence made to run: "The Hindu dreads transmigration in other *inferior* forms, on this planet."

This would have dove-tailed with the preceding sentence, and would show a fact, as the Hindu *exoteric* views allow him to believe and fear the possibility of reincarnation — human and animal in turn by jumps, from man to beast and even a plant — and *vice versa*; whereas *esoteric* philosophy teaches that nature never proceeding backward in her evolutionary progress, once that man has evolved from every kind of lower forms — the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms — into the human form, he can never become an animal except morally, hence— *metaphorically*. Human incarnation is a cyclic necessity, and law; and no Hindu dreads it — however much he may deplore the necessity. And this law and the periodical recurrence of man's rebirth is shown on the same page (346) and in the same unbroken paragraph, where it is closed by saying that:

"But there is a way to avoid it. Buddha taught it in his doctrine of poverty, restriction of the senses, perfect indifference to the objects of this earthly vale of tears, freedom from passion, and frequent intercommunication with the Atma — soul-contemplation. *The cause of reincarnation is ignorance of our senses, and the idea that there is any reality in the world, anything except abstract existence.* (8) From the organs of sense comes the "hallucination" we call contact; "from contact, desire; from desire, sensation (which also is a deception of our body,) from sensation, the cleaving to existing bodies; from this cleaving, reproduction; and from reproduction, disease, decay, and death."

This ought to settle the question and show there must have been

some carelessly unnoticed mistake and if this is not sufficient, there is something else to demonstrate it, for it is further on:

"Thus, like the revolutions of a wheel, *there is a regular succession of death and birth*, the moral cause of which is the cleaving to existing objects, while the instrumental cause is *Karma* (the power which controls the universe, prompting it to activity, merit and demerit). It is therefore, the great desire of all beings who would lie released *from the sorrows of successive birth*, to seek the destruction of the moral cause the cleaving to existing objects, or evil desire."

"They in whom evil desire is entirely destroyed are called *Arhats*. Freedom from evil desire insures the possession of a *miraculous* power. At his death, the Arhat is never reincarnated; he invariably attains nirvana — a word, by the by, falsely interpreted by the Christian scholar and skeptical commentators. Nirvana is the world of *cause*, in which all deceptive effects or delusions of our senses disappear. Nirvana is the highest attainable sphere. The *pitris* (the pre-Adamic spirits) are considered as reincarnated by the Buddhistic philosopher, though in a degree far superior to that of the man of earth. Do they not die in their turn? Do not their astral bodies suffer and rejoice, and feel the same curse of illusionary feelings as when embodied?"

And just after this we are again made to say of Buddha and his Doctrine of "Merit and Demerit," or Karma:

"But this *former life* believed in by the Buddhists, is not a life on *this planet* for, more than any other people, the Buddhistical philosopher appreciated the great doctrine of cycles."

Correct "life on this planet" by "*life in the same cycle*" and you will have the correct reading: for what would have appreciation of "the great doctrine of cycles" to do with Buddha's philosophy, had the great sage believed but in one short life on this Earth and in the same cycle. But to return to the real theory of reincarnation as in the esoteric teaching and its unlucky rendering in *Isis*.

Thus, what was really meant therein, was that, the principle which *does not reincarnate* — save the exceptions pointed out — is the *false* personality, the illusive human Entity defined and individualized during this short life of ours, under some specific form and name; but that which *does* and has to reincarnate *nolens volens* under the unflinching, stern rule of Karmic law — is the real EGO. This confusing of the real immortal Ego in man, with the false and ephemeral *personalities* it inhabits during its Manvantaric progress, lies at the root of every such misunderstanding. Now what is the one, and what is the other? The first group is —

1. The immortal Spirit — sexless, formless (arupa) an emanation from the One universal BREATH.
2. Its Vehicle — *the divine* Soul — called the "Immortal Ego," the "Divine monad," etc. etc., which by accretions from *Manas* in which burns the ever existing *Jiv* — the undying spark — adds to itself at the close of each incarnation the essence of that individuality *that was*, the aroma of the culled flower that is no more.

What is the *false* personality? It is that bundle of desires, aspirations, affection and hatred, in short of *action*, manifested by a human being on this earth during one incarnation and under the form of one personality. (9) Certainly it is not all *this*, which as a fact for us, the deluded, material, and materially thinking lot —

is Mr. So and So, or Mrs. somebody else — that remains immortal, or is ever reborn.

All that bundle of *Egotism* that apparent and evanescent "I" disappears after death, as the costume of the part he played disappears from the actor's body, after he leaves the theatre and goes to bed. That actor re-becomes at once the same "John Smith" or Gray, he was from his birth and is no longer the Othello or Hamlet that he had represented for a few hours. Nothing remains now of that "bundle" to go to the next incarnation, except *the seed for future Karma* that *Manas* may have united to its immortal group, to form with it — the disembodied *Higher Self* in "Devachan." As to the four lower principles, that which becomes of them is found in most classics, from which we mean to quote at length for our defence. The doctrine of the *perispirit* the "false personality," or the remains of the deceased under their astral form — fading out to disappear in time, is terribly distasteful to the spiritualists, who insist upon confusing the temporary with the immortal Ego.

Unfortunately for them and happily for us, it is not the modern Occultists who have invented the doctrine. They are on their defense. And they prove what they say, *i.e.*, that no "*personality*" has ever yet been "reincarnated" "on the same planet" (*our earth*, this once there is *no* mistake) save in the three exceptional cases above cited. Adding to these a fourth case, *which is the deliberate, conscious act of adeptship*; and that such an *astral* body belongs *neither to the body nor the soul* still less to the immortal spirit of man, the following is brought forward and proofs cited.

Before one brings out on the strength of undeniable manifestations, theories as to *what* produces them and claims at once on *prima facie* evidence that it is the *spirits* of the departed mortals that re-visit us, it behooves one to first study what

antiquity has declared upon the subject. Ghosts and apparitions, materialized and semi-material "SPIRITS" have not originated with Allan Kardec, nor at Rochester. If those beings whose invariable habit it is to give themselves out for *souls* and the phantoms of the dead, choose to do so and succeed, it is only because the cautious philosophy of old is now replaced by an *a priori* conceit, and unproven assumptions. The first question is to be settled — "Have spirits any kind of substance to cloth themselves with?"

Answer: That which is now called *perisprit* in France, and a "materialized Form" in England and America, was called in days of old *peri-psyche*, and *peri-nous*, hence was well known to the old Greeks. Have they *a body* whether gaseous, fluidic, ethereal, material or semi-material? No; we say this on the authority of the occult teachings the world over. For with the Hindus *atma* or *spirit* is *Arupa* (bodiless,) and with the Greeks also. Even in the Roman Catholic Church the angels of Light as those of Darkness *are absolutely incorporeal*: "*meri spiritus, omnes corporis expertes*," and in the words of the "SECRET DOCTRINE," *primordial*. Emanations of the undifferentiated Principle, the Dhyān Chohans of the ONE (First) category or pure Spiritual Essence, are formed of the *Spirit of the one Element*; the second category of the second Emanation of the Soul of the Elements; the third have a "*mind body*" to which they are not subject, but that they can assume and govern as a body, subject *to them*, pliant to their will in form and substance. Parting from this (third) category, they (the spirits, angels, Devas or Dhyān Chohans) have *BODIES* the first *rupa* group of which is composed of one element *Ether*; the second, of two — ether and fire; the third, of three — Ether, fire and water; the fourth of four — Ether, air, fire and water. Then comes man, who, besides the four elements, has the fifth that predominates in him — Earth: therefore he suffers. Of the Angels, as said by St. Augustine and Peter Lombard, their bodies are made *to act* not to suffer. It is earth and water, *humor et humus*, that gives an

aptitude for suffering and passivity, *ad patientiam*, and *Ether* and *Fire* for action." The spirits or human *monads*, belonging to the first, or indifferentiated essence are thus incorporeal; but their third principle (or the human Fifth — *Manas*) can in conjunction with its vehicle become *Kama rupa* and *Mayavi rupa* — body of desire or "illusion body." After death, the best, noblest, purest qualities of *Manas* or the *human* soul ascending along with the divine Monad into Devachan whence no one emerges from or returns, except at the time of reincarnation — what is that then which appears under the double mask of the spiritual *Ego* or soul of the departed individual? *The Kama rupa element with the help of elementals*. For we are taught that those spiritual beings that can assume a form at will and appear, *i.e.*, make themselves objective and even tangible — are the angels alone (the Dhyan Chohans) and the *nirmanakaya* (10) of the adepts, whose spirits are clothed in sublime matter. The astral bodies — *the remnants* and *dregs* of a mortal being which has been disembodied, when they do appear, are not the individuals they claim to be, but only their simulachres. And such was the belief of the whole of antiquity, from Homer to Swedenborg; from the *third* race down to our own day.

More than one devoted spiritualist has hitherto quoted Paul as corroborating his claim that spirits do and can appear. "There is a natural and there is a spiritual body," etc., etc., (I Cor. xv, 44); but one has only to study closer the verses preceding and following the one quoted, to perceive that what St. Paul meant was quite different from the sense claimed for it. Surely there is a *spiritual* body, but it is not identical with the *astral* form contained in the "natural" man. The "spiritual" is formed only by our individuality *unclothed* and *transformed after death*; for the apostle takes care to explain in Verses 51 and 52, "*Immut abimur sed non omnes*." Behold, I tell you *a mystery*, we shall *not all sleep* but we shall *all*

be changed. This corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality.

But this is no proof except for the Christians. Let us see what the old Egyptians and the Neo-Platonists — both "*theurgists*" *par excellence*, thought on the subject: They divided man into three principal groups subdivided into principles as we do: pure immortal spirit; the "Spectral Soul" (*a luminous phantom*) and the gross material body. Apart from the latter which was considered as the terrestrial shell, these groups were divided into six principles: (1) *Kha* "vital body"; (2) *Khaba* "astral form," or shadow, (3) *Khou* "animal soul" (4) *Akh* "terrestrial intelligence;" (5) *Sa* "the divine soul" (*or Buddhi*;) and (6) *Sah* or mummy, the functions of which began after death. *Osiris* was the highest uncreated spirit, for it was, in one sense a generic name, every man becoming after his translation *Osirified*, *i.e.*, absorbed into *Osiris* — *Sun* or into the glorious divine state. It was *Khou*, with the lower portions of *Akh* or *Kama rupa* with the addition of the dregs of *Manas* remaining all behind in the astral light of our atmosphere — that formed the counterparts of the terrible and so much dreaded *bhoots* of the Hindus (our "elementaries"). This is seen in the rendering made of the so called "Harris Papyrus on magic." (*papyrus magique*, translated by Chabas) who calls them *Kouey* or *Khou*, and explains that according to the hieroglyphics they were called *Khou* or the "revivified dead," the "resurrected shadows." (11)

When it was said of a person that he "*had a Khou*" it meant that he was possessed by a "Spirit." There were two kinds of *Khous* — the justified ones, — who after living for a short time *a second life* (*nam onh*) failed out, disappeared; and those *Khous* who were condemned to wandering without rest in darkness *after dying for a second time* — *mut, em, nam* — and who were called the *H'ou—metre* ("second time dead") which did not prevent them

from clinging to a vicarious life after the manner of Vampires. How dreaded they were is explained in our Appendices on Egyptian Magic and "Chinese Spirits" (*Secret Doctrine*). They were exorcised by Egyptian priests as the evil spirit is exorcised by the Roman Catholic *cure*; or again the Chinese *houen*, identical with the *Khou* and the "Elementary," as also with the *lares* or *larvae* — a word derived from the former by *Festus*, the grammarian; who explains that they were "the shadows of the dead *who gave no rest in the house they were in* either to the Masters or the servants." These creatures when evoked during theurgic, and especially *necromantic* rites, were regarded, and are so regarded still, in China — as neither the Spirit, Soul nor any thing belonging to the deceased personality they represented, but simply, as his reflection — *simmulacrum*.

"The human soul," says Apuleius, "is an *immortal God*" (Buddhi) which nevertheless has his beginning. When death rids it (the Soul), from its earthly corporeal organism, it is called *lemure*. There are among the latter not a few which are beneficent, and which become the gods or demons of the family, *i.e.*, its domestic gods: in which case they are called *lares*. But they are vilified and spoken of as *larvae* when sentenced by fate to wander about, they spread around them evil and plagues. (*Inane terriculamentum, celerum noxium malis*;) or if their real nature is doubtful they are referred to as simply *manes* (Apuleius. see — *Du Dieu de Socrate*, pp. 143-145. Edit. Nix.) Listen to Yamblichus, Proclus, Porphyry, Psellus and to dozens of other writers on these mystic subjects.

The Magi of Chaldea believed and *taught that the celestial or divine soul* would participate in the bliss of eternal light, while the animal or *sensuous* soul would, if good, rapidly dissolve, and if wicked, go on wandering about in the Earth's sphere. In this case, "it (the soul) assumes at times the forms of various human phantoms and even those of animals." The same was said of the

Eidolon of the Greeks, and of their *Nephesh* by the Rabbins: (See *Sciences Occultes*, Count de Resie. V. 11). All the *Illuminati* of the middle ages tell us of our *astral Soul*, the reflection of the dead or his *spectre*. At *Natal* death (birth) the pure spirit remains attached to the *intermediate* and *luminous* body but as soon as its lower form (the physical body) is dead, the former ascends heavenward, and the latter descends into the nether worlds, or the *Kama loka*.

Homer shows us the body of Patroclus — the true image of the terrestrial body lying killed by Hector — rising in its spiritual form, and Lucretius shows old Ennius representing Homer himself, shedding bitter tears, amidst the *shadows and the human simulachres* on the shores of Acherusia "*where live neither our bodies nor our souls, but only our images.*"

"* * * Esse Acherusia templa,
* * * Quo neque permanent anima, neque corpora nostra,
Sed quedam simulacra * *"

Virgil called it *imago* "image" and in the *Odyssey* (I. XI) the author refers to it as the type, the model, and at the same time the copy of the body; since Telemachus will not recognize Ulyssus and seeks to drive him off by saying — "No thou are not my father; thou art a demon, trying to seduce me!" (*Odys.* I. XVI. v. 194.) "Latins do not lack significant proper names to designate the varieties of their demons; and thus they called them in turn, *lares*, *lemures*, *geni* and *manes*." Cicero, in translating Plato's *Timaeus* translates the word (*dimones* by *lares*; and Festus the grammarian, explains that the inferior or lower gods were the *souls* of *men*, making a difference between the two as Homer did, and between *anima bruta* and *anima divina* (animal and divine souls). Plutarch (in *proble. Rom.*) makes the *lares* preside and inhabit the (haunted) houses, and calls them, cruel, exacting, inquisitive, etc., etc. Festus thinks that there are good and bad

ones among the lares. For he calls them at one time *prostites* as they gave occasionally and watched over things carefully (*direct apports*), and at another — *hostileos*. (12) "However it may be" says in his queer old French, Leloyer, "they are no better than our devils, who, if they do appear helping sometimes men, and presenting them with property, it is only to hurt them the better and the more later on. *Lemures* are also devils and *larvae* for they appear at night in various human and animal forms, but still more frequently with features that THEY *borrow from dead men*." (*Livre des Spectres*. V. IV p. 15 and 16).

After this little honour rendered to his Christian preconceptions, that see Satan everywhere, Leloyer speaks like an Occultist, and a very erudite one too.

"It is quite certain that the *genii* and none other had mission to watch over every newly born man, and that they were called *genii*, as says Censorius, because they had in their charge our race, and not only they *presided* over every mortal being but over whole generations and tribes, being the *genii of the people*."

The idea of guardian angels of men, races, localities, cities, and nations, was taken by the Roman Catholics from the prechristain occultists and pagans. Symmachus (Epistol, I. X) writes: "As souls are given to those who are born, so *genii* are distributed to the nations. Every city had its protecting genius, to whom the people sacrificed." There is more than one inscription found that reads: *Genio civitates* — "to the genius of the city."

Only the ancient profane, never seemed sure any more than the modern whether an apparition was the *eidolon* of a relative or the genius of the locality. Enneus while celebrating the anniversary of the name of his father Anchises, seeing a serpent crawling on his tomb knew not whether that was the *genius* of his father or the genius of the place (Virgil). "The *manes* (13) were numbered

and divided between good and bad; those that were *sinister*, and that Virgil calls *numina larva*, were appeased by sacrifices that they should commit no mischief, such as sending bad dreams to those who despised them, etc:

Tibullus shows by his line: —

Ne tibi neglecti mittant insomnia manes. (Eleg., I. II.)

"Pagans thought that the *lower Souls* were transformed after death into *diabolical aerial spirits*." (Leloyer p. 22.)

The term *Eteroprosopos* when divided into its several compound words will yield a whole sentence, "an other than I under the features of my person."

It is to this terrestrial principle, the *eidolon* the *larva*, the *bhoot* — call it by whatever name — that reincarnation was refused in *Isis*. (14)

The doctrines of Theosophy are simply the faithful echoes of Antiquity. Man is a *Unity* only at his origin and at his end. All the Spirits, all the Souls, gods and demons emanate from and have for their root-principle the SOUL OF THE UNIVERSE — says Porphyry (*De Sacrifice*). Not a philosopher of any notoriety who did not believe (1) in reincarnation (metempsychosis), (2) in the plurality of principles in man, or that man had *two* Souls of separate and quite different natures; one perishable, the *Astral Soul*, the other incorruptible and immortal; and (3) that the former was not the man whom it represented — "neither his spirit nor his body," but his *reflection*, at best." This was taught by Brahmins, Buddhists, Hebrews, Greeks, Egyptians, and Chaldeans; by the post-diluvian heirs of the prediluvian Wisdom, by Pythagoras and Socrates, Clemens Alexandrinus, Synesius, and Origen, the oldest Greek poets as much as the Gnostics, whom Gibbon shows as the most refined, learned and enlightened men of all ages ("See Decline

and Fall," etc.). But the rabble was the same in every age: superstitious, self-opinionated, materializing every most spiritual and noble idealistic conception and dragging it down to its own low level, and — ever adverse to philosophy.

But all this does not interfere with that fact, that our "fifth Race" man, analyzed esoterically as a septenary creature, was ever *exoterically* recognized as mundane, sub-mundane, terrestrial and supra mundane, Ovid graphically describing him as —

"Bis duo sunt hominis; *manes, caro, spiritus, umbra*
Quatuor ista loca bis duo suscipiunt.
Terra tegit carnem, tumulum circumvolat umbra,
Orcus habet manes, spiritus astra petit."

OSTENDE, Oct., 1886

FOOTNOTES:

1. See charge and answer, in *Theosophist*, August, 1882. ([return to text](#))
2. The cycle of existence during the manvantatra — period before and after the beginning and completion of which every such "monad" is absorbed and reabsorbed in the ONE soul, *anima mundi*. ([return to text](#))
3. Hades has surely never been meant for *Hell*. It was always the abode of the sorrowing *shadows* of astral bodies of the dead personalities. Western readers should remember Kama-loka is not Karma-loka, for Kama means *desire*, and Karma does not. ([return to text](#))
4. Had this word "immediate" been put at the time of publishing *Isis* between the two words "no" and "reincarnation" there would have been less room for dispute and controversy. ([return to text](#))

5. By "sphere above," of course "Devachan" was meant. ([return to text](#))

6. The reader must bear in mind that the esoteric teaching maintains that save in cases of wickedness when man's nature attains the acme of Evil, and human terrestrial sin reaches *Satanic* universal character, so to say *as some Sorcerers* do — there is no punishment for the majority of mankind after death. The law of retribution as *Karma*, waits man at the threshold of his new incarnation. Man is at best a wretched tool of evil, unceasingly forming new causes and circumstances. He is not always (if ever) responsible. Hence a period of rest and bliss in Devachan, with an utter temporary oblivion of all the miseries and sorrows of life. *Avitchi* is a *spiritual* state of the greatest misery and is only in store for those who have devoted *consciously* their lives to doing injury to others and have thus reached its highest spirituality of EVIL. ([return to text](#))

7. Says Apuleius: "The soul is born in this world upon leaving the soul of the world (*anima mundi*) in which her existence precedes the one we all know (on earth). Thus, the Gods who consider her proceedings in all the phases of various existences and as a whole, punish her sometimes for sins committed during an *anterior* life. *She dies* when she separates herself from a body in which she crossed this life as in a frail bark. And this is, if I mistake not, the secret meaning of the tumulary inscription, so simple for the initiate: "*To the Gods manes who lived.*" But this kind of death does not annihilate the soul, it only transforms (one portion of it) it into a *lemure*. "*Lemures*" are the *manes* or ghosts, which we know under the name *lares*. When they keep away and *show us a beneficent protection*, we honour in them the protecting divinities of the family hearth: but if their crimes sentence them to err, we call them *larvae*. They become a plague for the wicked, and the vain terror of the good." ("Du Dieu do Socrate" Apul. class,

pp., 143-145.) ([return to text](#))

8. "The cause of reincarnation is ignorance" — therefore there is "reincarnation" once the writer explained the causes of it. ([return to text](#))

9. A proof how our theosophical teachings have taken root in every class of Society and even in English literature may be seen by reading Mr. Norman Pearson's article "Before Birth" in the "Nineteenth Century" for August, 1886. Therein, theosophical ideas and teachings are speculated upon without acknowledgment or the smallest reference to theosophy, and among others, we see with regard to the author's theories on the *Ego* the following: "How much of the *individual personality* is supposed to go to heaven or hell? Does the whole of the mental equipment, good and bad, noble qualities and unholy passions, follow the soul to its hereafter? Surely not. But if not, and something has to be stripped off, how and when are we to draw the line? If, on the other hand, the Soul is something distinct from all our mental equipment, except the sense of self, are we not confronted by the incomprehensible notion of a personality without any attributes."

To this query the author answers as any true theosophist would: "The difficulties of the question really spring from a misconception of the true nature of these attributes. The components of our mental equipment — appetites, aversions, feelings, tastes and qualities generally — are not absolute but relative existences. Hunger and thirst for instance are states of consciousness which arise in response to the stimuli of physical necessities. They are not inherent elements of the soul and *will disappear* or become modified, etc.," (pp. 356 and 357). In other words the theosophical doctrine is adopted, Atma and Buddhi having culled off the *Manas* the aroma of the personality or

human soul — go into Devachan; While the lower principles the astral *simulacrum* or false personality void of its Divine monad or spirit will remain in the *Kamaloka* — the "Summerland." ([return to text](#))

10. *Nirmanakaya* is the name given to the astral forms (*in their completeness*) of adepts, who have progressed too high on the path of *knowledge* and absolute truth, to go into the state of Devachan; and have on the other hand, deliberately refused the bliss of nirvana, in order to help Humanity by invisibly guiding and helping on the same path of progress elect men. But these astrals are not empty shells, but complete monads made up of the 3d, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th principles. There is another order of *nirmanakaya*, however, of which much will be said in the *Secret Doctrine*. — H. P. B. ([return to text](#))

11. Placing these parallel with the division in esoteric teaching we see that (1) *Osiris* is Atma; (2) *Sa* is Buddhi; (3) *Akh* is Manas; (4) *Khou* is Kama-rupa, the seat of terrestrial desires. (5) *Khaba* is Lingha Sarira; (6) *Kha* is Pranatma (vital principle); (7) *Sah*, is mummy or body. ([return to text](#))

12. Because they drove the enemies away. ([return to text](#))

13. From *manus* — "good," an *antiphrasis*, as Festus explains. ([return to text](#))

14. Page 12. Vol I. of "*Isis Unveiled*" belief in reincarnation is asserted from the very beginning, as forming part and parcel of universal beliefs. "Metempsychosis" (or transmigration of souls) and reincarnation being after all the same thing. ([return to text](#))

POETICAL OCCULTISM: II — *Julius*

SOME ROUGH STUDIES OF THE OCCULT LEANINGS OF THE POETS.

II.

Perhaps no passage in *Light on the Path* is more forcible than that which warns the disciple against allowing the idea of separateness from any evil thing or person to grow up within him. He is bidden to "be wary, lest too soon you fancy yourself a thing apart from the mass." The Bhagavad-Gita utters the same truth in other words by picturing man as led astray by the pride of self-sufficiency and the great danger underlying the desires and passions of the individual soul. Throughout life the student of occultism daily renews the struggle of soul against flesh, of faith against desire. This combat is finely pictured in Tennyson's *Palace of Art*. It is truly an occult palace. Four courts are made, east, west, south and north, with a squared lawn in each, and four great fountains "stream in misty folds." Here we are reminded of the Garden of Eden with its four rivers, of which Eliphas Levi says: "this description of the terrestrial paradise is resumed in the figure of a perfect pentacle. It is circular or square, since it is equally watered by four rivers disposed in a cross." The square, answering to the number four was indeed the great kabbalistic figure, representing the Trinity in Unity. Nor is the mystic circle wanting in our occult palace, for there are "cool rows of circling cloisters" about the squares, and a gilded gallery that "lent broad verge to distant lands," and "incense streaming from a golden cup," another mystic symbol, representing the passive or negative side of nature. Full of sumptuousness was this palace, built for the soul that she might dwell in sensuous luxury, remote from the

struggling world. Then the poet shows us further into the recesses of his sweet thought, and we see in the pictures with which the palace was hung, a portrayal of the various life experiences of the soul as it passes from phase to phase, from room to room of this great palace which is human life.

"Full of great rooms and small the palace stood,
All various, *each a perfect whole*
From living nature, fit for every mood
And change of my still soul.

From high estate to low the soul thus passes, from a "glimmering land" to "iron coast and angry wave;" from uplands of toil and harvest, to the "high bleak crags of sorrow, from Greece and Sicily to India or the North, until "every landscape, as fit for every mood was there, not less than truth designed," a rich panorama of re-incarnations. Amongst all these the soul moves joyful and feasting, "Lord of the senses five," communing with herself that all these are her own in the "God-like isolation which is hers."

"Then of the moral instinct would she prate,
And of the rising from the dead,
As hers by right of full-accomplished Fate,
And at the last she said:

I take possession of man's mind and deed.
I care not what the sects may brawl.
I sit as God, holding no form of creed
But contemplating all."

So three years she throve and prospered, but in the fourth year, (mark again the occult number of perfection,) a great dread came upon her, she was plagued in "the abysmal deeps of personality" with a sore despair. The moment of choice, the turning point had come, that period of which Esoteric Buddhism speaks as

occurring for the race in the fifth round but to which some exceptional personalities have forced themselves in this our fourth round. Many occultists will see their own experience mirrored in that of this tormented and lonely soul, contemplating her "palace of strength whereof the foundation stones were laid since her first memory," only to see in its dark corners, "uncertain shapes, horrible nightmares, white-eyed phantasms and hollow shades enclosing hearts of flame." Do we not seem to see all the elemental world, led on by the dread Dweller of the Threshold here confronting us? The struggle is even more powerfully depicted but the lesson is learned; the soul may retrieve herself by a lowly life: she throws aside her royal robes, and recognizing the need of mixing with her kind, begs for a "cottage in the vale."

The poet reserves for his last verse the final lesson that only when we lead others to the heights and share these with our kind, can we ourselves stand steadfast there:

"Yet pull not down my palace towers, that are
So lightly, beautifully built;
Perchance I may return with others there
When I have purged my guilt."

A footnote in the September PATH states: — "After all, the whole process of development is the process of *getting back the memory of the past*. And that too is the teaching found in pure Buddhism, etc." Sometimes we are conscious of vague callings to do a certain thing, and critically regarding ourselves, we cannot see in this life any cause. It seems the bugle note of a past life blown almost in our face: it startles us; sometimes we are overthrown. These memories affect us like the shadows of passing clouds across our path, now tangible; then fading, only a cloud. Now they start before us like phantoms, or like a person behind you as you look at a mirror, it looks over the shoulder. If they are indeed

reminiscences of other lives, although dead and past, they yet have a power. Hear what Lowell whispers in "*The Twilight*" of these mysterious moments:

"Sometimes a breath floats by me,
An odor from Dreamland sent,
Which makes the ghost seem nigh me
Of a something that came and went,
Of a life lived somewhere, I know not
In what diviner sphere.
Of mem'ries that come not and go not;
Like music once heard by an ear
That cannot forget or reclaim it;
A something so shy, it would shame it
To make it a show.
A something too vague, could I name it.
For others to know:
As though I had lived it and dreamed it,
As though I had acted and schemed it
Long ago.

And yet, could I live it over,
This Life which stirs in my brain;
Could I be both maiden and lover,
Moon and tide, bee and clover,
As I seem to have been, once again.
Could I but speak and show it.
This pleasure more sharp than pain.
Which baffles and lures me so!
The world would not lack a poet,
Such as it had
In the ages glad,
Long Ago."

Emerson, who saw further into the world of nature than any poet of our race, gives us this:

"And as through dreams in watches of the night.
So through all creatures in their form and ways,
Some mystic hint accosts the vigilant.
Not clearly voiced, but waking a new sense.
Inviting to new knowledge, *one with old.*"

The hermetic maxim, "As above so below," sends us indeed to nature for initiation, and the Gita follows up this nail with a hammer by saying: "The man, O Arjoona, who from what passeth in his own breast, whether it be pain or pleasure, beholdeth the same in others, is esteemed a supreme Yogi." Analogy, Harmony. Unity, these are the words traced over and over for us, the shining rays of the one Law. These are the thoughts in which the poets delight. Emerson speaks again with still clearer voice:

"Brother, sweeter is the Law
Than all the grace Love ever saw,
If the Law should thee forget,
More enamored serve it yet.

* * * * *

* * I found this;
That of goods I could not miss
If I fell within the line;
Once a member, all was mine:
Houses, banquets, gardens, fountains,
Fortune's delectable mountains.
But if I would walk alone
Was neither cloak nor crumb my own."

The Biblical verse: — "It is more blessed to give than to receive," is a great occult teaching. As we strengthen the muscles by exercise, so we enlarge the intelligence and the heart by constantly

dispensing our means, whether these be golden thoughts, or time, or affections, all along the line of Brotherhood. Not because of a sentiment, but because Life is made up of vibrations which our scientists, cautious as they are, admit may affect the farthest stars.

"Like warp and woof, all destinies
Are woven fast,
Linked in sympathy, like the keys
Of an organ vast.
Pluck but one thread, and the web ye mar;
Break but one of a thousand keys, and the paining jar
Through all will run."

This from Whittier reminds us of the lines on Karma in *Light on the Path*. "Remember that the threads are living, — are like electric wires, more, are like quivering nerves. How far, then, must the stain, the drag awry, be communicated." Yes, the communion of saints is a living fact. We all commune, not alone with one another; with those above us and with those below, but essentially with our time. Not one of us can escape its influence: we oppose its conclusions, deny its powers, and meanwhile it speaks through us, without our knowledge, the passwords we do not yet understand. This "dark age" is still the birth-place of spiritual development, of an awakening belief in the supernatural, or that which overshadows nature. We have had no more safe, practical sober poet than Whittier, who sweetly sings the life of every day, when he is not stirred by the fret of the times, to Freedom's larger issues. Yet hear him describing the power of a "wizard:"

All the subtle spirits hiding
Under earth or wave; abiding
In the caverned rock, or riding
Misty clouds, or morning breeze.

Every dark intelligence,
Secret soul, and influence
Of all things, which outward sense
Feels, or hears, or sees, —
These the wizard's skill confessed.—"

Is not here an "outward sense" of Professor Denton's discoveries of the "soul of things?" But hear further the poet's confession of faith in the occult power of will:

"Not untrue that tale of old!
Now as then, the wise and bold
All the powers of nature hold,
Subject to their kingly will.

* * * * *

Still to such, life's elements,
With their sterner laws dispense,
*And the chain of consequence
Broken in their pathway lies.*
To his aid the strong reverses,
Hidden powers and giant forces,
And the high stars in their courses,
Mingle in his strife."

The italicized lines are almost an echo of the words of an Adept when speaking of the possibility for the disciple, of an ultimate escape from the laws of Karma, which give him the right to demand the secrets of nature. "He obtains this right by having escaped from the limits of nature, and by having freed himself from the rules which govern human life." So does Whittier's initiate. For every one of us there looms a danger in our being prone to mistake desire for will. The paradox of Levi is sound and true: "The will obtains all that it does not desire." Meditation in this direction will reveal some deep and useful truths to the

practical occultist.

But to return to our poets. There are many butterfly hints to be found fluttering through their lines. Time has spared us this one from Marvel:

"At some fruit-tree's mossy root.
Casting the body's vest aside
My soul into the bows does glide;
There, like a bird, its sits and sings."

And Matthew Arnold, turned dreamer for the nonce, has netted us one, more meaty than diaphanous, in which we find hints of periodic Devachanic sleep, between every period of earth struggle, of man's threefold nature which serves to hide the memory of his other lives, and a touch of Karma as well:

"The Guide of our dark steps a triple veil
Betwixt our senses and our sorrow keeps;
Hath sown with cloudless passages the tale
Of grief, and eased us with a thousand sleeps."

It would sometimes seem, as in the above quotation, that the poet himself was scarcely conscious of the full bearing of what he wrote, as if that dim something from another life of which Lowell spoke, had brushed him with its wing unawares. Often the higher Self speaks out from a man's work, to other men whose consciousness has a higher development than his own, while it has not as yet revealed itself to him. How many men tremble thus on the borders of the unseen. Let us beware whom we set down as remote from our communion, "for in an instant a veil may fall down from his spirit, and he will be far ahead of us all." There is an occult verse from Goethe which has been quoted by Tyndall in one of those sad and baffled paragraphs which darkle through the works of our scientists, shadowy witnesses that these

distinguished materialists and physicists are often nearer our path than they or we suspect. Through such they seem to call for deliverance. We give the verse in its setting, leaving Tyndall's prose to point its poetic meaning.

"As regards knowledge, physical science is polar. In one sense it knows, or is destined to know everything. In another sense it knows nothing. Science understands much of this intermediate phase of things that we call nature, of which it is the product; but science knows nothing of the origin or destiny of nature. Who or what made the sun, and gave his rays their alleged power? Who or what made and bestowed upon the ultimate particles of matter their wondrous power of varied interaction? Science does not know: the mystery, though pushed back, remains unaltered. To many of us who feel that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in the present philosophy of science, but who have been also taught by baffled efforts, how vain is the attempt to grapple with the Inscrutable, the ultimate frame of mind is that of Goethe:"

 "Who dares to name His name,
 Or belief in him proclaim,
 Veiled in mystery as He is, the All-enfolder?
 Gleams across the mind His light,
 Feels the lifted soul His might;
 Dare it then deny His reign, the All-upholder?"

The Path

HINDU SYMBOLISM: II — *Isaac Myer*



This figure represents Brahma-Maya or Mahat-Maya, Brahma Viraj, or the great Illusion.

The androgene or male-female, the Great Appearance, the first revelation of the Being or Brahman (neuter), under the form of the double-sexed first emanation. The neuter, became male and female, by separation into the male, positive, forming the spiritual — the entities or the noumena, and his sakti or female, the negative, or plastic, matter, the illusionary or phenomenal existence. The sakti, is his developing energy, force or potentiality. This symbol, the divine type of the first male and female, which can be compared with the terrestrial Adam before the final separation of Eve, is really in consonance with this Adam's perfect ideal, the Adam Kadmon or Heavenly Adam of the Kabbalah. The Brahma-half is on the right side, the good side, man's, the Maya-half is on the left, the evil side, the woman's. So according to the Hebrew sacred writings, through Eve the woman, evil was brought into the world. Compare with this the Greek myth of Pandora. Issuing from the linga-yoni is the pearl chain, or connected circle of the existences, looked upon as united

atoms, and the symbol of all the existing. It is held up by the hand on the male side.

Brahman (neuter), appears here as manifested in the male in union with the female sakti, of the preformatory imagination, as the nine creative monarch and Pearl King, richly decorated with the circles of the soul-monads and atoms. On his head is the world egg cap. The veil of the existences, upon which are woven the ideas or models of the to-be-emanated existences, flows from the linga-yoni to the highest part of the head and thence down the right side. He as the male, has a tendency to twist himself upon himself and his face bears the stamp of deep meditation. The aureole of fire is on the male side and from it scintillate sparks upon the veil of Maya. On the Maya side, the attitude is that of joy or dancing; the hand raised as if in play, holds up the veil, bells are hanging on her robe and singularly the Egyptian hieroglyphic for the water of life is shown; while the bust is developed. Portrayed upon the veil are the prototypes of the creatures. Compare the symbolism of the girdle of Aphrodite and that of Venus.

As the double spouse of Brahman (neuter) considered apart and in opposition to It. The Brahma-Maya is the life in nature, of which, Brahman (neuter) is the soul. The Brahma-Maya is that blind energy and force, potential and powerful, and eternally fecund, which is incessantly producing under forms which are without cessation renewed; and which is adored in India to-day, as the Great Mother, the Universal Mother, in other words all nature deified. Maya is the mother of Love or Desire, the first principle or affinity of all affection, creation, matter. She is even matter itself, but the primitive subtile matter co-existing with God (Brahman, neuter) from all eternity, contained in It, and symbolized by the three colors, red, white, black; the three qualities or powers of creation, preservation and destruction,

consequently the Trimurti, and also the three *gunas* (qualities), Truth, Action, and Indifference, of the Bhagavad Gita. (1) It is Maya, who through the attraction of her beauty, causes the Most High, from the bosom of Its ineffable profundity, forgetting Itself, to unite Itself, in the intoxication of desire with that divine enchantress.

The mysterious veil, which she had woven with her hands, received entirely from both, and the thought of the Eternal Almighty became fecundated, and fell into Time. The innumerable forms of the creatures, represent the perfect ideals woven upon the magic tissue, the woven warp and woof of all existence, with which veil Maya (2) envelops her spouse and causes the recurrence of the gift of life.

FOOTNOTES:

1. These three qualities are explained by Krishna in the *Bhagavadgita*, as *Satwa* good or inactive being purely spiritual; *Rajas* bad and active; and *Tamas* inactive or indifferent and bad. They exist in every human mind and are mingled in greater or less proportions at all times, according to the individual and also according to his varying circumstances. His teaching in regard to the *Tamo guna* is the same as that taught in the Christian Bible, for he says that for the indifferent man there is no salvation — he is as it were "ejected like a broken cloud;" and in I James v, 6, 7, the doubting man is declared incapable of obtaining anything, while in Rev. iii, 16, the Laodiceans are accused of being neither cold nor hot, that is of being indifferent, and they are condemned to be "spewed out of the mouth," which is the same as the fate described as awaiting those in whom indifference predominates, Krishna declaring that they become more and more deluded at each succeeding generation until at last they reach the lowest round of the ladder in the shape of primordial matter. The

difference between the two schools is, that Krishna's allows the doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma, while the modern Christians, blind to their own Bible, reject these supremely important laws, or rather ignore them as yet. [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

2. *Maya* is the Sanskrit for *illusion*. [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE THEOSOPHICAL MAHATMAS — *H. P. Blavatsky*

It is with sincere and profound regret — though with no surprise, prepared as I am for years for such declarations — that I have read in the Rochester *Occult Word*, edited by Mrs. J. Cables, the devoted president of the T. S. of that place, her joint editorial with Mr. W. T. Brown. This sudden revulsion of feeling is perhaps quite natural in the lady, for she has never had the opportunities given her as Mr. Brown has; and her feeling when she writes that after "a great desire * * to be put into communication with the Theosophical Mahatmas we (they) have come to the conclusion that it is useless to strain the psychical eyes toward the Himalayas * * " is undeniably shared by many theosophists. Whether the complaints are justified, and also whether it is the "Mahatmas" or theosophists themselves who are to blame for it is a question that remains to be settled. It has been a pending case for several years and will have to be now decided, as the two complainants declare over their signatures that "we (they) need not run after Oriental Mystics, *who deny their ability to help us.*" The last sentence, in italics, has to be seriously examined. I ask the privilege to make a few remarks thereon.

To begin with, the tone of the whole article is that of a true *manifesto*. Condensed and weeded of its exuberance of Biblical expressions it comes to this paraphractical declaration; "We have knocked at their door, and they have not answered us; we have prayed for bread, they have denied us even a stone." The charge is quite serious; nevertheless, that it is neither just nor fair — is what I propose to show.

As I was the first in the United States to bring the existence of our Masters into publicity; and, having exposed the holy names of

two members of a Brotherhood hitherto unknown to Europe and America, (save to a few mystics and Initiates of every age) yet sacred and revered throughout the East, and especially India, causing vulgar speculation and curiosity to grow around those blessed names, and finally leading to a public rebuke, I believe it my duty to contradict the fitness of the latter by explaining the whole situation, as I feel myself the chief culprit. It may do good to some, perchance, and will interest some others.

Let no one think withal, that I come out as a champion or a defender of those who most assuredly need no defense. What I intend, is to present simple *facts*, and let after this the situation be judged on its own merits. To the plain statement of our brothers and sisters that they have been "living on husks," "hunting after strange gods" without receiving admittance, I would ask in my turn, as plainly: "Are you sure of having knocked at the right door? Do you feel certain that you have not lost your way by *stopping so often on your journey at strange doors, behind which lie in wait the fiercest enemies of those you were searching for?*" Our MASTERS are not "a jealous god;" they are simply holy mortals, nevertheless, however, higher than any in this world, morally, intellectually and spiritually. However holy and advanced in the science of the Mysteries — they are still men, members of a Brotherhood, who are the first in it to show themselves subservient to its time-honored laws and rules. And one of the first rules in it demands that those who start on their journey *Eastward*, as candidates to the notice and favors of those who are the custodians of those Mysteries, should proceed by the straight road, without stopping on every sideway and path, seeking to join other "Masters" and professors often of the Left-Hand Science, that they should have confidence and show trust and patience, besides several other conditions to fulfill. Failing in all of this from first to last, what right has any man or woman to complain

of the liability of the Masters to help them?

Truly "'The Dwellers of the threshold' are within!"

Once that a theosophist would become a candidate for either *chelaship* or favours, he must *be* aware of the mutual pledge, tacitly, if not formally offered and accepted between the two parties, and, *that such a pledge is sacred*. It is a bond of seven years of probation. If during that time, notwithstanding the many human shortcomings and mistakes of the candidate (save two which it is needless to specify in print) he remains throughout every temptation *true to the chosen Master*, or Masters, (in the case of *lay* candidates), and as faithful to the Society founded at their wish and under their orders, then the theosophist will be initiated into ——— thenceforward allowed to communicate with his *guru* unreservedly, all his failings, save this one, as specified, may be overlooked: they belong to his future *Karma*, but are left for the present, to the discretion and judgment of the Master. He alone has the power of judging whether even during those long seven years the *chela* will be favoured regardless of his mistakes and sins, with occasional communications with, and from the guru. The latter thoroughly posted as to the causes and motives that led the candidate into sins of omission and commission is the only one to judge of the advisability or inadvisability of bestowing encouragement; as he alone is entitled to it, seeing that he is himself under the inexorable law of Karma, which no one from the Zulu savage up to the highest archangel can avoid — and that he has to assume the great responsibility of the causes created by himself.

Thus, the chief and the only indispensable condition required in the candidate or chela on probation, is simply unswerving fidelity to the chosen Master and his purposes. This is a condition *sine qua non*; not as I have said, on account of any jealous feeling, but

simply because *the magnetic rapport between the two once broken, it becomes at each time doubly difficult to re-establish it again*; and that it is neither just nor fair, that the Masters should strain their powers for those whose future course and final desertion they very often can plainly foresee. Yet, how many of those, who, expecting as I would call it "favours by anticipation," and being disappointed, instead of humbly repeating *mea culpa*, tax the Masters with selfishness and injustice. They will deliberately break the thread of connection ten times in one year, and yet expect each time to be taken back on the old lines! I know of one theosophist — let him be nameless though it is hoped he will recognize himself — a quiet, intelligent young gentleman, a mystic by nature, who, in his ill advised enthusiasm and impatience, changed *Masters* and his ideas about half a dozen times in less than three years. First he offered himself, was accepted on probation and took the vow of chelaship; about a year later, he suddenly got the idea of getting married, though he had several proofs of the corporeal presence of his Master, and had several favours bestowed upon him. Projects of marriage failing, he sought "Masters" under other climes, and became an enthusiastic Rosicrucian; then he returned to theosophy as a Christian mystic; then again sought to enliven his austerities with a wife; then gave up the idea and turned a spiritualist. And now having applied once more "to be taken back as a chela" (I have his letter) and his Master remaining silent — he renounced him altogether, to seek in the words of the above manifesto — his old "Essenian Master and *to test the spirits* in his name."

The able and respected editor of the "Occult Word" and her Secretary are right, and have chosen the only true path in which with a very small dose of blind faith, they are sure to encounter no deceptions or disappointments. "It is pleasant for some of us," they say, "to obey the call of the 'Man of Sorrows' who will not

turn any away, because they are unworthy or have not scored up a certain percentage of personal merit." How *do* they know? unless they accept the cynically awful and pernicious dogma of the Protestant Church, that teaches the forgiveness of the blackest crime, provided the murderer *believes sincerely* that the blood of his "Redeemer" has saved him at the last hour — what is it but *blind* philosophical faith? Emotionalism is *not* philosophy; and Buddha devoted his long self sacrificing life to tear people away precisely from that *evil breeding* superstition. Why speak of Buddha then, in the same breath? The doctrine of salvation by *personal* merit, and *self* forgetfulness is the corner-stone of the teaching of the Lord Buddha. Both the writers may have and very likely they did — "hunt after *strange* gods; " but these *were not* our MASTERS. They have "denied Him thrice" and now propose "with bleeding feet and prostrate spirit" to "pray that He (Jesus) may take us (them) once more under his wing," etc. The "Nazarene Master" is sure to oblige them so far. Still they will be living on "*husks*" *plus* "blind faith." But in this they are the best judges, and no one has a right to meddle with their private beliefs in our Society: and heaven grant that they should not in their fresh disappointment turn our bitterest enemies one day.

Yet, to those Theosophists, who are displeased with the Society in general, no one has ever made to you any rash promises; least of all, has either the Society or its founders ever offered their "Masters" as a *chromo-premium* to the best behaved. For years every new member has been told that *he was promised nothing*, but had everything to expect only from his own personal merit. The theosophist is left free and untrammelled in his actions. Whenever displeased — *alia, tentanda via est* — no harm in trying elsewhere; unless, indeed one has offered himself and is decided to win the Masters' favors. To such especially, I now address myself and ask: Have you fulfilled *your* obligations and pledges?

Have you, who would fain lay all the blame on the Society and the Masters — the latter the embodiment of charity, tolerance, justice and universal love — have you *led the life* requisite, and the conditions required from one who becomes a candidate? Let him who feels in his heart and conscience that he has, — that he has never once failed seriously, never doubted his Master's wisdom, never sought *other* Master or Masters in his impatience to become an Occultist with powers; and that he has never betrayed his theosophical duty in thought or deed, — let him, I say, rise and *protest*. He can do so fearlessly: there is no penalty attached to it, and he will not even receive a reproach, let alone be excluded from the Society — the broadest and most liberal in its views, the most Catholic of all the Societies known or unknown. I am afraid my invitation will remain unanswered. During the eleven years of the existence of the Theosophical Society I have known, out of the seventy-two regularly accepted chelas on probation and the hundreds of *lay* candidates — only *three* who have not hitherto failed, and *one only* who had a full success. No one forces any one into chelaship; no promises are uttered, none except the mutual pledge between Master and the would-be-chela. Verily, Verily, many are the called but few are chosen — or rather few who have the patience of going to the bitter end, if bitter we can call simple perseverance and singleness of purpose. And what about the Society, in general, outside of India. Who among the many thousands of members does *lead the life*? Shall any one say because he is a strict vegetarian — *elephants and cows are that* — or happens to lead a celibate life, after a stormy youth in the opposite direction; or because he studies the *Bhagavat-Gita* or the "Yoga philosophy" *upside down*, that he is a theosophist *according to the Master's hearts*? As it is not the cowl that makes the monk, so, no long hair with a poetical vacancy on the brow are sufficient to make of one a faithful follower of *divine* Wisdom. Look around you, and behold our UNIVERSAL Brotherhood so called! The Society

founded to remedy the glaring evils of Christianity, to shun bigotry and intolerance, *cant* and superstition and to cultivate real universal love extending even to the dumb brute, what has it become in Europe and America in these eleven years of trial? In one thing only we have succeeded to be considered higher than our Christian Brothers, who, according to Lawrence Oliphant's graphic expression "Kill one another for Brotherhood's sake and fight as devils for the love of God" — and this is that we have made away *with every dogma* and are now justly and wisely trying to make away with the last vestige of even nominal authority. But in every other respect we are as bad as they are: backbiting, slander, uncharitableness, criticism, incessant war-cry and ding of mutual rebukes that Christian Hell itself might be proud of! And all this, I suppose is the Masters' fault: they will not help those who help others on the way of salvation and liberation from selfishness — with kicks and scandals? Truly *we are* an example to the world, and fit companions for the holy ascetics of the snowy Range!

And now a few words more before I close. I will be asked: "And who are you to find fault with us? Are you, who claim nevertheless, communion with the Masters and receive daily favors from Them; Are you so holy, faultless, and so worthy?" To this I answer: I AM NOT. Imperfect and faulty is my nature; many and glaring are my shortcomings — and for this my Karma is heavier than that of any other Theosophist. *It is* — and must be so — since for so many years I stand set in the pillory, a target for my enemies and some friends also. Yet I accept the *trial* cheerfully. Why? Because I know that I have, all my faults notwithstanding, Master's protection extended over me. And if I have it, the reason for it is simply this: for thirty-five years and more, ever since 1851 that I saw my Master *bodily* and personally for the first time, *I have never once denied or even doubted Him,*

not even in thought. Never a reproach or a murmur against Him has escaped my lips, or entered even my brain for one instant under the heaviest trials. From the first I knew what I had to expect, for I was told that, which I have never ceased repeating to others: as soon as one steps on the Path leading to the *Ashrum* of the blessed Masters — the last and only custodians of primitive Wisdom and Truth — his Karma, instead of having to be distributed throughout his long life, falls upon him in a block and crushes him with its whole weight. He who believes in what he professes and in his Master, will stand it and come out of the trial victorious; he *who doubts*, the coward who fears to receive his just dues and tries to avoid justice being done — FAILS. He will not escape Karma just the same, but he will only lose that for which he has risked its untimely visits. This is why having been so constantly, so mercilessly slashed by my Karma using my enemies as unconscious weapons, that I have stood it all. I felt sure that Master would not permit that I should perish; that he would always appear at the *eleventh* hour — *and so he did*. Three times I was saved from death by Him, the last time almost against my will; when I went again into the cold, wicked world out of love for Him who has taught me what I know and made me what I am. Therefore, I do His work and bidding, and this is what has given me the lion's strength to support shocks — physical and mental, one of which would have killed any theosophist who would go on doubling of the mighty protection. Unswerving devotion to Him who embodies the duty traced for me, and belief in the Wisdom — collectively, of that grand, mysterious, yet actual Brotherhood of holy men — is my only merit, and the cause of my success in Occult philosophy. And now repeating after the *Paraguru* — my Master's MASTER — the words He had sent as a message to those who wanted to make of the Society a "miracle club" instead of a Brotherhood of Peace, Love and mutual assistance — "Perish rather, the Theosophical Society and its hapless Founders," I say

perish their twelve years' labour and their very lives rather than that I should see what I do today: theosophists, outvying political "rings" in their search for personal power and authority; theosophists slandering and criticizing each other as two rival Christian sects might do; finally theosophists refusing to *lead the life* and then criticizing and throwing slurs on the grandest and noblest of men, because tied by their wise laws — hoary with age and based on an experience of human nature milleniums old — those Masters refuse to interfere with Karma and to play second fiddle to every theosophist who calls upon Them and whether he deserves it or not.

Unless radical reforms in our American and European Societies are speedily resorted to — I fear that before long there will remain but one centre of Theosophical Societies and Theosophy in the whole world — namely, in India; on that country I call all the blessings of my heart. All my love and aspirations belong to my beloved brothers, the Sons of old Aryavarta — the Motherland of my MASTER.

The Path

LINES FROM LOWER LEVELS — *Jasper Niemand*

Many will turn from this heading. Whether they really live upon the upper levels or only imagine such to be their dwellings, these words are probably mute to them. A laggard in the great race, one who has only just rounded the starting buoy in stress of weather, here signals to his unseen companions amid heavy seas. If a score of blind men, turned loose to beat the city's by-ways, should meet and compare mischances, some light would presently dawn among them. We are not isolated in spiritual experience. Though Falsehood wears myriad masks, when Truth looks in, she turns the same face on all.

It is of the beginning of the Way that I speak. Confusions and perplexities beset us. Most of these are of our own conjuring. The insidious canker of Doubt is first, is worst of all. Better stop right where you are for a lifetime than advance with this moral leprosy unexterminated. It will spread through future existences until it has eaten the heart to the core. Now it is in our power. Wrestle boldly with every doubt until you have converted it to a certainty; thus you force it to bless you in departing, as Jacob did the Angel. Why should we doubt? The day on which I first heard of the Wisdom-Religion is for me set apart like a potent jewel in the crest of Time. My thought salutes its messengers with the grand old words, — "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth Peace." The Peace of this religion is the proof absolute of its Wisdom. Our vitality is exhausted with the life struggle; it seems a dead pull against the current. Reason tells us we ought to be able to move with the stream. Man has a false idea of his own requirements; this is why possession satiates all. We are ignorant that the desire for Unity lies hidden in the deeps of every human heart. This is the Truth at

the bottom of the well; it is the basic need of all mankind. Recognise it, and you may sweep unwearied along the resistless current of evolutionary progress. We begin to realize the inability of existing creeds to sound and explain our Being. Every one of us craves a belief which shall not be a formula, but Life itself, which shall develop and complete the constituency of lives.

Our religions violate the golden rule of Architecture, — "Ornament construction; do not construct ornamentation." Their slight framework is florid with theological detail, garlanded with the varying ideals of centuries. Not so does the Master Builder plan. Yet the keystone of each arch is the Truth manifest in the Past, the Truth which still bears witness to Divinity to the new Age.

When men meet their belief in every department of life, when it assists them on every plane, so that they eat better, sleep better, love better, create better and die better by it, then will it be a vital law to them, not a garment to be laid aside on work days. Theosophy does all this. It informs every deed, makes of each fact a new revelation, and testifies to more religion in one chapter of Natural Philosophy, than in all the sermons of next Sunday. Study these grand similitudes and we find how single is Truth, so that the three great laws of Motion are also those of Emotion, and Newton spoke for my heart, as well as for the universe. All life is thus related; if you doubt the validity of theory or action, test them by this law of correspondence.

Do I revolt from the rule of gentle procedure in the teeth of wrath or abuse. I recall the axiom of mechanics, — "Motion seeks the line of least resistance," — and my moral force proves itself perpetual motion by its avoidances of friction. *Truth is the same in every part.* You shall pass every beam of thought through this prism; if it is a pure ray each component will have its distinct

value on its own plane, and all will blend again to Light.

Sometimes we are chilled as by a sense of isolation from the main body of our kind. This is imaginary; you shall not think we are few, or stand alone. Even now the thoughtful listener hears the soughing of the rising flood of Public Opinion. This was the mainstay of Science in her late tilt with the Church. The People, weary of barren Theology demanded in facts, in laws, the manifestation of the Divine. Now it begins to call Science to account for her limitations. Do we doubt the bubbling interest in Psychology? We should scan our newspapers, novels, magazines, boudoir gossip even, to feel the pulse of the general tide. Science yields so far to the pressure as to explain why she cannot or does not make thorough and sustained psychical investigations, and with a blunt, — "so much the worse for you," the public turns expectantly to the broader or younger men who better gauge the tendency of our time.

This tendency is to cooperation, to unification. Science and Religion are one, are truth, and blindness is the portion of those who dismember her kingdom. A pertinent case is that of a physician well known to New York clinics who used his mesmeric power in putting patients to sleep in the presence of his students and maintaining their complete unconsciousness during painful operations, thus carried to successful conclusions without the dangerous drawback of anesthetics. Less gifted confreres frowned down the "irregularity." This is a thinking Age, and men are losing confidence in the judgment of scientists whose biased attitude would bar them from jury service in the pettiest court of the land.

Again there are those who are tried by the mistakes, the treachery, or the public misunderstanding of other adherents of Theosophy. What does it matter? The world swung on while

Galileo recanted, and though a disciple betrayed his Master, the Christian world still kneels. Our noblest opponents are often unconscious Theosophists, judging them by their fervid search for Truth. When *their hour* strikes, they will find her; meanwhile Wisdom needs no converts. Man passes; *Truth is*, and needs no concern of ours. Do not think either that the Wisdom-Religion is only for the strong or the intellectual; it is for all. Food is meant to sustain life, and Love to develop it, but excess in either may kill. So those whose nature is morbid, exaggerate the aspect of Truth and go mad of their own phantasms. Every Science, every Art, every Religion has its list of these moral suicides and those who confront you with it are like the old nurses who scare children from the jam closet with "bogies."

I said that we breed our own perplexities. Take the first day of the new life, when with fledgeling resolves aflutter we come glowing and resolute down the stairs. We had ordered a spartan meal which Love has spared us. Frowning, we order the dainties away and sit reflecting on the encumbrances of earthly affection; wounded, it leaves our side. Our plain food comes; it is ill cooked and the retarded servant has a scowl which we resent: the household jangles and jars. The meal has not refreshed us, and the lack of the soothing but condemned cigar brings our irritability to a head. We hasten to lock ourselves into the study for meditation; but a bird sings in at the window, and Love's voice pleads at the door. We shut out the song and chide the syren. Why is our heart so heavy now when bent on eternal things? Knocking! We open with a martyr face. A friend is there, a dogged churchman; his salvation is in our hands! He chats of the weather, our club, state politics. We broach a higher theme, we denounce, cut and thrust, argue. Surprised he listens in courteous silence, and as he leaves us we remember too late that he too cherishes his religion, we curse the follies of the wretched day

and call Theosophy for the nonce "impracticable." Brothers! the man of creeds who can hear our dogmatism with self control is perhaps nearer the Essential than we are. He who plunges into restraints which unhinge and irritate him is no better than the man who loses his reason through drink. Both lack moderation, the result is the same, and we have only to do with results. Devote your thoughts to ascetic meals, and no Lucullus of the town is more prostrate before his viands than yourself. Moderation declares the sage. Accept all that comes with equal content, the thought held high above all. When the daily functions are fulfilled I have done nothing; the soul is no participant in these. Advance towards the Eternal and the Transient will imperceptibly drop away from you. No shirking of the duties of our position avails. *Comrades! The battle field is there where the long roll finds you standing.* Your past acts enlisted you under just that flag; fight it out there! The universal charge is carried through the vigor of individuals, each acting from his own headcentre and not from that of another. "The duties of a man's own particular calling, although not free from faults, is far preferable to the duty of another, let it be ever so well pursued." (1) On this plane we are a body militant; on the next plane we shall transform this activity, but as long as individuality exists, it would seem that each must move in an orbit of his own. There is as much egotism in snatching at the burden not meant for us, as in refusing that which is. Do all necessary acts promptly and with your best ability, abandoning at once all care for the result. Do you say this is not Theosophy? You mistake. True Theosophy is everything that elevates or aids mankind, were it but the singing of a ballad to lighten another's toil. "It is not that you must rush madly or boldly out *to do, to do*. Do what you find to do. Desire ardently to do it, and even when you shall not have succeeded in carrying out anything but some small duties, some words of warning, your strong desire will strike like Vulcan upon other hearts in the

world, and suddenly you will find that done which you had longed to be the doer of. Then rejoice, that another had been so fortunate as to make such a meritorious Karma. Thus like the rivers running into the unswelling passive ocean, will your desires enter into your heart." Prop this concern for ephemera and forms; heed essentials only, Get to the centre of every vital fact and live there as at the heart of an opal, darting forth prismatic rays of Love and Faith upon all created things.

If we set out upon a journey to lands unknown, we should observe the inhabitants, gathering the spirit of their laws from their manners, ourselves courteous yet cautious with all. So in this passage to the unseen, that which is essential is the spirit of things. What affair is it of mine if this man glows with gratified desire, or that woman shines in undue laces and coquetries? Do I know the principles of their constitution? Can I vouch that these errors are not the mere husk of habit, which dropping-off may reveal a larger kernel of Virtue than I possess? Nor will I hastily become the spiritual bondsman of him who stands above me. He has not exhausted the sum of Truth; tomorrow I shall find a fraction of my own. All these finical distinctions are not of the Eternal. The substratum of all things is Wisdom. The twist of Failure has its strands of silver. The pratings of the fool dissuade men from folly. I have never done anything of myself: a clarion impulse commands my best deeds; high thoughts radiate to me from I know not what sphere. Ask yourself before friend or foe, — "How does the spirit manifest in him?" For above and below it manifests equally. The undeviating brute, true to its every principle, has a volume of teaching for us. We cannot read until we know the alphabet and Nature holds our primer daily before us. Do not hawk Truth about to the careless crowd. Not because you belittle it, (that is impossible,) nor yet yourself, (that is immaterial,) but because you must hold fast in silence to all that

you possess to support you in the tests of the future. Nor is Truth a nostrum to be forced down the unready throat. Thereby you disgust a man with Truth; who covets that responsibility? Ah, gentle hearts and virile minds! Are you wounded by the wantonness of those you long to save? These errors are perhaps their appointed teachers in your stead. Error is not exempt from the law! Can Love check a cyclone in mid career, or does Reason outrun the whirlwind? Desire has a lustier voice than yours. Let these errant ones wisely alone. Presently when success is at an ebb, or the complacent Ego is stung by pride or pain, they will hear the low plaint of the soul. Then, their state related to yours, they will turn to you as the heliotrope to the sun. Trust to the law of spiritual affinity. He for whom you have a thought will be attracted to you for it; he will in some way ask it of you. Distrust the intellect in these replies. Only the dwellers of the upper levels draw their thought crystal pure from the Fountain-head of Mind. Below, sympathy is the universal solvent; its ardent fusion welds mankind. Speak to me in our common language; it is that of the heart. You cannot so much as tie up a straying rosetree without sympathy. Try it, and the tender shoots are nipped as by a frost. Do you say that it is hard that you should not help others? Perhaps you only want to help them in your own way. The difference between loving a man for himself, and loving him for myself, is the difference between "heaven" and "hell." There is no hell but that which we create in our hearts, and selfishness is its yawning portal. Effort for Wisdom is help for all; he who thinks wisely does a deed of beneficence. Beneath generous yearnings lurks sometimes the wish that this "I," shall become influential or admired, have clients and suitors in the anteroom. Lest I deceive myself I will mutely speed my good wishes to all. Only when we have learned how to preserve a wise silence, will the first stammerings of speech come to us. Speak then from your own knowledge, simply, without trying to adorn Truth. Many of our

most valued writers are at times too transcendent, too erudite for us of the lower level. As the great orator or actor sees one face grow towards his from out the vast field of faces, and concentrating his burning purpose into that focus, sees streaming thence the homogeneous force which electrifies the throng, — so I would have each writer among you address his thought to some especial comrade within his mind, that you may drop this mantle of remoteness, and let us feel you tense and vibrant with helpfulness, pressing close to our side. The West needs a more ringing note than the mystic Orient mind. Let the spirit of your nation speak through your work and to your fellows every word will be an occult charm.

Why are we so impatient that we do not receive the accolade of accepted duty from those Royal Souls who proceed us on the Way? "They also serve who only stand and wait." (2) He who cannot wait contentedly may be sure he cannot serve. We must master the diurnal before we can overcome the spiritual. Some say that a heroic deed is easier than submission to pinpricks. We may survive Niagara when a drop of water per second on the brain is madness. Friends; the struggle for the Eternal is not one daring deed nor yet hundreds of them. It is a calm unbroken forgetfulness of the lower self for all time. Begin it on your present plane. You have within you the same guide that the Masters possess. By obeying It, they have become what they are. Hark! A voice resounds within. "Know thy true Self; it is thy guide." If the voice seems silent, it is perhaps because you ask with the mind only, which is a higher kind of curiosity. When a spiritual need cries out within you, the answer will come with a flash to the reverent listener. But in all the three worlds there is no power to save you but your own. When we have exhausted the possibilities of growth on our present plane, we rise naturally to a higher level. If here we find a Master, it is because we have come

into the region where he dwells. Better than desiring to deserve is deserving to desire. Of this be sure. All that is rightfully yours will come to you. So reads the Law.

As a mountain climber leans forward, treads zig-zag, counteracting gravity and the air's resistance, so shall you walk with care. We do not know what moral resistance we arouse, what unseen evil lurks near, what stone our passage may loosen to fall on those below. We do not know the delicate adjustment of this aerial world. Keep eyes and mind fixed on the heights above, lest the yawning abyss from which you rose, attract you. Distrust your emotions, your thoughts above all. An insidious thought, like a traitor in the fortress, tends outward to the legions of evil and would deliver you up to them. Who knows where the ripples of a hasty thought may end? We are pledged by our theosophic vow to do naught that can dishonor our Society. What more dishonoring than unjust, angered or vagrant fancies which corrupt the atmosphere of others and may breed a moral pestilence. "He that hateth his brother is a murderer." (3) Perhaps there are times when this is literally true. "If he does not love his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God, Whom he hath not seen?" Pass this word along the line; — "Eternal vigilance is the price of safety."

You who are inclined to dispute these thoughts, do better; ignore them. They are a life experience, not meant for you who have it not, nor are you once named herein. They are true from one standpoint and for those upon the same plane. Hereafter all must alchemize virtues and vices alike. Be not discouraged at these necessary transitions; they do not convict you of radical error. Give me an unknown seed; its potentiality is a secret from me, but in faith I plant and tend it. As it waxes to the budding glories of branch and flower, and thrills with the fecund boon of fruitage, I am no whit the loser, and hidden at the root of this larger

heritage, the same seed remains life bestowing and true. Thus Knowledge is not final; it must expand and germinate or it is but a dead thing. "Veil upon veil shall lift, but there shall be veil upon veil behind." (4)

Does he who writes thus always follow his own teachings? *No!* A hundred, a thousand times, no! Deluded, he climbs by devious paths and from the very brink of attainment, falls!

"Jove strikes the Titans down. Not when they set about their mountain piling, but when one stone more would complete the work." (5)

Then with toil and pain he rises and cons the chart once more. Beloved Brothers! — and there is nowhere one so lost, so estranged, so low or so great whom this name does not call — he will have received these blows to a benign purpose, if their teachings shall roll away a single stone from your upward path.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Bhagavad Gita. ([return to text](#))
2. Milton. ([return to text](#))
3. Bible. ([return to text](#))
4. Light of Asia. ([return to text](#))
5. Browning. ([return to text](#))

The Path

POETICAL OCCULTISM: III — S. B. J.

SOME ROUGH STUDIES OF THE OCCULT LEANINGS OF THE POETS

Many will find in Whitman, the fullest measure of mystic truths, plainly and significantly stated, to be met with in any modern poet. For instance, a recognition of the reality of Reincarnation, and of its necessity, constantly recurs in his poems. Passages like these attest it: "Believing I shall come again upon the earth after five thousand years. Births have brought us richness and variety, and other births have brought us richness and variety." "And as to you Life, I reckon you are the leavings of many deaths, (no doubt I have died myself ten thousand times before.)" In contemplating an idiot he muses:

"And I knew for my consolation what they knew not,
I knew of the agents that emptied and broke my brother,
The same wait to clear the rubbish from the fallen
tenement,
And I shall look again in a score or two of ages,
And I shall meet the real landlord, perfect and unharmed,
every inch as good as myself."

Are not the "agents," mentioned above, the operations of Karmic law? Among the last lines of the closing poem of his volume are the following:

"I receive now again of my many translations, from my
avatars ascending, while others doubtless await me,
An unknown sphere more real than I dream'd, more direct,
darts awakening rays about me, *So long!*
Remember my words, *I may again return.*"

Neither rhyme nor verse are essential to true poetry. Even words are but its vehicle, and not the poetry itself. Poetry is that manifestation of the mind which excites the imagination and arouses in responsive minds a sense of beauty. All that which does this is poetic in quality: that which does not, which awakens no response, leaving one cold and unimpressed, is prosaic. Poetry, therefore, possesses the rhythmic quality, for beauty appeals to no sense, except through its power of producing rhythmic action upon the brain through the nerves of sight, hearing, etc. Rhythm is a product of harmonious vibration and produces the sensation of beauty by its play upon the nerves in a succession of reiterated, regular groups of impressions. All sensations of ugliness, etc., which are the causes of pain and disease, are due to the discordant impressions made by irregularity in the series of vibrations. Thus does strict mathematical law underlie all effects of beauty. All poetry is in some way rhythmic, and arouses rhythmic action.

The highest poetry is truth made manifest in the guise of beauty. Poets have often expressed in verse their feeling of the total inadequacy of words to present to others the sublimity and beauty of the thoughts which at moments occur to them. The poetic temperament is one which enables an approach to that state which some exalted men attain in perfection, and which is the ultimate destiny of the entire human race. The poet perceives fragments of the Divine thought as embodied in natural materials; he reads pages of the great book of Creation and interprets more or less clearly the significance of the symbols that exist on every hand in growing things, in things inanimate, in the waters and the heavens, and in the thoughts, sentiments, passions and emotions of men. In assuming the mental state which may be called the *poetic attitude*, he throws himself into rapport with his Higher self, his *atma*, and thus obtains a glimpse of the eternal

truth, so much of which his memory retains as accords with his personality and with the nature of his mood; of this he incorporates in poetic form that which his power of expression enables him to give. Walt Whitman characterizes this state in his lines:

"I lie abstracted and hear beautiful tales of things and the reasons of things,
They are so beautiful I nudge myself to listen,
I cannot say to any person what I hear — I cannot say it to myself — it is very wonderful!"

The more unconscious one becomes of physical surroundings the more clearly does his mind act; its operations are attended with less friction. By withdrawing his attention from bodily environment he enters upon the plane of the higher consciousness. This accounts for the greater ease with which mental work proceeds after one has been engaged in it for some little time; it absorbs his attention so that the surrounding objects and circumstances no longer distract it. In other words, the mental machinery settles down to smooth running, after overcoming the various hitches and obstructions attending the starting of the train of thought. Everyone knows how earnest devotion to any object makes him oblivious to all else. Under such conditions one, in reality, loses consciousness and is merged in the object. Self, the illusory Self, simply consists in a sense of the existence of the body and the relations borne to it by surrounding objects.

Therefore, in concentration of the mind upon the object lies the true secret of power, and the man who best knows how to do this is the most powerful among his fellows. The best work is that done when one is least conscious of material environment. This accounts for remarkable examples of work done in a

somnambulistic state when all consciousness of physical surroundings is lost, and the Self becomes so absorbed in the object that on returning to ordinary consciousness it cannot remember the process of its most perfect activity of thought. And yet people refuse to accept the truth of Reincarnation because they cannot remember, in this gross physical state, their former existences through the intervening *Devachanic* periods when their consciousness was lifted to a plane above the thralldom of matter!

Whoever knows anything of ceremonial magic, whether practically or theoretically, recognizes the necessity of rhythmic action, or the institutions of a regularly recurring set of vibrations. Many will testify to the marvels wrought by the earnest repetitions of a rhythmic formula. It seems likely that the transfer of consciousness and the performance of phenomenal feats by Adepts are wrought by their command of some formula or method which enables them instantly and perfectly to achieve the harmonious condition of mental vibration crudely acquired by novices only by elaborate processes. The logical inference may be drawn that the purpose of the rhythmic form of poetry is not only to arouse harmonious thoughts in the minds of hearers or readers, but is due to the fact that the poet, by subjecting his mind to a rhythmic flow of thought, opens it to the reception of impressions from the highest source of thought. In the words "I nudge myself to listen" the poet strikingly and graphically depicts the effort to maintain his concentration of mind as he lies abstracted when he feels his attention slipping away from the sublime mysteries which, in the greatness of their wonder, are beyond his power to realize in any thoughts he may frame. Poets are often unconscious of the full greatness of the truths they reveal after the moment of their receptive state has passed, but they, perhaps, awake to a sense of the true significance of their

words years after.

This concentration of mind is insisted on in the Hindu systems in many different ways. It is called by them *Ekkragrata* or *one-pointedness*. In the dialogues the expression is constantly used, and Krishna is said to say to Arjuna (in *Bhagavad-Gita*). "Has thou listened to me with thy mind fixed on one point?" It is to bring about such a condition that practitioners of Hatha Yoga — which in English simply means any practice tending to develop psychical powers, such as mediumship and the like — prescribe that the Yogee shall sit with his sight concentrated upon the tip of his nose. And this practice, although scarcely commendable, has a scientific basis which shows that the much belittled Aryans had a wonderful fund of knowledge. The fixing of the eyes upon the tip of the nose puts the focus about three inches from the eyeball, and that produces first, concentration, because of the effort to remain fixed, and secondly, a hypnotic state in which trance results with psychic vision and the like. They prescribed it for another reason not likely to be admitted by our science; three inches from the eyes was said by them to be the clairvoyant point.

Our poet Whitman, whether he was aware of it or not, constantly enunciated the doctrine of Karma. In "Assurances," to be found in *Leaves of Grass*, he says:

I need no assurances. I am a man who is pre-occupied of his own soul;

I do not doubt that from under the feet and beside the hands and face I am cognizant of, are now looking faces I am not cognizant of, calm and actual faces.

I do not doubt but the majesty and beauty of the world are latent in any iota of the world.

I do not doubt I am limitless, and that the universes are limitless; in vain I try to think how limitless.

I do not doubt that the orbs and the systems of orbs play their swift sports through the air on purpose, and that I shall one day be eligible to do as much as they, and more than they.

I do not doubt that temporary affairs keep on and on millions of years.

I do not doubt interiors have their interiors, and exteriors have their exteriors, and that the eyesight has another eyesight, and the hearing another hearing, and the voice another voice.

I do not doubt that the passionately-wept deaths of young men are provided for, and that the deaths of young women and the deaths of little children are provided for.

(Did you think life was so well provided for, and Death, the purport of all life, not well provided for?)

I do not doubt that wrecks at sea, no matter what the horror of them, no matter, whose wife, child, husband, father, lover, has gone down, are provided for to the minutest points.

I do not doubt that whatever can possibly happen anywhere at any time, is provided for in the inherences of things.

I do not think Life provides for all and for Time and Space, but I believe Heavenly Death provides for all.

Here he dwells upon the belief that all things are provided for. It would be error to say that he was a fatalist, just as it is a mistake to hold that the Mohammedan doctrine of "Kismet" is pure fatalism. Edwin Arnold in "Pearls of the Faith," enlarges on that pearl called *Al-Kadar*, in these words:

"When ye say *Kismet*, say it wittingly, O, true believers! under Allah's throne place is not left for those accursed three, 'Destiny,' 'Fortune,' 'Chance.' Allah alone ruleth his

children: *Kismet* ye shall deem each man's allotted portion *

* *"

And Whitman plainly states that the provision which is made for all the happenings is a provision existing "in the inherences of things," and not a fatalistic decree by an irresponsible Almighty.

He also says that he is limitless. This is the doctrine of the Upanishads. Everyone is limitless, for Ishwara, the Lord, dwells in the heart of every mortal being. Jesus also, said: "the kingdom of heaven is *within* you." Now the kingdom of heaven cannot be apart from God, so that the Nazarene herein says the same thing as the Upanishads.

Again, in the lines, "I do not doubt that interiors have their interiors, and exteriors have their exteriors, and that the eyesight has another eyesight, and the hearing another hearing, and the voice another voice," Whitman might be said to be taking the words from the mouths of those sages who in ancient India penned the Upanishads. In those it is incessantly insisted that these interiors really are the Universal Self which is "the eye of the eye and the hearing of the ear." And a knowledge of that is the key to unlock the doors of glory and praise. As it is beautifully said in Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad: (1)

"This Self is the footstep of everything, for through it one knows everything. And as one can find again by footsteps what was lost, thus he who knows this finds glory and praise."

And further, "Therefore, now, also, he who thus knows that he is Brahman (the Self) becomes all this, and even the Devas cannot prevent it, for he himself is their Self."

FOOTNOTE:

1. Bri-Up. I Adh., 4 Brah., 7. ([return to text](#))

The Path

APOLLONIUS AND THE MAHATMAS: II — S. B.

(Concluded.)

When Apollonius asked about the wise men whom Alexander the Great was said to have conquered and then held converse with, Phraotes said that they were the Oxydraks, a war-like people who claimed Wisdom though they knew nothing of consequence; the truly wise men dwelt between the Hyphasis and Ganges. Had Alexander gone thither he could not have conquered them, even with ten thousand Achilles and thirty thousand Ajaxes. "For they fight not in battle against advancing enemies, but being holy men, beloved by God, they repulse them through aerial apparitions and lightning flashes."

When Apollonius took his departure Phraotes gave him the following significant letter to the Brahmins:

"The King Phraotes greets his teacher Iarchas and the Wise men with him. Apollonius, the wisest of men, regards you as wiser than himself, and comes to learn from you. Let him not depart without knowledge of all which you yourselves know. For thus nothing of your wisdom will be lost; since no one speaks better than he, or has a truer memory. Let him also behold the throne whereon I sat when then, Father Iarchas, gavest me my kingdom. His attendants also deserve praise for their attachment to such a man. Be thou happy. Be happy all of you."

When they came near the hill where the wise men dwelt their guide was filled with fear, for the Indians stood more in awe of these men than of their own King, and the King who ruled the land where they lived was accustomed to consult them about everything he said or did.

When near a village not a stadium from the hill, a youth approached them, blacker than any Indian, with a gleaming, moon-shaped mark between his eyebrows. He bore a golden anchor, which in India took the place of the Herald's staff. He addressed Apollonius in Greek, which did not astonish him, since all the dwellers in the village [a lamasary?] spoke that tongue but it did astonish the others to hear their master called by name; Apollonius, however, it filled with confidence as he remembered the purpose of his journey. "We have come to men truly wise," he said to Damis "for they have a fore-knowledge of things." Asking the youth what was to be done, he was told: "Those with you remain *here*; thou, however, shall come just as thou art, for so *They* command. In this *They* Apollonius recognized Pythagorean language and he followed with joy.

In one of his conversations with the Egyptian Gymnosophists, years afterwards, Apollonius thus characterized the wise men of India: "I saw the Indian Brahmins who dwell upon the earth and not upon the earth; in a strong fortress though unfortified; and, without possessions, possessing everything." The deep, interior significance of this is evident to a Theosophist. Damis, in the matter-of-fact way often customary with him, also gives these words a literal interpretation, saying that they had their bed upon the earth and strewed the ground with herbs selected by themselves; he himself had seen them floating in the air two ells above the earth; not for hocus pocus — for they despised vain striving — but in order, by thus floating with the sun, to be near and pleasing unto the god. This was what was meant by "upon the earth and not upon the earth." The strong fortress, unfortified, meant the air in which they dwelt, for although they appeared to live under the open heaven, they spread a shadow over themselves, were not wet by the rain, and were in the sunshine whenever they wished. And since they obtained everything the

moment they wished it, Apollonius rightly said that they possessed what they did not possess. "They wear their hair long, they bind a white mitra around their heads, their feet are bare. The form of their clothing resembles that of a sleeveless undergarment; the material is a wool produced by the earth of itself, white like the Pamphylian, but softer, and so fat that oil flows from it. Of this they make their sacred garments, and when another than these men seeks to gather this wool the earth will not release it. By the power of the ring and the staff which they bear every thing can be done, but both are kept as a secret." This personal description by Damis corresponds in certain particulars with what we are told of the Masters to-day. The account of the wool leads some commentators to believe that asbestos is meant.

Iarchas welcomed Apollonius in Greek and asked him for the letter from Phraotes; when Apollonius wondered at his gift of prescience he remarked that a *delta* was lacking in the letter, left out by mistake, and so it proved. After reading the letter Iarchas asked: "What dost thou think of us?"

And Apollonius replied: "As no other person in the land whence I came, as my journey hither shows."

"What makest thou think that we know more than thou dost?"

"I believe," answered Apollonius, "that your knowledge is deeper and much more divine."

Iarchas hereupon said: "Others are accustomed to ask the new comer whence he comes and for what purpose; the first sign of our wisdom shall be this: that the stranger is not unknown to us. So then, test this:"

Hereupon he told Apollonius his history from father and mother down, what he had done in Aega?, how Damis had come to him, what tidings of importance had happened on the way, etc. As

Apollonius asked in surprise whence came that knowledge.

Iarchas answered: "Thou also earnest gifted with this wisdom, but not yet with all of it."

"And wilt thou teach me all thy wisdom?" asked Apollonius.

"By all means, and in ungrudging abundance, for this is wiser than miserly to conceal that which is worthy of knowing. Besides, Apollonius, I see thou hast been richly gifted by Mnemosyne, and she is the one among the gods whom we most love.

"Dost thou also behold," asked Apollonius, "of what manner my nature is?"

"We see all peculiarities of the soul, for we know them by thousandfold indications," replied Iarchas.

When mid-day came they rose in the air and did homage to the sun. The youth who bore the anchor was then told to go and provide for the companions of Apollonius. Swifter than the swiftest of birds he went and returned, saying: "I have provided for them." He was then commanded to bring the throne of Phraotes, and when Apollonius had seated himself thereon they continued their conversation. Iarchas told him to ask what he wished, for he had come to men who knew all things. Apollonius asked if they knew themselves, for he believed that they, like the Greeks, held knowledge of self to be difficult. But Iarchus answered with an unexpected turning: "We know all things, because first of all we know ourselves; for no one of us can approach this wisdom without first attaining knowledge of self."

Apollonius asked further, what they held themselves to be?

"Gods," answered Iarchas.

"And wherefore?"

"Because we are good men."

Apollonius found so much wisdom in this saying that he made use of it in his speech of defence before the Emperor Domitian.

They talked about the soul and reincarnation, and Iarchas told him that the truth was "as Pythagoras taught you, and as we taught the Egyptians." They spoke about the previous incarnation of Apollonius as steersman of an Egyptian ship, in which capacity he had refrained from following the inducements held out by pirates to let his vessel come into their hands.

Concerning this Iarchas said that refraining from unrighteousness did not constitute righteousness.

The King came to visit the Brahmins and a wonderful feast was prepared for him; everything came of itself: Pythian tripods, and automatic attendants of black bronze, the earth spread out herbs softer than beds to recline on, delicate viands appeared in orderly succession, etc. The accounts of these phenomena occasioned great remark during the subsequent career of Apollonius, and people would persist in mixing them up with the teachings of the master just as today they inextricably confound Madame Blavatsky's famous cup and saucer with Theosophy. But we are told that Apollonius did not concern himself with phenomena; when he saw these wonderful things he did not ask how they were done, nor to be taught to do them, but he contented himself with admiring them. And we are also told that the marvelous things he did were not accomplished through ceremonial magic, but through the perfection of his wisdom.

Damis was subsequently allowed to come to the Brahmins and when he asked about the composition of the world and the four elements they replied that there were five — the fifth being ether, which was to be regarded as the primal source of the gods.

"For everything that breathes the air is mortal; that which drinks the ether is immortal and divine," said Iarchas. He also said that the world was to be regarded as a living being of both sexes, having a more ardent love for itself than that of one person to another, being united and bound to itself." Damis learnt much from his intercourse with the Brahmins, but he wrote that at the secret discourses Apollonius was alone with Iarchas, and from there originated the four books written by the former. Iarchas, said Damis, gave Apollonius seven rings bearing the names of the seven planets, and Apollonius wore them one after the other according to the name of the day of the week.

The foregoing is an incomplete account of the remarkable journey and experience of Apollonius, as is necessitated by the limits of a brief article.

Many passages of deep wisdom have had to be passed over, and many remarkable things are told, hard to understand, but which, there is reason to believe, have an occult significance.

The Path

THE HERMETIC PHILOSOPHY: II — B.

(Concluded from the July Number.)

"The music of the spheres" is not a mere figure of speech, but an actuality.

The Soul of the World has its central Sun whose life throbs pulsate throughout immensity. If we study the phenomena and conditions of either crystallization or organization we shall find that every atom in the vast universe is set to music. There is the pean of life, and the dirge of death, the major and the minor key. The rhythm is the same whether in the ebb or flow of life, but the serried columns march in opposite directions. The Unity lies back of all phenomena in the infinite ocean, the universal solvent, as the crystal lies latent, potential, unmanifested, in the solution of salt. So all things exist potentially in the ether. The real form of everything is perfect, essential, divine. Only the effigy appears with ebb and flow; with swell and cadence like martial music. Only in the Garden of the Gods can the perfect flower and fruit appear. There is but one approximation to perfect form to be apprehended by mortals — the Sphere — and even this is ideal or geometrical, not actual. The dimensions of space pertain to objects: objects exist in time, and the essence of time is motion. (1) Imagine the intelligence of man posited in an ocean of Ether, a thinking principle, without form or extension, and the fallacy of space as generally conceived becomes manifest, and disappears. Matter, space, time, and motion, these pertain to outwardly manifested existence. Read backward the genesis of crystal, plant, animal or man, and one plan, one basis is discovered in all.

"Out from the shore of the great unknown" come trooping these effigies of diviner being, these shapes of diviner forms. In the

beginning was the Word, the Fiat has gone forth. Listen O! man to the music of Bath Col the voice of thine own soul. Adonai speaks. If thou art *conscious*, His voice is *conscience*. It is the memory of the voice of God in fields elysian, thy former divine abode. Thou mayest involve in thy life on earth thine Augoeides, "being of light," a "gleaming brightness." This is thy holy mission, the meaning of thy human shape, thy manly powers, thy subtle intellect, thy holy intuitions. These are but the seed of larger life, the bird of promise. The unfolded flower shall be thy highest aspiration, thy holiest wish, and its ripened fruit shall bear thee to the garden of the gods, with knowledge and power as thy servants. Ask but thine own soul, counsel with thy better self, and if thou findest not within the silence the answering voice, then return to thy wallowing in the mire, and the husks which the swine do eat, rather than to thy *father's house* which thou hast made, and will henceforth continue to make a den of thieves, at best, a whited sepulchre.

Now let us read the Tablet of Hermes, bearing in mind the fact that man is an epitome of the universe, thus actually or potentially containing all that is, and if he knows how to read and to unfold his own nature, powers and possibilities, he may read thereby the universe, unfold its laws, comprehend its plan, and if he be master of himself, thus revealed to his understanding, his powers shall be co-extensive with knowledge. He shall possess the MASTERS' WORD.

[This tablet is printed in full in September *Path*, 1886]

The reader is referred to *Isis Unveiled* for explanation of the Azoth to which, on the physical plane, the tablet refers, (2) and I might say in passing, that those who complain that the Brothers closely guard occult secrets, will do well, even at this late day, to read *Isis Unveiled*, There are several matters contained in those

two volumes which the careless reader, and complaining "theosophist" has possibly overlooked. In fact there is less concealment in all occult matters than the ignorant and time-serving suppose. There can be no better safe-guards to Royal Secrets, than ignorance and defective vision, for which defects there is no surgery or remedy outside ourselves.

"God saith, Let the man endued with a *mind*, mark, consider, and *know himself well*. * * And before they give up their bodies to the death of them, they hate their senses, knowing their works and operations.

"Rather, I, that am the mind itself, will not suffer the operations or works, which belong to the body, to be finished and brought to perfection in them, but being the *Porter* and *Doorkeeper* I will shut up the entrances of evil, and cut off the thoughtful desires of filthy works.

"But to the foolish, and evil, and wicked, and envious, and covetous, and profane, I am far off, giving place to the revenging demon * *

"For the sleep of the body is the sober watchfulness of the mind, and the shutting of my eyes, the true sight, and my *silence* great with child; and full of good, and the pronouncing of my words the blossoms and fruits of good things." (3)

"Wherefore we must be bold to say that *an earthly man is a mortal god, and that the heavenly God is an immortal Man*." (4)

Compare with this the following from the writings of Plato:

"He who has not even a knowledge of common things, is a brute among men; he who has an accurate knowledge of human concerns alone, is a man among brutes; but he who knows all that can be known by intelligent inquiry is a god among men."

In these brief and imperfect outlines enough has been given to show the thoughtful student, the agreement of the Hermetic doctrines with the teachings of Theosophy, indeed, any real progress in the comprehension of the one, may be taken as a key to the other. These, together with the teachings of the Kabbala, are but different forms of the *Secret Doctrine*; none of them are to be fully apprehended by the intellect alone; but only when the mind is *illuminated* by the light of understanding, and the process by which this illumination is to be achieved, through diligent inquiry, unselfish work, and repression of the senses, appetites and passion, has been often pointed out, and is found repeated and reiterated in all these writings. If any, therefore, are disposed to complain that they are left to grope in darkness, they have no one to blame but themselves. To the conscientious student, the constant wonder is at the richness of the feast spread out on every hand.

Like a beautiful landscape to the blind, or music to the deaf, are the pages of wisdom to the ignorant and selfish. Eyes have they but they see not, ears have they but they hear not, and so long as they are joined to their idols they may as well be let alone. But to the earnest disciple, to the true seeker of *The Path* these are the everlasting verities: let them run and not be weary, walk and not faint, seek, and they shall *surely find*, desire, and they shall attain, knock, and the door of knowledge shall open, obey, and they shall in turn command, labor, and they shall obtain rest.

"Rest is not quitting
The busy career,
Rest is the fitting
Of self to one's sphere.
'Tis the brook's motion,
Clear, without strife,
Fleeting to ocean

After this life.
'Tis living and serving
The highest and best,
'Tis *onward unswerving*,
And this is true rest."

FOOTNOTES:

1. "We take no notice of time save by its loss" *i.e.* its passage or motion. ([return to text](#))
2. *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 1, p. 507, *et seq* ([return to text](#)).
3. Pymander, p. 33, *et seq*, edition of 1650. ([return to text](#))
4. IV Book, p 60. ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE ELEMENTALS, THE ELEMENTARY SPIRITS: I — C. H. A.

Bjerregaard

AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEM AND HUMAN BEINGS.

The subject of my paper is "*The Elementals, the Elementary Spirits, and the relation between them and human beings.*"

I will endeavor to give an outline of some of the teachings of the occult science relative to these beings, their relationship to the universal powers and to us, and our power over them.

In the general statement I shall probably not be able to say anything new to students of the occult forces of nature, except it be in the illustrations I shall bring forth from what I consider new sources, from Leibnitz's Monadology, namely:

In Leibnitz's Monads, I think we may see the very substance of the astral sphere, in which the elementary spirits "wrap themselves," according to a statement in the Kabbala. We may even see more, we may even look upon them as the Elementals themselves.

If Leibnitz's Monads may be considered not only as Elementals, but also the very substance of the astral sphere, and if it be so, that according to the Zohar, "the spirits, when they come down clothe themselves with air, or wrap themselves in elements," then it becomes a subject of the greatest importance to us how or by what means we may influence the astral sphere, or in other words, it becomes very important by *what kind of Monads* we are surrounded.

As a help to the proper consideration of this momentous question, I shall offer some information regarding the natural auras or objective spheres, that surround us, and also some historic facts

regarding the use of aromatic vapors, odors, &c.

Having come so far with my paper, I shall say a few words about our power over the elementals "clothed with air and wrapped in elements," by defining the power of *Mind* and by describing those — almost unknown — small nerve centres of the human hand, called *the Pacinian corpuscles*.

I shall only stop to define these two tools, the *head* and the *hand*, and leave out, for the present, the third of the human trinity, the *heart*.

Having defined the power of mind and the hand, I shall come to a close with a few suggestions as to the use of these powers regarding the subject under consideration.

Elementary Spirits are defined in "Isis Unveiled" to be "the disembodied *souls*. The depraved souls have at some time prior to death separated from themselves their divine spirits, and so lost their chance for immortality. Eliphas Levi and some other Kabbalists make little distinction between elementary spirits who have been men, and those beings which people the elements, and are the blind forces of nature."

The points to mark in this definition are these: (1) Elementary Spirits are disembodied *souls*; (2) they are disembodied souls of *the good*, and (3) of *the depraved*, i.e., of those, in whom the higher principles have never been developed, nor even born into light. They are the *shades* of those who, by their sins and moral misery, have closed the most interior principles of the constitution of man, and having closed the door against them, have no part in life, but sooner or later become dissolved and disintegrated in the surrounding elements.

In the manifestations common among Spiritualists, these Elementary Spirits play the most prominent parts. The Elementals

do not. We shall concern ourselves mainly with the Elementals.

Elementals are defined in "Isis Unveiled" as "the creatures *evolved* in the four kingdoms of earth, air, fire, and water, and called by the Kabbalists gnomes, sylphs, salamanders, and undines. They may be termed the forces of nature, and will either operate effects as the servile agents of general law, or may be employed by the disembodied spirits — whether pure or impure — and by living adepts of magic and sorcery, to produce desired phenomenal results. *Such beings never become men.*"

They are in popular mythology and folktales called by a great many names, peris, fauns, elves, brownies, pixies, &c., &c.

They are not disembodied human spirits, but distinct Creations. They have their homes in the astral sphere but are found commonly on earth.

The definition already given from "Isis Unveiled" I will amplify by a few lines I have extracted and translated from the various works of Paracelsus:

"All elements have a soul and are living. The inhabitants of the elements are named *Saganes* (Saganae), *i.e.*, elements. They are not inferior to men; they differ from men by having no immortal soul. They are the powers of Nature, *i.e.*, *they are the ones who do that which is usually ascribed to Nature*. We may call them beings, but they are not of Adam's kin. They eat and drink such substances as in their element serve for eating and drinking. They are clothed, they marry and multiply themselves. They can not be incarcerated, and die like the animals, having no soul."

"They know all that is going on, and do often reveal it to men, who are able to converse with them. But they are very unreliable, and some are very treacherous. They like children and simple minded persons the best. They avoid drunken and beastly men.

They reveal more of their nature to the simple minded and innocent ones than to the learned and arrogant ones. They are rather simple minded themselves."

"There are more women among them than men, and a congregation of women is called a Venus-mount. The fable told about Tannhauser is no mere tale, it is true."

Thus far, we have, perhaps, no difficulty in following Paracelsus, but when we read further into his revelations, our common sense fails to comprehend the mysteries laid open. Yet, I will say for myself, that though I can not comprehend it, I can readily apprehend such a state of things as that described in the following words:

"They can come to us and mix with our society. They can bear us children; but such children do not belong to them, *they belong to us*. We may bring these elemental wives to us by faith, pure thinking and our image-making powers. When they enter our sphere of existence and copulate with us, they appear, on account of their strange manners, like gods."

"Those that live in the water are called Nymphs or Undines, those in the air Sylphs, those of the earth Pygmies or Gnomes, those of the fire Salamanders. Nymphs or Undines look much like human beings, the others differ more or less."

"It is particularly the Undines or Nymphs that unite with men. When an Undine marries a man, both she and her child become souls."

From the Kabbala we can draw many statements corroborating the testimony of Paracelsus. In fact all the most valuable teachings *we possess*, relative to Elementals, as far *as they are printed and given to the public*, are derived from the Kabbala. According to it all activity, all events, in History and in Nature, are

in the hands of spirits, either Elementals or Elementary. We find them as ministering everywhere, from the Zodiac down to the smallest worm. We find them mentioned by name, those of the sphere of the Shechina as well as those presiding over the four elements.

In *Jalkut Chadash* it is stated: "There is not a thing in the world, not the least herb, over which is not set a spirit."

The Kabbalistic work *Berith Menucha* (by Abraham, a son of Isaac, a Jew from Granada), their names are given:

The spirit that presides over fire is named *Jehuel*, and under him range seven other spirits. Prince *Michael* is set over water, and under him rule seven other spirits. *Jechiel* rules over the wild animals and these rule under him. *Anpiel* rules over the birds and two princes rule beside him. *Hariel* controls the cattle and besides him three spirits. *Samniel* rules the creatures of earth and water and *Mesannahel* the worms. *Deliel* together with three princes command the fishes; *Ruchiel* and three others, the winds; *Gabriel*, the thunder; *Nariel*, the hailstorm; *Maktuniel*, the rocks and *Alpiel* the fruitful trees, while *Saroel*, the unfruitful. *Sandolfon* governs men.

These names are important, as you know, for they are the key to the respective powers of each of these spirits.

As stated in "Isis Unveiled," Eliphas Levi and other Kabbalists make no or very little distinction between Elementals and Elementary Spirits. This cannot be right by Levi to do. There are essential differences. The *Elementals never become men, nor were they ever men*. The Elementary spirits as defined by Levi resemble very much such spirits as those we are familiar with in ordinary spiritism. I shall in this paper only give them a passing notice and speak about the Elementals mainly.

From the definition already given, it is evident that the Elementals exist in a great variety of forms, some are mere forces of nature, pure abstract beings; others have some kind of body, at least, when we speak of gnomes, sylphs, undines, &c., we represent them in figures more or less human.

In the Kabbala and other Jewish secret books and traditions, the Elementals are represented as a middle race of beings, which, by a general name, the Jews called *Schedim* (the male Ruchin and the female Lilin). They are really the lowest and the dregs of the spiritual orders. They are divided into four classes: (1) Those of Fire; these cannot be seen with the eye; they mean to do good, and often help men. They understand the Thora and have communion with the angelic world. They are masters of many of nature's secrets.

It was these beings which Solomon employed, according to Mohammedan traditions, in erecting the temple. We are told, (1) that "the male genii to erect various public buildings, among others also, the temple. The female genii he obliged to cook, to bake, to wash, to weave, to spin, to carry water, and to perform other domestic labors. The stuffs they produced Solomon distributed among the poor."

Much curious information can be had from these Mohammedan traditions. Solomon, we are told, once asked an Elemental, who appeared to him in the form of a fish, as to how many there were of that kind, and received the following reply: "There are of my species alone, seventy thousand kinds, the least of which is so large that thou would appear in its body like a grain of sand in the wilderness."

We are further told, that Solomon, by means of a certain stone, "had dominion over the kingdom of spirits, which is much greater than that of man and beasts, and fills up the whole space between

the earth and heaven. Part of these spirits believe in the only God, but others are unbelieving. Some adore the fire; continually others the sun; others, again, the different stars; and many of them even water. The first hover round the pious, to preserve them from evil and sin; but the latter seek in every possible manner to torment and to seduce them, which they do the more easily, since they render themselves invisible, or assume any form they please. Solomon desired to see the genii in their original form. An angel rushed like a column of fire through the air, and soon returned with a host of demons and genii, whose appalling appearance filled Solomon, in spite of his dominion over them, with horror. He had no idea that there were such misshapen and frightful beings in the world. He saw human heads on the necks of horses, with asses' feet; the wings of eagles on the dromedary's back; and the horns of the gazelle on the head of the peacock. Astonished at this singular union, he prayed the angel to explain it to him: "This is the consequence," replied the angel, "of their wicked lives and their shameless intercourse with men, beasts and birds; for their desires know no bounds; and the more they multiply, the more they degenerate."

(2) The second group consists of those of Fire and Air; they are lower in order than the former, those of Fire, but they are good and wise. They are also invisible. They inhabit, like the former, the upper regions.

(3) The third group consists of those of Fire, Air and Water, they are sometimes visible to our senses.

(4) The fourth class is also made of Fire, Air and Water, but have besides an element of Earth in their constitution. They may be fully seen by human eyes.

This class and those of the third are of a wicked disposition and deceive men, and are glad to do us harm. They have no moral

sense at all. Some of them live in the waters, some in the mountains and deserts, and some in filthy places. Some of them are hideous to look upon, and are said to be met with even in open daylight.

The two first classes mentioned stand bodily next to men and are very dangerous. They possess extraordinary powers, standing, as they do, between the visible and the invisible worlds. They have some knowledge of the future and are particularly wise in regard to natural things. Some of these have in the time past been worshipped as gods and national deities. The Kabbala is quite emphatic in warnings against them, saying that they are untrustworthy because "their natural affinities are towards the lower realms of existence, rather than the higher."

All these elementals, whatever class they belong to are subject to dissolution. *Their lives are not centred on an eternal principle.* They die — and that is the end of them.

It is also worthy of notice that there is a close parallel between the teachings of the Kabbala on this point with that of the *Vishnu Parana* regarding the composition of the descending order of emanations. According to the Kabbala, as we have just heard, the Elementals of the first order were pure Fire, those of the next were Fire plus Air, those of the next Fire, Air, and Water, while those of the lowest order consisted of Fire, Air, Water plus Earth. Each of them as they live on a lower plane add a new element to their constitution. The same law is found in the groupings of the elements according to the *Vishnu Purana*. The purest one is Ether and has only one property, sound. The next is Air which to sound adds touch; the next is Fire, which to sound and touch adds colour; the next is Water, which to the three former adds a fourth, taste; the last is *Earth*, which to all the former adds smell, thus possessing five properties.

The harmony in the teachings of these two authorities, resting as they do on so different a basis is an additional argument for the truths of their teachings on the main subject.

Thus far I have been speaking of *Elementals* in the commonly accepted sense. But, it appears to me that there is another order of beings which also may be called *Elementals*, though perhaps in another sense.

I mean the ten *Sephiroth*.

The Kabbala teaches that the *En-Soph* (the One without end, the Boundless) is present in the *Sephiroth* or "intelligences," by means of which creation is effected.

These Sephiroth, these "intelligences" or spheres, as they also have been called, these spiritual substances are emanations from the *En-Soph* in which they existed from all eternity. They are emanations, not creations. A creation implies diminution of strength, but an emanation does not, hence the ten Sephiroth form among themselves, and with the *En-Soph*, a strict unity. They are in fact only differing from the *En-Soph* in the same way as light differs from its source, the fire. They are boundless on one side of their being, but finite manifestations on the other. They are both infinite and finite.

It has been stated that the whole world is like a gigantic tree full of branches and leaves, the root of which is the spiritual world of the Sephiroth; or it is like an immense sea, which is constantly filled by a spring everlastingly gushing forth its streams. That which thus has been said about the world applies equally to the Sephiroth. They are like trees rooted in the *En-Soph*, but blossoming and bearing fruit in the world. They are open within but closed without. Though they partake of the divine nature, they are on the outer side the garments of the Most High. This

their outer side is their bodily form, and it is with this *we* may come in contact.

It is almost blasphemy to call the outer side of the Sephiroth bodily — for body is to us something very low. Let us, therefore, beware of attaching anything low or mean to Body, when we speak of the Sephiroth. Let us bow down and revere, for we are in the presence of the Holy, even when we in thought rise to the bodily form of the Sephiroth.

The Sephiroth, through the divine power immanent in them, uphold the World. *They are the Elemental Forces of the World*. Through them flows all Power and all Mercy. Yea, the En-Soph is revealed through the Sephiroth, and becomes incarnate in them. It is stated in the Kabbala that the En-Soph, through various Sephiroth, became incarnate in Abraham as love, in Isaac as power, in Jacob as beauty, in Moses as firmness, in Aaron as splendor, in Joseph as foundation, etc.

The soul, notwithstanding its connection with the body, if it remain uncontaminated and pure, is able to ascend to the Kingdom of the Sephiroth and to "command them". But great mysteries surround the secrets connected with this power, and but few have they been who have been pious enough and strong enough to be admitted.

That the Sephiroth are powers, "Elementals," and not individual beings is evident from their division into three groups, intelligence, animation and matter.

Each of the three groups is again subdivided, the first into (1) the Crown or the inscrutable Height, (2) the creative Wisdom, (3) the conceiving Intellect. The result of the combination of the latter two: the creative Wisdom and the conceiving Intellect, is in the Kabbala called knowledge (= Logos), which certainly shows these

three Sephiroth to be spiritual substances, rather than individualities according to the common acceptance of the term. But it is not enough that we escape the mistakes which we would fall into if we regarded the Sephiroth as individualities, we must also beware of regarding them as mere *abstractions*, which the terms wisdom and intellect might lead us into. We shall never arrive at the truth, much less the power of associating with these celestials, until we return to the simplicity and fearlessness of the primitive ages, when men mixed freely with the gods, and the gods descended among men and guided them in truth and holiness.

The *first* group of the Sephiroth rests in so sublime an atmosphere and so near the Deity, that we can know nothing of their nature or activity.

The *second* group of the Sephiroth exercises its power over the moral world, and consists of (1) infinite Grace, (2) divine Justice, and (3) Beauty, which is the connecting link between Grace and Justice.

Here again we have to do neither with mere moral states nor with abstractions, but with embodiments of living and moving realities. Human eyes can, however, neither see them, nor can human hands touch them, for they are far removed from them, existing as they do on another plane of existence. Yet, he who *keeps his virtue*, and who knows the key to the chain of existences, can bring them out from their own realm and into his own and cause them to act.

The *third* group of the Sephiroth stands in relation to Matter in the same way as the other two stand to the Mind and the Heart, and may be called *Elementals par excellence*. They are called Firmness, Splendor, primary Foundation and Kingdom. —

I now wish to engage your attention by describing to you Leibnitz's Monads. His monads have all the characteristics of Elementals, at the same time, that they seem to be purely physical molecules. But this very duplicity is an argument for my theory, that Leibnitz's monad is a faithful definition of an Elemental. If it should be proved that they are not Elementals, and I doubt that that can be proved, they will at least serve as *illustrations* as to what an Elemental is.

Leibnitz (2) formulates his conception of substance in direct opposition to Spinozism. To Spinoza substance is dead and inactive, but to Leibnitz's penetrating powers of mind everything is living activity and active energy. In holding this view he comes infinitely nearer the Orient than any other thinker of his day or after him. His discovery that an *active energy forms the essence of substance* is a principle that places him in direct relationship to the seers of the East.

This fact, that the chief points of Leibnitz's philosophy are derived from this conception of an active energy forming the essence of substance, places it at once in our confidence.

From Leibnitz's *Monadology* I translate the following paragraphs:

§1. "The Monad is a *simple substance*, entering into those which are compound; simple, that is to say, without parts."

§2. "Monads are the veritable Atoms of Nature, in one word, the elements of things."

When *Leibnitz* speaks of atoms it must not be understood that he is a materialist. He is far from it. Indeed, his system has been called a spiritualistic *atomistic*. Atoms and Elements to him are SUBSTANCE not *Matter*. They are centres of force or better "spiritual beings, whose very nature it is to act." These elementary particles are vital forces, not acting mechanically, but from an internal

principle. They are incorporeal or spiritual units, inaccessible to all change from without, but only subject to internal movement. They are indestructible by any external force. Leibnitz's monads differ from atoms in the following particulars, which are very important for us to remember, otherwise we shall not be able to see the difference between Elementals and mere matter.

Atoms are not distinguished from each other, they are qualitatively alike, but one monad differs from every other monad, qualitatively; and every one is a peculiar world to itself. Not so with the atoms; they are absolutely alike quantitatively and qualitatively and possess no individuality of their own. Again, the atoms of materialistic philosophy can be considered as extended and divisible, while the monads are mere "metaphysical points" and indivisible. Finally, and this is a point where these monads of Leibnitz closely resemble the Elementals of mystic philosophy, these monads are representative beings. Every monad reflects every other. Every monad is a living mirror of the universe, within its own sphere. And mark this, for upon it depends the power possessed by these monads, and upon it depends the work they can do for us: in mirroring the world, the monads are not mere passive reflective agents, but *spontaneously self-active*; they produce the images spontaneously, as the soul does a dream. In every monad, therefore, the adept may read everything, even the future. Every monad — or elemental — is a looking-glass that can speak.

The monads may from one point of view be called *force*, from another *matter*. To occult science *force* and *matter* are only two sides of the same substance.

Such a doctrine is of course much objected to by people of the modern age, who pretend to possess very fine analytical powers, and yet are unable to conceive of matter under any other

conditions than those cognizable by our coarse senses.

Those who have *intellectual* difficulties in seeing that Brahm is everything and everything is Brahm must take this doctrine *on faith* for awhile. A little earnest practice will lead them to see that truth is not attained through reflection, but through immediate intuition.

If we should desire to look upon these monads as matter, I know of no better comparison than with that which has been called Matter in a *Fourth* state or condition, a condition as far removed from the state of gas as a gas is from a liquid.

If we should desire to look upon these monads as *force*, I know of no better comparison than with that which Faraday called "Radiant Matter" and which by Crooke's experiments has been shown to be so much like mere *force*, or matter completely divested of all the characteristics of bodies that its physical properties have been so modified that it has changed nature and appears under the *form* of force.

In §8 of the Monadology Leibnitz declares that "The Monads have *qualities* — otherwise they would not even be entities." The qualities attributed to them make them appear very much like living rational beings. I am disposed to look upon them as upon those little beings represented by Raphael, as heads resting upon a pair of wings: pure intelligence, or spirits who have not yet attained to bodily life. If they have not a *thinking* soul, they are at least forces that resemble life. Continuing, Leibnitz (§11) says: "We might give the name of *Perfection* (Entelechies) to all monads inasmuch as there is in them a certain Completeness or Perfection. There is a sufficiency which makes them the sources of their own internal actions, and, as it were, incorporeal automata." Says Leibnitz: (§19) "If we choose to give the name of soul to all that has perceptions and desires, in the general sense

which I have just indicated, all simple substances or monads may be called souls."

You see these infinitesimal beings are regarded by the great philosopher very much like intelligent existences; and yet they are very far removed from our conceptions of soul-life and existence. They are like the Elemental of the Kabbala: they never become men.

Continuing his definitions, he says (§60): "The monads are limited, not in the object, but in the mode of their knowledge of the object." That is the objective would have no power over them, but they themselves have only a limited knowledge of the objectivity, hence also a limited power. But that does not preclude the possibility of their being the means of the greatest influence upon the objective world — in the hands, namely, of an intelligent human being or spirit. "They all", says Leibnitz, "tend (confusedly) to the infinite, to the whole; but they are limited and distinguished by the degrees of distinctness in their perception."

Now I quote (§62) a sentence that reechoes the most beautiful philosophy of the Orient. Leibnitz has seen as distinctly as the old nature worshippers of the early Aryans, that "every monad represents the entire universe." This short sentence is the key to all mystical philosophy and to all magic; it is only second to such sentences as these: "God dwells in all things in His fullness," (Vemana verse), and "The world is the image of God," (Sufi philosophy).

It is a common mistake in the world to believe that God and his truth is only to be found in the Grand, in the Large, in the infinitely large.

In opposition to this, much of our mystical and esoteric philosophy points to the infinitely *Small*, declaring, that if we can

become humble enough to descend to nature's workshop, we shall learn more from the "atoms in space" upon which God let fall a "beam of his glory," than from all the magnificent systems of the learned. Hear what Leibnitz himself says, though he is not a mystic. He ought to have been, for his insight was truly remarkable. He declares (§66) "There is a world of creatures, of living things, of animals, of Perfection of souls, in the minutest portion of matter." (§67) "Every particle of matter may be conceived as a garden of plants, or as a pond full of fishes — all swarming with life!"

Keep this in mind, that I am not talking about *atoms of MATTER*, but of *atoms of substance*, real unities, the first principles in the composition of things. *Leibnitz* himself, besides calling these corpuscular units Monads, has also called them *Metaphysical points*, and *Scaliger* called them *seeds of eternity*, and a Persian poet has put it very clearly before us, that an atom is not a unit, by saying, "*Cleave an atom, and you will find in it a Sun.*" Here is the kernel of our subject, the substance of an atom in space is the storehouse of the immanent forces to which elementals, and elementary spirits to some extent, have access, and by means of which they work.

This view is fully corroborated by a representative of modern science, Sir John F. W. Herschel, who has approached very near to the teachings of occult science by declaring the presence of mind in atoms. In the *Fortnightly Review* of 1865, Sir John Herschel stated as follows: "All that has been predicated of Atoms, 'the dear little creatures,' as Hermione said, all their hates and loves, their attractions and repulsions, *according to the primary laws of their being*, only becomes intelligible when we assume the presence of MIND."

These various definitions of the Monads as given by Leibnitz,

answer in many important points exactly to what we find in occult teachings about the Elementals, and I can see no good reason why we should not look upon Leibnitz's Monadology as a work on Elementals.

We are really done with him as far as our subject is concerned, but before dismissing him to turn to other wisdom, permit me to quote a few more passages, though they do not bear directly upon the subjects of monads. He says (§83-86): "Among other differences which distinguish spirits from ordinary souls, there is also this: "That souls in general are living mirrors, or images of the *universe of creatures*, but spirits are, furthermore, images of Divinity itself, or of the Author of Nature, capable of cognizing the system of the universe, and of imitating something of it by architectonic experiments, each spirit being, as it were, a little divinity in its own department. — Hence spirits are able to enter into a kind of fellowship with God. — All spirits constitute the City of God — that is to say, the most perfect state possible under the most perfect of monarchs. — The City of God, this truly universal monarchy, is a moral world within the natural; and it is the most exalted and the most divine among the works of God."

(To be continued.)

FOOTNOTES:

1. Dr. G. Weil: The Bible, the Koran, and the Talmud. ([return to text](#))

2. Leibnitz was born 1646 at Leipzig, and died 1716. According to Schwegler's Hist. of Phil. he was, next to Aristotle, the most highly gifted scholar that ever lived, and according to F. Papillon ("Nature and Life") modern students in various departments of science and philosophy have verified his ideas and endorsed them to a large extent. ([return to text](#))

The Path

THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE: I — *Pilgrim*

Within the symbols and doctrines of the Christian Church may indeed lie hidden all the truths of the Occult Philosophy, and another and abler pen has already traced the correspondences, but it is necessary to realize differences as well as likenesses, and while Christianity, as a definite system, has embodied for the world many noble ideas, it seems to the writer to have been able to display only one fact of the divine jewel of Truth — to have been able to trace only a short line of the celestial circle of Wisdom.

Putting aside all such unphilosophical dogmas, as a personal anthropomorphic God — atonement by the vicarious sacrifice of another — eternal damnation and such like, which may be regarded as the outworks of the Creed, and which indeed many of its own professors deny or minimize, and coming to the essential kernel of the system — the inner stronghold of the faith — that which would be regarded as such by all its truest sons throughout these nearly nineteen centuries of its existence, it would yet seem to be but a one-sided statement — a partial view — compared with the all-embracing Catholicity of the Occult Wisdom.

Unfortunately the outworks and excrescences above referred to, have, during these many centuries, so warped the thoughts and feelings of the populations professing this religion that it is no longer the pure and exalted doctrine as preached by its founder, but something very different. There are, no doubt, here and there good and noble souls, who practice the higher virtues of Christianity, but they are in such a minority that they are quite unable to affect the popular standard.

When one begins to analyse the stupendous outgrowth called

Western Civilization, of which steam and electricity, in their practical uses, may be regarded as the types, and to ask how and by what means this vast fabric has arisen, we are informed by those who are able to see below the mere surface of things that the setting of men's minds in a certain direction must have been the factor, and it is only logical that if a man's highest religious duty is put before him as the saving of his own soul from perdition, a tendency of mind which may be characterized as the supremely selfish must naturally be set in motion. When the converging lines of heredity through many generations have so strengthened this tendency that it has become a potent factor, the development "*in excelsis*" of the purely intellectual faculties as dissociated from the moral will be seen to be the inevitable result, and from this has naturally evolved the Western Civilization which is spoken of with so much pride. But are not nations like trees to be known by their fruits? "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"

What sins are dwelt on with more emphatic reprobation throughout the whole teachings of Christ than those of hypocrisy and cupidity? And where is hypocrisy deeper than within the Christian fold? So deep indeed, that it has become an integral part of the nature, and is no more recognized as a vice than it was by the Pharisees of old. And where is the worship of mammon more rampant than throughout the length and breadth of Christendom? The preachers of the Churches may utter faint-hearted protests, but the nations nevertheless remain prostrate before their idol, and as steam and electricity extend their sway, and new countries are laid open to modern progress, the more primitive races, to avoid extinction, join in the mad competition for wealth. But whether conspicuously shown in the acts of States lustful to conquer fresh territory, or hidden in the individual character, where it displays itself in the haste to grow rich by fair

means or foul, it remains none the less a gnawing canker at the heart of Christendom.

What a gulf there lies between the practice of modern Europe and the divine teachings of the Master.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon Earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

And again: "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

There is probably no teaching more thoroughly altruistic in its character, and which, if it could be literally applied, would exercise so direct and beneficial an influence on the human race as the teaching of Christ, but to the impartial student there seems to be none, the spirit of whose revelation has been more perverted and degraded by his followers of all denominations, and following the spiritual law whose complement on the physical plane may be recognized in the axiom that action and reaction are equal, the moral light to which Christ's teachings soared is the measure which decides the depth to which such teaching, when perverted, must inevitably fall, and Christendom may veritably be said to have become Anti-Christian. (1) All the religions of the world have more or less lost the divine afflatus by which they were originally vivified, but it has been reserved for Christianity to mould the life of the nations from the very blackness of the shadows cast by the "Light of the World."

When we ask to what goal or catastrophe this Western Civilization is hurrying, it is still more necessary to have the eyes of those who are able to read the signs of the times. The following

is an extract from a letter to which many of the above ideas may be traced which was signed "a Turkish Effendi" (in the absence of any right to suggest the real and more authoritative name), and was published by his correspondent in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine of January, 1880:

"The persistent violation for centuries of the great altruistic laws propounded and enjoined by the great founder of the Christian religion, must inevitably produce a corresponding catastrophe; and the day is not far distant when modern civilization will find, that in its great scientific discoveries and inventions, devised for the purpose of ministering to its own extravagant necessities, it has forged the weapons by which it will itself be destroyed. No better evidence of the truth of this can be found than in the fact that Anti-Christendom alone is menaced with the danger of a great class revolution: already in every so-called Christian country we hear the mutterings of the coming storm, when labor and capital will find themselves arrayed against each other — when rich and poor will meet in deadly antagonism, and the spoilers and the spoiled solve, by means of the most recently invented artillery, the economic problems of modern 'progress.' It is surely a remarkable fact that this struggle between rich and poor is specially reserved for those whose religion inculcates upon them as the highest law — the love of their neighbor — and most strongly denounces the love of money. No country which does not bear the name of Christian is thus threatened."

But to return from this long digression, take Christianity, I say, in its loftiest ideal, as taught and practiced by its founder — and it certainly is a very lofty one — altruism in its most sublimated form — self-sacrifice incarnate upon Earth — giving of its life-

blood to raise the sons of men, and drawing all to Him by the sheer force of divine love, until the believer's heart is set on flame, and nothing seems worthy in his eyes short of absolute union with this divine personality who is at once his Saviour, his brother and his God.

Yet were you to analyse the thoughts and feelings of the most ecstatic saint, would they display more than an ardent soul, a devout mind and a holy life?

Those of the Dualist Philosophy might indeed argue that such an one had his feet well planted on the narrow way — but the students of the wider Philosophy of Nature know well that everything on Earth — religion included — is under the governance of natural law. The attainment of perfection is not to be achieved by sentiment alone — *it is a scientific process*, and knowledge is the supreme enlightener.

The devotion of Bhakti is indeed a necessary prelude to progress in the religious life, under the guidance of whichever special cult the neophyte may aspire, but it is as it were the outer court of the Temple, and the Holy of Holies cannot be reached by any save those who have attained knowledge.

Without some previous study of occult writings, this word knowledge will entirely fail to carry home the idea which it is intended to express, and let alone the liability to misinterpretation from this cause, how can anyone pretend to describe it who has himself none of this knowledge, who has not yet trodden one step of the path that leads there, and who can only strain with vague imagination towards the sublime conception of the inmost workings of Nature through her manifold diversity laid bare before the intuitive vision? However, although it is an act of temerity on the writer's part, these few words may convey some idea to those who are no further on the

path than himself.

When the lower states of consciousness have been so welded in the fire of supreme emotion that duty, though involving the most appalling sacrifice, is no longer a thing to strive after with pain and struggle, but is a natural outcome of the life — the absolute expression of unity with nature — when the higher faculties, emotional, ethical and intellectual, whose respective functions may be said to be the perceiving of the Beautiful, the Good, and the True, have been so merged in one that the Buddhi or divine spark which hitherto flickered, becomes a bright, steady, luminous flame — when the "Explosion," as St. Martin called it, has taken place, "by which our natural will is forever dispersed and annihilated by contact with the divine," — then and then only is one fit to begin to tread the path of knowledge.

That it leads altogether beyond human experience, and entirely transcends what we can conceive is but too apparent.

The 15th and 16th Rules in the second part of "*Light on the Path*" may help towards a vague apprehension of what this knowledge means.

15th. Inquire of the earth, the air and the water of the secrets they hold for you. The development of your inner senses will enable you to do this.

16th. Inquire of the holy ones of the earth of the secrets they hold for you. The conquering of the desires of the outer senses will give you the right to do this.

And the final secret of all may be said to be wrapped up in the mystery of "self." When the knowledge of the individualization of Being is reached, man has learned all that this world can teach him, and in the words "Know thyself" lie folded the ultimate possibilities of Humanity. Knowledge is indeed the supreme

enlightener.

"There is no purifier like thereto
In all this world, and he who seeketh it
Shall find it — being grown perfect — in himself."

Whether any intelligible idea as to the knowledge itself can be evolved from what is here written — it will at least be apparent that a goodness so exalted as to be scarcely imaginable as a human attribute is required as Unnecessary qualification for the commencement of the search.

Well did Shelley write in his Prometheus:

"The good want power but to weep barren tears
The powerful goodness want — worse need for them.
The wise want love; and those who love want wisdom.
And all best things are thus confused to ill.
Many are strong and rich, and would be just
But live among their suffering fellow-men
As if none felt: they know not what to do."

and the current Theologies of the world have not been able to remove the reproach. In the case of Christianity the failure may, to a great extent, be owing to its sentimentality and its failure to realize that to be supremely good it is necessary to be wise — though wise with a higher wisdom than that referred to in the above lines.

But Christianity's greatest fall has probably been its disregard of the facts of Reincarnation. Whatever interpretation may be put on the great Master's utterance on this subject, and however the early church may have regarded it, it is notorious that Christianity, as interpreted by its mediaeval and modern professors alike, has entirely ignored the evolution of the soul progressing through innumerable earthly existences, and has

instead adopted the illogical and unphilosophic dogma of a human soul born into the world from nothingness and meriting by its 70 or 80 years of earth-life an Eternity of bliss or an Eternity of misery.

But one does not expect of the child the reason-guided actions of mature manhood — its teachings must be given in the form of dogma, to which it must yield implicit obedience. Nor do we expect the infant school to provide the same training that the University does for the cultured intellect. Similarly the various Religions of the world have been the infant schools for growing Humanity until the complete stature of manhood should be reached.

It has been remarked by some Christians who are much enamored of the self-devoted love exhibited by the Founder of their faith, and the strong feeling of personal love and attachment thereby called forth from them, that Theosophy is cold because it does not dwell exclusively on that side of the nature, but while each separate Religion that has existed in the world may be regarded as the analysis of one special characteristic of the mind, the occult philosophy gathers into one synthetical whole all its varied characteristics. The different religions accentuating as they do different truths may be regarded at the same time — according as one looks at them from the scientific or religious stand-point — and both views are equally tenable and mutually comprehensive — as natural evolutions of the peoples among whom they arose, and as revelations from the unseen universe of partial truths which have to be received and assimilated before mankind can be fitted to comprehend the Supreme Truth in its abstract purity.

It will be seen from the foregoing that what we call Theosophy is the supreme expression of all Religion, as it is the final synthesis

of all Science — for it is faith merged in Knowledge.

When one looks abroad on the world and sees how few even among the Religious, the Cultured and the Intellectual are able to grasp the Truth by intuitive vision — while the masses of mankind are sunk in degradation and semi-barbarity, the mind is lost in the vistas of the future, during which the present Religions or those which may have taken their place will have to continue their work of teaching.

Education is slow and Evolution is tardy, and the whole circle of wisdom is slow to trace; but the march of Nature has been as it was bound to be — for the best — and the line of Pope

"One truth is clear, whatever is is right."

seems more and more to be borne in upon the mind as an Eternal verity.

Destiny has guided us till now, and has made us what we are, but we who now realize the omnipotence of the divinely guided *Will*, have become potentially the makers — let us take it in our hands and shape our own career, for the sooner we rise to the heights of our Being, the sooner shall we be able to stretch down helping hands to the suffering Humanity of To-day.

FOOTNOTE:

1. It is an old declaration of the esoteric doctrine that "the counterfeit religion will last as long as the true one." — [Ed.]
([return to text](#))

The Path

**THE ELEMENTALS, THE ELEMENTARY SPIRITS: II — C. H. A.
Bjerregaard**

AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEM AND HUMAN BEINGS

(Continued.)

There are several designations for "angels" in the Bible, which clearly show that beings like the elementals of the Kabbala and the monads of Leibnitz, must be understood by that term rather than that which is commonly understood. They are called "morning stars," (Job 38, 7); "flaming fires," (Ps. 104, 4); "the mighty ones," (Ps. 103, 20) and St. Paul sees them in his cosmogonic vision (I Col. 1,16) as "principalities and powers." Such names as these preclude the idea of personality, and we find ourselves compelled to think of them as impersonal existences, in the same way as we conceive the angel that troubled the waters of the pool of Bethesda as an *influence*, a spiritual substance or *conscious* force.

I stated above that the Kabbala taught that all events in Nature and History were under the immediate superintendence of spirits, elementals and elementary. It was in harmony with such teachings, that the translators of the Septuagint translated Deuteronomy 32, 8-9, thus: "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, he set the bounds of the Heathen according to the number of the spirits, but He Himself took His abode in Israel."

According to this translation, which differs radically (1) from the orthodox, spirits *i.e.* Elementals and Elementary Spirits, are the rulers, the principalities and powers among the heathen, *i.e.* all people outside of Israel. Whatever we may think of the

exclusiveness of this passage, and the work given the "chosen people" to perform, we can verify this passage historically.

All people of the earth — so far as we know their religious and philosophical ideas — have drawn their spiritual life from sources very different from those whence the leaders of Israel derived *their* inspiration. I say the leaders of Israel, for the Israelites as a people, never comprehended the mission imposed upon them, they constantly fell back into what has been called the "idolatry" of the nations around. The people, as a people, were true to their natural instincts, which led them to follow the guiding influence of natural *ideas*, (*i.e.* Elementals and Elementary Spirits).

I need not tell you that the *Ideas* now spoken of are not merely Conceptions, such as we, according to common usage, are wont to believe. Ideas to the antique world, were exactly the same thing as Leibnitz called monads, and the Kabbala Elements and Elementary Spirits. Plato, for instance, attributes to ideas an independent, singular existence and hypostative power. He calls them Gods (in the *Timeaus*), and asserts that movement, life, animation, and reason belong to them, (in the *Sophistes*).

The nations of the earth, all those not belonging to the chosen few, have indeed been — for good and for evil — guided by the Spirits, now called Elementals, now Ideas and now Gods. Therefore, if any one will study the history of mankind, he must begin with a knowledge of these occult powers. If any one will guide mankind's history, he must follow the laws of these occult forces.

If we recognize the translation of the Septuagint as given above, and find ourselves outside the pale of the chosen people, whose work is in "the plan of salvation," we know where to look for the intermediate powers between ourselves and the Deity, we know

that they are the Elementals, the powers of Nature, the silent, but invincible giants of the Elements.

The importance to Theosophists of the modern school of clear conceptions on these points are evident. I need not point out to you why and wherefore.

In the Zohar it is stated that, "when spirits come down, they clothe themselves with air or wrap themselves in Elements." It is also stated that, "some spirits have a natural affinity for the air-(elements), others for fire-(elements), and when they come down to the earth, they envelop themselves either in air-(elements) or fire-(elements), according to their nature."

These statements, which can easily be supplemented with many more like them, are of the greatest importance, when the question is of spirit manifestations, for it becomes a matter of grave consequence by what kind of monads we are surrounded.

But, before speaking of the atmosphere of monads that surround us, I must define the auras or emanations that proceed from all objects in nature.

As an aromatic scent emanates from a flower, so all other bodies emit either colors or rays of "imponderable" matter. Copper and Arsenic send out auras of red matter; Lead and Sulphur emit a blue colored substance; Gold, Silver Antimony green, etc. In short, Science teaches that all matter is luminous, *i.e.* shines by its own light.

Human beings, be they spiritual-minded or not, are also surrounded by their spheres. We all know this. We have all felt these sphere influences, and some of you have perhaps seen them. It is said that persons of a high and spiritual character have beautiful auras of white and blue, gold and green, in various tints; while low natures emit principally dark red emanations, which in

brutal and vulgar persons darken almost to black.

The impulse or motive power, the cause, if you choose, of these emanations is the soul of man, of course. According to the condition of the soul, these emanations are more or less powerful, more or less extensive, more or less clear. The stuff they are made of, what is it? It is of course physical, though they may not be measured and weighed by any scientific instrument known at this day.

These emanations are soul-rays and they become reflected upon those small MONADIC bodies already described. I cannot prove this to you experimentally, but I can see these reflections as clearly as a physical experiment can demonstrate to you the light-reflection of the sun's rays upon a raindrop.

Swedenborg claimed to have *smelled* the inner nature of certain spirits he met with in the spiritual world, and to have determined their moral value by these rays. In his work "Heaven and Hell," he has recorded several such experiences. It is an innate power of the soul, that enables it to throw off these rays and it does it by necessity, for without going beyond itself, to express itself, the soul would never realize itself.

The soul can, however, also be trained to emit these rays or auras, consciously.

If we will believe the famous Norse traveller and explorer of Spirit-land, already referred to, Em. Swedenborg, we may learn from his *Arcana Celestia*, that "the particular quality of a spirit is perceived immediately on his entrance into the other life, *from his sphere*" that "sphere is *the image* of the spirit extended beyond him;" "indeed, it is the image of *all* that is in him." The cause of the spheres around spirits, the same author states to be from "the activity of things in the interior memory," from "*the ruling love.*"

Swedenborg further states, that "by the sphere which exhales from the spirit of man, even while he lives in the body, every deed, however secret, becomes manifest in clear light," and that good or evil spirits recognize him by his sphere; and that good spirits can not be present with those who are in worldly and corporeal loves, however pious exteriorly, because they instantly perceive their sphere of evil as something filthy; and, on the other hand, that good spirits readily associate with those surrounded by pure and heavenly spheres. But it is not necessary to have recourse to the seers and those spiritually illuminated, most of us have some knowledge of these facts from daily life. Who has not perceived the low and filthy sphere that surrounds the sensual, or the intolerable atmosphere of a proud and haughty spirit, or been depressed in the surroundings of a melancholy and passionate man or woman? Indeed, we all have perceptions as to these things; some stronger, some less developed.

It is, as I said, the very life of the soul to diffuse itself through all its surroundings. Without such an activity it would not be soul. An inactive, an inert soul has no existence.

Next, the soul, while thus actualizing itself, takes its material from the monads, just described, and moulds them into such shapes and forms as are requisite for its own life and the influence it endeavors to exert. The Soul has the power to mould and shape them into any possible condition. (More about this later on.) This faculty is its image-making power or the form-making power of the soul.

In order to understand this image-making power, let it first be remembered, that it is an axiom in all mystical and spiritual philosophy, that the spiritual degree in man (Atman) contains in its unity with the Universal soul, the patterns of all things and that these are reflected through the soul (Buddhi and Manas).

This being so, *the soul (Buddhi and Manas) to understand the principle of creation has only to descend to its own deep, the spirit (Atman), there to find it reflected.* Having found and realized the idea of creation, the soul may take material from the ethereal world, called by the Orientals Akasa, and out of it build any form — image, I call it — it likes.

Unless the soul gives such form and shape to the ideas and life, that dwells in its own inner deep, these will remain uncreated and the soul uneducated by not approving of its opportunities.

This is what I call the image-making power of the soul. Upon it depends all Kardiology or the science of the heart, and all Rationality. Upon it depends our attainment of psychic powers.

It is not only an innate and natural tendency of the soul (Manas) to go beyond its body to find material with which to clothe the life that it wants to give expression to. The soul (Manas) can and must *be trained to do this* CONSCIOUSLY.

You can easily see that this power possessed *consciously* will give its possessor the power to work magic.

And this leads me directly to the subject of the use of aromas, odors, etc., wherewith to create a suitable atmosphere around us; an atmosphere congenial to the nature of spirits.

You all remember the splendid scene in Bulwer's Zanoni where Glyndon meets the Dweller of the Threshold. In that scene is described all the mystery of aromatic vapors, their effect upon the human mind, and the assistance they offer to spirit manifestations.

In short, it is of the greatest importance that we produce the right environment by the right kind of emanations or auras, and atmospheres: "As we give, so we shall receive!"

It would require a volume to relate the religious, political, economic, and gallant history of odors and perfumes. I shall mention a few instances only.

From the highest antiquity we find that priests have employed odoriferous substances. The worshippers of light, the Zoroastrians, laid perfumes five times a day upon the sacred flame, that symbolized light and life. The Greeks were very profuse in the use of ambrosia, and believed that the gods always appeared in fragrant clouds. You all know the importance of smoke and perfumes in the rituals used at the Mysteries and around the sacred tripod on which rested the prophetesses at Delphi. The Romans almost carried the use of incense and odoriferous substances too far. From the classic people the custom was borrowed by the Christian Church. There was even a time, when the Romish Church owned large estates in the East, devoted exclusively to the cultivation of balms and essences to be used in the rites of worship.

But it was not only in religious practices that these delicate media were used to facilitate the descent of spiritual beings. All through the Orient, even to this day, they are employed in the private life for the same purpose; not for mere luxury, as some people will have us believe. It was very appropriate indeed, that the Greeks should burn aromatic substances during their banquets, and who can estimate the soothing influence upon the wild and warlike Romans of their beautiful custom of perfuming their baths, their sleeping rooms and beds, and their drinks. It is not at all likely that the Romans should have been ignorant of the high spiritual significance of these practices. Why should they before battle anoint the Roman eagles with the richest perfumes, if they did not think it pleasing to the god of war and his followers, if they did not thereby expect to prepare a suitable atmosphere for their descent.

I pass by the modern use of these things. Among the many abuses with which we are familiar, the strong human instinct asserts itself everywhere. We expect, for instance, that Youth and Beauty shall be surrounded by a sphere, sweet-smelling and elevating; and our instincts are true in this, for there is a close parallel between purity and aromatic odors.

It is a truth well understood that Spirit does not act immediately upon Matter. There always is a medium between them. It seems rational that it should be so. Spirit and Matter being the two poles of one and the same substance need the intermediate middle as a point of conjunction and exchange of energy.

Applying this general law to the particulars before us, it seems most natural to conclude that the Elementals are the media by means of which all our spiritual efforts are exerted upon Nature, and that nothing can be done without their intervention.

But the question also arises: how do we make the Elementals perform this work for us? By what means do we influence them?

Occult Science teaches that "the pure of heart," those that, having travelled over "the Path," have come to "freedom," can, by a mere mental effort or by stretching out the hand, "do these things."

In view of this teaching, I shall state a few facts relative to the power of the Mind and the Hand.

(1) The Word spoken consists of the thought or idea we want to convey to the person spoken to, and (2) this thought clothed in a form, a kind of vessel, by means of which we send the thought flying through space. These two elements are the main factors of the Word.

Let us now look a little closer upon each of these two factors.

When an animal in distress calls for another, we, human beings, understand that it throws its desire or animal life into the sounds which proceed from that throat, and the other animal answers *instinctively*, we say quite correctly, for we do not think that the animals *reason* about their doings.

This kind of "language," if it can be so called, is not much different from the language of mankind at large. All language as used in ordinary daily life is but slightly higher in character, but not different in degree.

Language — the Word — is spoken when an Idea or Spiritual Life is communicated. In the true sense, we only speak or pronounce the Word when the Highest finds a channel into the actual world by means of our vocal organs.

That is the Word! Now, about its Form. Whence comes its material? For form is something substantial. It is not enough that an architect has a design to a building in his mind, he needs actual material with which to erect the house if it is to be realized on the actual side of existence. As surely as he procures stones and wood, etc., so do we also need material substances with which to construct our mental edifices. From what world do we draw these substances? From the astral or ethereal molecules! From the Monads!

By a pre-established harmony, the suitable monads glomerate around the heavenly idea that proceeds to reveal itself upon our tongue when we speak the Word. Thus the thought gets its Form.

Thus far I have spoken of the thought or idea descending to utter itself upon our tongue, we being the mere tools of the idea. And such is almost always the case. We neither originate thought nor its form. Thought or Spirit speaks through us as the passive agents. Yet we all know how we boast of our oracles, of our

prophets and our seers, even because they act as passive agents.

But there is a language still higher. It is possible for man to originate thought and to control the form to such thought. The adepts know this secret and they have arrived at that power by getting beyond the "ordinary" laws of life. They are not mere channels for the flux and reflux of thought; they originate and control thought.

Heaven's first law is order. As we know some of the laws according to which we formulate speech in a logical way, so that other sphere outside (or inside, if you like), which is full of the germs of life, has its laws. Hence the adepts, too, follow certain rules or laws, when they want to originate or control thought and its form. Vulgarly, the laws or methods are called spells or incantations.

Before we consciously can work spells or control spirits and their energies, we must arrive at the state of the adept, where he is beyond the laws that govern, so to say, the surface of things. But we cannot come there on any highroads nor by any short cuts. We must travel the road of self-denial and that of illusion.

As it is possible to enter into the sanctuary of a temple by sheer brutal force, so it is possible to get into possession of formulas and spells which work wonders, though we be neither pure of mind nor strong of heart.

Would formulas and spells under such conditions be useful to us? They may! They may not! They may also work our destruction. We have been taught that they are more dangerous to us than a naked sword in the hands of a child. The child may accidentally do some useful work with its sharp instrument, but it may also destroy itself.

From this we should learn that the true course to pursue in

regard to the performing of wonders by means of Elementals or Elementary Spirits is to first to attain to the state of an adept: to learn to control life and thought.

If we should happen to come in possession of spells or incantations without knowing the proper use of them — better not use them!

But how do we attain to that state just described?

I can not define the way nor teach anybody how to do so, but I think that the way must be very much like that travelled by the Lord Buddha and now followed by "the Adepts."

But, as it is not our immediate duty to prepare for the performance of miracles, we have been warned to abstain from such vain pursuits.

Far better is it for us to follow the directions given for moral life:

"Try to get as near to wisdom and goodness as you can in this life. Trouble not yourself about the gods. Disturb yourself not by curiosities or desires about any future existence. Seek only after the fruit of the noble path of self-culture and of self-control." These are words from Buddhist Scriptures.

It is not only by mind that we may control the Elementals and the Elementary spirits. The hand forms a most important element among the tools used in occult science.

I shall not define the science of chiromancy, but describe the magnetic points of the fingers.

Have you given any thought and attention to the hand? Generally we consider the head of a man and put our estimate upon him according to the size of his brain. But we neglect the hand. And yet the hand is as important a factor in the execution of spiritual

acts as is the brain.

The hand is the executive organ of the dynamico-mysterious actions of the Spirit of man. Through the hand its psychico-somatic operations take place, through it its whole spiritual-psychical energy flows out, when laid upon the sick, for instance.

It may be readily enough understood that the spiritual activity of the spirit of man ultimates itself in acts, and that almost all of these are executed by the hand, but it is probably but little known that in healing, for instance, there is a peculiar physical basis in the hand, upon which the healing power is dependent, *the Pacinian corpuscles*, namely.

It is now many years ago (it was in 1830 and 1840) that Pacini, a physician of Pistola, made his discovery; but with the exception of the literature to which it gave rise, and which is known only to a few learned men and a few librarians of larger libraries, little or nothing is known of his discovery.

Pacini found in all the sensible nerves of the fingers many small elliptical, whitish corpuscles. He compared them to the electrical organs of the torpedo and described them as animal magneto-motors, as organs of animal magnetism. And so did Henle and Kolliker, two German anatomists, who have studied and described these corpuscles very minutely.

In the human body they are found in great numbers in connection with the nerves of the hand, also in those of the foot. Why should they not be in the feet? Let us remember the rhythmical structure of the human body, particularly the feet, and it becomes clear why they are there; the ecstatic dances of the enthusiasts and the not-sinking of somnambulists in water or their ability to use the soles of their feet as organs of perception and the ancient art of healing by the soles of the feet — all these

facts explain the mystery.

They are found sparingly on the spinal nerves, and on the plexuses of the sympathetic, but never on the nerves of motion.

They are most numerous on the small twigs of nerves and generally placed parallel to them, though often at an acute angle. They are more or less oval, sometimes elongated and bent. They are nearly transparent, with a whitish line traversing their axis. The corpuscles of the human subject are from one-twentieth to one-tenth of an inch in length.

They consist of a series of membranous capsules, from thirty to sixty or more in number, enclosed one within the other. Inside of these capsules there is a single nervous fibre of a tubular kind enclosed in the stalk, and advancing to the central capsule, which it traverses from, end to end. Sometimes the capsules are connected by transverse bands.

Anatomists are interested in these Pacinian corpuscles because of the novel aspect in which they present the constituent parts of the nerve-tube, placed in the heart of a system of concentric membranous capsules with intervening fluid, and divested of that layer which they (the anatomists) regard as an isolator and protector of the more potential central axis within.

This apparatus — almost formed like a voltaic pile, is the instrument for that peculiar vital energy, known more or less to all students as Animal Magnetism.

Since the cat is somewhat famous in all witchcraft, let me state that in the mesentery of the cat, they can be seen in large numbers with the naked eye, as small oval shaped grains a little smaller than hempseeds. A few have been found in the ox (the symbol of the priestly office); but they are wanting in all birds, amphibia and fishes.

Though his discovery was disputed it has since been verified and the theory strongly supported. These organs are the beneficent media through which the Spirit operates.

From time immemorial the human hand has been regarded as the life-point of a mysterious magical power, but not until Pacini's discovery do we know its seat. These corpuscles are its seat. Are they perhaps agglomerations of such monads as I have described and thus the media by means of whom the highest spiritual powers perform their work?

We find the Elementals under all forms of existence, as mere natural forces, totally, to our perceptions, destitute of any self-conscious life; we find them also attaining a form very near the human. There is no valid reason against supposing them to be the stuff out of which we form thoughts, much less against considering them to be the life-giving elements in the Pacinian corpuscles.

Let us maintain the theory that there is no *such thing as a dead or inanimate force* in the universe. *Every atom, itself a form of power, is alive with force.* Every atom in space *reflects the Universal Self*, who is:

The Soul of Things.

I shall now come to the end of my paper by a few words which contain the practical purpose of my lecture.

(1) The monads, just described, whether they reflect the auras, that surround us consciously or unconsciously, whether they are used as mind-stuff or be located in the Pacinian corpuscles of the hand, are physical media of intercourse between the Elementaries and the adepts.

Why not! If Eastern adepts and Western mediums are in

possession of power to atomize "the body," to make it become the smallest of the smallest, to enter into a diamond, for instance, if they have power to magnify "the body" to any dimensions; to change the polarity of the body, to make it become the lightest of the lightest as in the well known phenomena of levitation, why should the Elementaries, existing, as they do, under much more favorable circumstances, not be able to enter into matter, to enter into atoms which "contain a Sun" and there, for the time being direct its vital principle and its universal orbs, to such purposes as they choose, to make it serve the adept's or magician's will, who seeks aid or enlightenment?

(2) I contend that they do! And I argue for the necessity of producing such surroundings of auras of monads as will facilitate and raise the standard of what is commonly called "Mediumship."

(3) I argue for a cultivation of the image-making power of the soul, that we may be able to direct and utilize consciously the intercourse with the Elementaries.

(4) I wish to have a knowledge spread abroad about the Pacinian corpuscles, that we may lay our hands upon mankind and cure its ills.

I feel personally convinced that there is both "Light and Life "to be found upon these lines of study and conduct.

FOOTNOTE:

1. The orthodox translation is "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." ([return to text](#))

POETICAL OCCULTISM: IV — S. B. J.

SOME ROUGH STUDIES OF THE OCCULT LEANINGS OF THE POETS.

Whitman, in his short and remarkable poem, "To him that was Crucified," perceives very clearly the verity of Mahatmahood; the existence of men who live upon a higher plane than that of ordinary mortals, and who are united in an order of spiritual brotherhood. The poem runs: (1)

My spirit to yours, dear brother,
Do not mind because many sounding your name do not
understand you,
I do not sound your name, but I understand you,
I specify you with joy, O my comrade, to salute you, and to
salute those who are with you, before and since, and those
to come also,
That we all labor together transmitting the same charge
and succession,
We few equals indifferent of lands, indifferent of times,
We, enclosers of all continents, all castes, allowers of all
theologies,
Compassionaters, perceivers, rapport of men,
We walk silent among disputes and assertions, but reject
not the disputers nor anything that is asserted,
We hear the bawling and din, we are reached at by
divisions, jealousies, recriminations on every side,
They close peremptorily upon us to surround us, my
comrade,
Yet we walk unheld, free, the whole earth over, journeying
up and down till we make our ineffaceable mark upon
time and the diverse eras,

Till we saturate time and eras, that the men and woman of races, ages to come, may prove brethren and lovers as we are.

These lines, sublime as they are, will probably be regarded as little short of blasphemous by many of our good friends who, *sounding his name, do not understand him*; who, worshipping him as the only Man-God, have lost sight of the God in man, the *Christ*, the potential development of which in all men was the great lesson which the Nazarene sought to convey. They little think that he whose name they sound may perhaps be walking the earth today, striving to bring men to the light, but despised and rejected by themselves because in an unrecognized and strange guise, while the same old truths are again trampled upon, since they lack the endorsement of established authority.

The poet, however, shows that he, too broad to be limited by one name, truly understands the mission of Jesus; he, with his own grand teachings of universal brotherhood despised and misunderstood because of their unfamiliar form, is elevated by the sublimity of the truths that inspire himself to the level which gives him the right to address the founder of Christianity as a comrade. He sees, too, with a directness that probably has come to no other modern poet, that there is a band of "Equals" working for the same end, "transmitting the same charge and succession," through all races, through all ages, and giving vitality to all religions. The free, uninfluenced attitude which he who would grow towards the light must maintain is expressed here with most effective simplicity, as is the end for which *THEY* are striving — so to saturate the world and all eras with their precepts as finally to lift all mankind into the unity of perfect Brotherhood.

The true mental abnegation is here referred to, just as Krishna in the Bhagavad-Gita tries to teach Arjuna. In speaking of the

necessity for retiring to the forest so as to attain perfection untroubled by man, he says to Arjuna that the true philosopher will look with equal mind upon all classes of men, upon all systems of thought and all objects of sense, esteeming all alike, inasmuch as they are all one in the Supreme Spirit, and that spirit found in each, so that to retire to the forest is not a necessity. Thus Whitman says that he and all others of the same mind, are indifferent of lands, times, disputes or disputers, allowers of all theologies, because they well know — as occultism teaches — that each theology and each assertion is one facet of the great Truth.

The result of this state of mind is beautifully set forth in the lines which say that amid the bawling and din, reached at by divisions and jealousies on every side that close peremptorily upon us to surround and fetter us, we walk free, unheld by all, because we are fixed upon the immutable rock of the True. This is the imperturbability sought by the ancient Chinese philosophers, who, themselves students of occultism, esteemed that equanimity above all else.

There are various passages throughout Whitman's poems that intimate a perception, perhaps intuitive, of the existences of the Masters. For instance, he says, "I see the serene company of philosophers," and in "A Song of the Rolling Earth" are the lines:

"The workmanship of souls is by those inaudible words of the earth,
The masters know the earth's words and use them more than audible words."

And again, towards the end of the same poem:

"When the materials are all prepared and ready, the architects shall appear."

The thought here is identical with that in "*Light on the Path*" (note

to Rule 21, First Section):

"Therefore in the Hall of Learning, when he is capable of entering there, the disciple will always find his master."

And in the following note:

"When the disciple is ready to learn, then he is accepted, acknowledged, recognized. It must be so; for he has lit his lamp, and it cannot be hidden."

The poem in question concludes with the following exalted lines which contain a significant statement of one of the great truths of Occultism:

"I swear to you the architects shall appear without fail,
I swear to you they will understand you and justify you,
The greatest among them shall be he who best knows you,
and encloses all and is faithful to all,
He and the rest shall not forget you, they shall perceive
that you are not an iota less than they,
You shall be fully glorified in them."

It is hardly possible to say whether or not the poet means that these architects are in one sense the various, changeful mortal costumes the human monad had here and there, in many races and places, assumed while passing through the wheel of re-births. When he says that the architects "will understand you and justify you," we may easily picture the time when the regenerated man, now able to see all his illusionary entrances upon the stage of life under the costume of varied personalities, can understand that all these different incarnations were fully justified by the need for the particular experience found in each new life, and thus he himself is glorified and justified by these architects, who were really himself.

Complete proof of Whitman's belief in re-incarnation is to be found in the following lines from "*facing West from California's Shores*:"

Facing west from California's shores,
Inquiring, tireless, seeking what is yet unfound,
I a child, very old, over waves, towards the house of
maternity, the land of migrations, look afar,
Look off the shores of my Western sea, the circle almost
circled;
For starting westward from Hindustan, from the vales of
Kashmere,
From Asia, from the north, from the God, the sage, and the
hero,
From the south, from the flowery peninsulas and the spice
islands,
Long having wander'd since, round the earth having
wander'd.
Now I face home again, very pleas'd and joyous.
(But where is what I started for so long ago?
And why is it yet unfound?)

This last query is answered in *Light on the Path* (rule 12, § I.):
"You will enter the light, but you will never touch the flame." The
Self is what we seek. It resides in the heart of every mortal
creature "smaller than a grain of mustard seed;" the heart is in
the Sun — and now we speak of the real heart and the real
spiritual sun which is "now hidden by a vase of golden light" —
(as the Upanishads say) — the Sun in the mouth of Brahman and
Brahman is the All.

FOOTNOTE:

1. From *Leaves of Grass*. ([return to text](#))

The Path

HINDU SYMBOLISM: III — *Isaac Myer*

3



This figure represents the Mystic Brahma espousals with Parasakti. The latter is the divine principle of intellectual emanative potentiality or energy, and the ideal of archetypal womanhood. The Sakti is conceived of as the female part of the energy of Brahma's intellectual, creative power and creative wisdom. Brahma is here the true Para-Brahma, and Para-Sakti a true Para-sarasvadi. The sexless in Brahman (neuter) is here transmuted into the male or energizing power, as the principal symbolic type of the divine emanative, yet immanent, creative power, as the masculine principle of the ideal or Great Androgynic Man or the Makrokosm; and the flaming Sun is here depicted as the flaming sun-face, representative of the male-active deity, also called Purusha. The Sakti or Para-Sakti, the fructifying energy and potentiality of Brahman's wisdom, wears upon her head a bright fire-flaming crown or nimbus.

The veil surrounding them, is the mystic veil produced by the

ideation of the eternal thought of the eternal Mind. In the left hand of the sun-figure on the first finger, is carried a bird or perhaps a dove, which is intended to symbolize the flight of the ideal creation from the eternal Mind before the appearance of that which appears to us to be the real world. In the right hand he holds the end of the mystic veil. On the head of Maya — the woman — is the world-egg cap. Below, in the shadow of the spherical cloak of the God-dawn, is seen the world-egg surrounded by the spiritualizing Ananda the snake of eternity, which as if asleep and inactive, is suspended around the egg.

In India the principal general symbols are fire and water, sun and moon, man and woman, bull and cow, the linga and yoni, the lotus and the sacred fig (*ficus indica*). The lotus is formed of red, white and blue colors; blue is considered the same as black.

The Path

"LIGHT ON THE PATH" — Charles Johnston

"The Soul of man is immortal and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour has no limit."

It is with extreme diffidence that I venture to undertake a short commentary or analysis of the book whose title heads this article; not only because of the nature of the work itself, but also because it has already been twice commented upon, once by the author, and once by a very learned student of Eastern Literature. The author's notes, however, were rather an extension of the original text than a commentary in the strict sense of the word: while the object of the second annotator was more an attempt to show the identity of the doctrines contained in *Light on the Path* with those of ancient Brahamanical Philosophy, than to give the nature of those doctrines in themselves.

The object of this paper on the contrary, is to attempt to analyze the scheme of Philosophy in accordance with which this little book has been written; in other words, to attempt to set forth the intellectual counterpart of the spiritual doctrines of *Light on the Path*. It is inevitable that, in thus changing the doctrine from the Spiritual to the intellectual plane, so to speak, the intellectual counterpart should be inferior to the Spiritual original. To counterbalance this loss, however, it is true on the other hand that the intellectual counterpart may render the spiritual original accessible to some, the conformation of whose minds renders them unable to appreciate it directly. It is in the hope that this may be so that the present paper has been attempted.

To begin with, then, the work we are considering indicates a possible enlightenment of the Soul, and development of the higher part of our nature; and further states that these results

cannot take place before a certain battle has been fought and won: we have, therefore, to discover what the soul is; what is the nature of the battle; what are the opposing forces; and what are the results of the struggle.

The combatants are the higher nature, or Soul on the one side; and the lower nature or egotism on the other. The higher nature includes the intellectual, Spiritual, and aesthetical powers: that is to say, the powers which deal with the perception of truth, goodness, and beauty.

The sense of truth is characteristically manifested in the conquest of some intricate mathematical problem, or in following successfully some difficult chain of reasoning.

The sense of beauty is manifested in the joy with which we behold the splendor of a glorious sunset.

The sense of goodness is manifested in the voice of an approving conscience, or in the reverence and admiration we feel for some godlike and noble character.

It is undeniable that the intellect can discriminate between what is, and what is not true, within its own domain, the aesthetical faculty also can pronounce with certainty as to the presence or absence of that quality which we call beauty.

So can the moral nature decide without hesitation as to what is or what is not in accordance with Righteousness, These three powers of the higher nature are subject to development, that is to say, at different periods they will perceive the qualities of beauty, truth, and goodness in different objects, and in different degrees; but as to the reality of the three qualities their voice is ever the same.

The three powers perceive three harmonies, each in its own

domain; when the three are harmoniously developed the three harmonies are perceived to be one, and to this one great harmony are given the names of the Eternal and the Law of God. The seer of old feeling the sense of Righteousness within him exclaimed: "I will rejoice in the Eternal, and in him will I put my trust." When the powers of the higher nature are developed, under all temporary disharmony and chaotic disturbance, are perceived a deeper order and more enduring harmony ever at work. Marcus Aurelius had perception of a deep Spiritual truth, when he wrote the concluding sentences of the following utterance.

"Figs, when they are quite ripe, gape open: and in the ripe olives, the very circumstance of their being near to rottenness, adds a peculiar beauty to the fruit, and ears of corn bending down, and foam which flows from the mouth of wild boars, and many other things, — though they are far from being beautiful, in a certain sense, — still, because they come in the course of nature, have a beauty in them, and they please the mind; so that if a man should have a feeling and a deeper insight with respect to the things which are produced in the universe, there is hardly anything which comes in the course of nature, which will not seem to him to be, in a manner, disposed so as to give pleasure." That is, — in all things, could we but perceive it, is the harmony of the Eternal.

The first harmony, the harmony of truth, is perceived by the scientific materialist; that is to say, he is capable of perceiving the reign of Law in the physical universe.

The artistic nature can perceive the harmony of beauty in nature and art.

By the spiritually-minded is perceived the moral harmony.

It is the distinctive mark of modern Civilization that the harmonies of truth and beauty, of Science and Art are perceived

and openly recognized by all, while the harmony of Holiness is passed over, in silence and oblivion. It is the object of Theosophy, rightly understood, to arouse the world to a renewed sense of the harmony of Righteousness.

So much for the higher nature. Confronting it stands the Egotism. For where the moral sense dictates peace and goodwill to all men, the Egotism raises a selfish claim for a monopoly of all good things, all pleasures, all enjoyments. The first enjoyment the Egotism demands is to surpass and dominate all other Egotisms which it seems to see pursuing the same pleasures as itself. Hence the command: "Kill out ambition." Having once gained this domination the self cries out for enjoyments both sensual and sensuous, for all the pleasures of life. Hence the need for the command "Kill out the desire of life;" the self is also deterred by indolence from carrying out any good inspirations that may descend through the thick mist which surrounds it, from the higher nature: Against indolence it is written "Kill out the desire of comfort."

But the moral sense condemns the existence of this self, this centre of force, which is not in accordance with its perception of Harmony. When once the moral nature comes to perceive the evil of egotism, the question inevitably arises for solution, "Shall this cause of dis-harmony cease or continue?" If the decision is for its continuance one of two things will happen. Either, before the moral nature has been completely paralysed and atrophied by neglect, — before the seared conscience is completely silenced, — the fact will be recognised, in the midst of pain and sorrow unspeakable, that "to work for self is to work for disappointment;" and in that case the moral nature may at last meet with its development and all may be well; "the weak must wait for its growth, its fruition, its death, and it is a plant that lives and increases through the ages." It has been said also "the

forging of earthly chains is the occupation of the indifferent, the awful duty of unloosing them through the sorrows of the heart is also their occupation" and truly "both are foolish sacrifices."

Either this takes place, or, — the moral nature at last becomes completely deadened, all the force and vital power which has been drawn away from it goes to strengthen the Egotism which becomes from henceforth a centre of evil, of destruction; an enemy of the eternal.

It seems that individual existence means a certain amount of force; which may vitalise either the powers of the higher nature or those of the egotism; or those of both, in part. It seems also that the egotism is a group of centres, so to speak, from some or all of which the energetic force of the individual may work: so that, for example, when this force works from one centre in the egotism sensuality arises; when from another centre, hate; from another, evil ambition, and so on. When the energetic force is raised to the higher nature it may act from various centres; from one, as charity; from another, as holiness, and so on. Hence, "any good quality may become any other good quality" — if the conditions are favorable. It seems also that the Will can degrade the energetic force from the soul to the egotism; or, conversely, can raise it from the egotism to the soul; so that, by the alchemical power of the will, so to speak, the baser metal becomes converted and, rising to the top of the still, becomes pure gold. Besides the higher and lower natures we have been considering there resides also, in the complete being, consciousness or sense of existence and will. When all the portions of energetic force, — or the Satwaic sparks, as they are elsewhere called, — rise to the higher nature, the individual becomes one with the Eternal, and a part of the United Spirit of Life, and individual existence ceases, in a sense. When the question is asked "Shall the self cease or continue?" the moral nature answers decisively "It ought to cease." If the truth of this

mandate is recognised, at once a terrible struggle arises; self opposed rises with tenfold force and violence; again and again it craftily casts doubt on the truth of the moral nature; raises obstacles, temptations and hindrances; all the pleasures it has enjoyed are to be swept away forever; all the momentum and power that the egotism has gained, through long continued indulgence and unhindered growth, are brought to bear at once on the struggle; the whole nature is torn by the conflict, the will is tried to the uttermost; but under all this turmoil and strife lies the assured consciousness of final victory; it is felt that sooner or later the self must be destroyed, that it is built for time and not for eternity, that its days are numbered.

During the struggle intervals of peace occur, and grow greater and longer as the end approaches; till at last, when the final victory is won this peace becomes habitual.

But as the conflict goes on, the will at last gains strength to say, once for all "Henceforth, forever, will I serve self no more." And immediately the first struggle is ended. The dominance of self is forever destroyed. In reply to the command "Seek in the heart the source of evil, and expunge it" the soul can say "this also have I done," then comes "peace to the troubled spirit" peace deep and pure. The soul recognises that the self has been the cause of individual existence; when the self is removed the soul tends to harmonise itself with the great harmony, to become one with the eternal; but all the evil tendencies to selfishness and sin, must be gradually overcome, for though their cause and source has been destroyed, yet they still maintain a certain momentum. Not yet can it be said that the soul is perfectly at one with the United Spirit of Life. Much remains to be done, yet much has been done already, for during the struggle the energetic force has become loosened from the centres of self, and has ascended to strengthen and vivify the soul, which becomes strong, fully awakened, and in

harmony with the eternal; the flower of the soul is opening, the first step on the Path is taken. In the *Idyll of the White Lotus* the same author has given the same history in another form. The New Testament story is the same, and so is the scheme of Christian Theology for those who have eyes to see it; for that story is "the tragedy of the soul, it has been told in all ages and among every people."

"Enter the Path! there spring the healing streams
Quenching all thirst! there bloom the immortal flowers
Carpeting all the way with joy! there throng Swiftest and
sweetest hours."

Dublin, Ireland.

The Path

MUSINGS ON THE TRUE THEOSOPHIST'S PATH: III — *American Mystic*

If you desire to labor for the good of the world, it will be unwise for you to strive to include it all at once in your efforts. If you can help elevate or teach but one soul — that is a good beginning, and more than is given to many.

Fear nothing that is in Nature and visible. Dread no influence exerted by sect, faith, or society. Each and every one of them originated upon the same basis — Truth, or a portion of it at least. You may not assume that you have a greater share than they, it being needful only, that you find all the truth each one possesses. You are at war with none. It is peace you are seeking, therefore it is best that the good in everything is found. For this brings peace.

It has been written that he who lives the Life shall know the doctrine. Few there be who realize the significance of The Life.

It is not by intellectually philosophizing upon it, until reason ceases to solve the problem, nor by listening in ecstatic delight to the ravings of an *Elemental clothed* — whose hallucinations are but the offspring of the Astral — that the life is realized. Nor will it be realized by the accounts of the experiences of other students. For there be some who will not realize Divine Truth itself, when written, unless it be properly punctuated or expressed in flowery flowing words.

Remember this: that as you live your life each day with an uplifted purpose and unselfish desire, each and every event will bear for you a deep significance — an occult meaning — and as you learn their import, so do you fit yourself for higher work.

There are no rose-gardens upon the way in which to loiter about,

nor fawning slaves to fan one with golden rods of Ostrich plumes. The Ineffable Light will not stream out upon you every time you may think you have turned up the wick, nor will you find yourself sailing about in an astral body, to the delight of yourself and the astonishment of the rest of the world, simply because you are making the effort to find wisdom.

He who is bound in any way — he who is narrow in his thoughts — finds it doubly difficult to pass onward. You may equally as well gain wisdom and light in a church as by sitting upon a post while your nails grow through your hands. It is not by going to extremes or growing fanatical in any direction that the life will be realized.

Be temperate in all things, most of all in the condemnation of other men. It is unwise to be intemperate or drunken with wine. It is equally unwise to be drunken with temperance. Men would gain the powers; or the way of working wonders. Do you know, O man, what the powers of the Mystic are? Do you know that for each gift of this kind he gives a part of himself? That it is only with mental anguish, earthly sorrow, and almost his heart's blood, these gifts are gained? Is it true, think you, my brother, that he who truly possesses them desires to sell them at a dollar a peep, or any other price? He who would trade upon these things finds himself farther from his goal than when he was born.

There *are* gifts and powers. Not just such as you have created in your imagination, perhaps. Harken to one of these powers: He who has passed onward to a certain point, finds that the hearts of men lie spread before him as an open book, and from there onward the motives of men are clear. In other words he can read the hearts of men. But not selfishly; should he but once use this knowledge selfishly, the book is closed — and he reads no more. Think you, my brothers, he would permit himself to *sell* a page

out of this book?

Time — that which does not exist outside the inner circle of this little world — seems of vast importance to the physical man. There comes to him at times, the thought that he is not making any progress, and that he is receiving nothing from some Mystic source. From the fact that he has the thought that no progress is being made the evidence is gained that he is working onward. Only the dead in living bodies need fear. That which men would receive from Mystic sources is frequently often repeated, and in such a quiet, unobtrusive voice, that he who is waiting to hear it shouted in his ear, is apt to pass on unheeding.

Urge no man to see as yourself, as it is quite possible you may see differently when you awake in the morning. It is wiser to let the matter rest without argument. No man is absolutely convinced by that. It is but blowing your breath against the whirlwind.

It was at one time written over the door: "Abandon Hope, all ye who enter here." It has taken hundreds of years for a few to come to the realization that the wise men had not the slightest desire for the company of a lot of hopeless incurables in the mysteries. There is to be abandoned hope for the gratification of our passions, our curiosities, our ambition or desire for gain. There is also another Hope — the true; and he is a wise man who comes to the knowledge of it. Sister to Patience, they together are the Godmothers of Right Living, and two of the Ten who assist the Teacher.

The Path

THOUGHT EFFECTS — *H. N. H.*

Some thirty years ago, I began a five years' residence in a foreign land. Whilst there, I was conscious of a stern conflict going on within me to keep myself from falling into some of the ways and beliefs of the people of that land. So strong was the assault in one direction upon the Idol of Right which had been set up within me by a New England training, that for fear it should topple and fall, I was constrained to withdraw myself little by little from social relations, until finally I came to be pretty much alone, living on the pampas with flocks, herds, nature generally, and a few books for company. Even after this change the fight went on, though in a less active form and on a more desultory scale.

After I went from there, reflection upon the subject brought me to this conclusion among others, viz.: that one of the most powerful forces emanating from distinct societies of mankind works by mental action upon man from the unseen atmosphere surrounding him.

It is said advisingly, "When in Rome do as the Romans do." It may be said, warningly: "When one enters upon living in Rome, he can scarce help *but* do as the Romans do."

In these later days, investigation of Theosophy has shown me of what nature was the obstacle against which I had been contending so stoutly.

It was of the Karma of that nation. It has shown me also the method of that unseen, unheard influence which "is in the air," ever about us, ever ready to move us, to govern us. And this method of influence, unseen and unheard, is the action upon us of forces existing on the Astral Plane. Among these forces are the

thoughts of men living upon the objective plane of Earth.

After so much of preface, I come to a more particular consideration of some of the effects of those thoughts of man, which are unexpressed by speech or action, upon others and upon himself:

1st. How may we effectually resist the force of bad influence of locality operating on *us* from the Astral Plane?

2nd. How may we do something, otherwise than by precept and example, towards overcoming the evil Karma of Locality which may be affecting *others*?

3rd. How may we in individual cases help some unfortunates with whose needs we are acquainted?

An answer is — by Thoughts.

In man's advancement from darkness into light, in the "Human Soul's" departure from lower materiality to entrance into right Spiritual living, among other means to be used to attain that end are right thought, right action, right speech and right meditation. Of these, *right thought*, is of primary importance, for it is the foundation from which only the others can spring into life. Actions in objectivity are illusions; they are shadows of our personality created by thoughts. Thoughts are nearer, more akin to our personality than actions are, for they are primary expressions from personality, always preceding conscious speech and action. Of all the indices to our personality of which we have knowledge thoughts are the clearest; we are as our thoughts are. In compliance with that grand mandate, "Know Thyself," why scan life's *page* of speech and actions — shadows — when a vast *volume* of thoughts — realities — expressions of our personality, lies open to us for finding knowledge of self?

Though independent of speech and action, thoughts are realities. They are real, living, active forces, until their force is expended, — but the effects of right thoughts last forever. Space does not necessarily limit their reach. They are in the air, so to speak, everywhere, and can move with a rapidity that is instantaneous. They may not only be sent, but are received. It takes but the veriest morsel of time to send a thought to the Sun; at the Sun it takes as little time to receive a thought from the Earth.

To the first question — "how may we effectually resist the force of bad influence of Locality operating on *us* from the Astral Plane?" — one way is to search for Spiritual Truth. That truth is "in the air." It is conveyed to us by Thoughts. But a thought "from the air" is as a seed. A mustard seed planted in ice will not fructify; a spiritual thought-seed falling upon a "Human Soul" which is bound and tied to Earth by its "Animal Soul" will not fructify. The mustard seed must fall into ground properly prepared for its reception, ere by culture it can sprout, grow, and bear fruit. And so, too, must the soil of the "Human Soul," be made ready in order that it shall afford an appropriate bed upon which the ever-present Spiritual thought-seed shall alight. On such a prepared soil it will *surely* fall; as surely as the magnetic needle points to its pole, and once there, by our own culture it may grow into "an everlasting tree of Holiness."

How is that bed prepared? How is it that we become ready to receive Spiritual Truth? By right thought, right action, right speech and right meditation. It lies within our *inner selves* whether we shall advance in Spiritual knowledge and life, and nowhere else; it must be our purpose, our business. No dictum of the Schools can bring it about. No printed book on esoteric wisdom or on ethics, or on the multitudinous religions of man can give it to us; — belonging to the Theosophical Society does not necessarily lead us into Spiritual life. These, to the hungry

"Human Soul," may be of immense importance, but if the "Human Soul" — principle 5, be not first prepared, if we do not look upward and build upward, all these means, — Spiritual thoughts that are "in the air," wise books, this society of yours — they are all to such a spiritually-desert soul, but as of old — "pearls before swine" — hidden light — a force shut out by ourselves from acting within us.

When we are engaged in right searching for Spiritual Truth, bad forces from the Astral Plane are inoperative upon us: Thus may we effectually resist the force of bad influence of Locality operating on *ourselves* from the Astral Plane.

The second question we are considering is, "How may we do something, otherwise than by precept and example, towards overcoming the evil Karma which may be affecting *others*?"

Surely, again, it is by right thought, and right action, speech and meditation. For, not only do they prepare the way for the reception of Spiritual Truths, but the ego, so thinking, acting, speaking and meditating, is, while so employed, disseminating Spiritual light on all sides through the Astral Plane. He is throwing out Spiritual truth-seed which is reaching far and near. Wherever a "Human Soul" is in need of it, and hungering for it, it *will surely fall*; for there the soil is ready for its reception. These right thoughts have gone into "the air," and are certain to strike in somewhere for good.

Thus by *right thought* we may do something otherwise than by precept and example, towards obliterating the evil Karma of locality which is affecting *others*.

Regarding the third question; it seems to me that we all know some particular individuals to whose high needs we can minister by direct intention through the power of thought.

Who, that observes and reflects, cannot gather from his own experience the fact that thought can fly to a person at a distance? How common to say "I was thinking of one and he appeared." It is not an uncommon experience for one to unexpectedly entertain serious, at any rate marked thoughts about another, and subsequently to find that the other was similarly occupied in mind with him at the same time. It is odd if there be not some among you who know that thought messages have been sent, received and acted on by the object-person when the receiver was in an abnormal condition to the sender. By these and other illustrations which doubtless will occur to you, we *know* that it is within the province of cause and effect that thought has power to operate on others at a distance by direct intention of the sender, by mental action alone.

Believing in the reality of thought — *knowing* the reality of thought — in its power to shield us from evil; in its power to affect others unknown to us; in our power to project it to special individuals, what opportunities it affords us for conferring high good.

But in order to do positive good to another by this direct thought unexpressed by speech or action, some certain conditions are necessary, which we may consider as milestones that shall indicate the progress of our own ascending path from materiality to spirituality. To be a power by thought influence, — (I do not refer now to thought sent by will power to a particular "sensitive" who is in subjective state to the sender — which condition is on a lower plane than that which we are now considering,) presupposes intensity of love born of and nurtured by Spirituality for those whose high good we thus seek to establish. There must first be born in us an enthusiasm for giving high and positive good to another unconsciously to him. According to our unselfish love in this matter will be our enthusiasm, as is our enthusiasm,

shall be the energy of our missive-thought; and according to the energy of that thought will be its effect upon the object to which it is sent, — the more powerfully intense the thought the deeper it will penetrate; — the longer its effects will endure.

Right meditation will be required of us to determine what we really desired to effect. If we arrive at the position within ourselves necessary for obtaining power for affecting another for good by thought message, there will be engendered within us a portion of that grand principle on which this Society is founded, viz: Universal Brotherhood — unselfish love for others.

In making thought message to others, on the basis of lifting them to a higher plane of action, a part of our daily life, by its reaction upon ourselves we shall surely be "laying up treasures in Heaven" — and full will be our material for Devachanic life.

As in Devachan one shall live in the good he has done while in objective earth life — shall live in the true beauty he has learned to perceive — shall live in the effects of his good-life, his thoughts while here on earth can be made for the Devachanic period of his existence a vast store-house of "good-life" of purest water. But it must be of thoughts untinged by selfish considerations. It must be of thoughts evolved through love of others for *their* good.

Right thought being the grand power it is:

1st. To resist within *ourselves* the bad Karma of Locality.

2nd. By which to weaken and destroy the bad Karma of Locality, which is disastrously affecting *others*.

3rd. By which from a basis of spiritual love we may send light to a groping soul, — what heavy responsibility is ever over us that it shall be our purpose, our study to "think aright." — To live much in thus right thinking — we shall ever be lifting some of the heavy

Karma from off the world. It is thus, that we can live in the Eternal, for right thought is of the Universal Mind, and Universal Mind is of the Eternal.

Reflect that persistent right thinking affects humanity constantly in the right direction, ever from the gross and material to the refined and Spiritual. It will ever be a constant force so long as evil exists. Let this idea sink into our consciousness. Let right thought be to us as the strong arm with which to do good to others. One need not long for wealth, for position or power that he may do good to others; the poorest in material wealth, the humblest in station, the most insignificant among men has within himself this ever open store-house of power for conferring good on which he can draw without limit; a wealth he can scatter broadcast, or can give by direct selection of object with the surety that he is bestowing benefits broadly, — knowing that he is successfully contending against Spiritual poverty — which is the sum of evil.

He who uses this wealth, can do so — *must* do so only by sacrifice of thought of self. He must be interested only in combating evil by helping humanity at large; of offering special help to those whom he knows are desirous of help. As his life-love for the objects in view is the only foundation upon which he can do these works, — love of self can not be a power within him.

To put it the other way. Begin the work of thought for the good of others by first forgetting self; as fast as possible get away from the dominion of materiality. Live in the love of doing *enduring* good to others — these conditions *are* the true and upward advancement of ourselves. The doing of these things *is the reward*; — it is the advancing into *God-life*. It is part of our real Eternal selves. It is living in the Eternal — the everlasting good; for the God-life — the good-life is the only eternally active one. By

living thus, the gross and material now enchaining our entities will be broken down and will die and leave us — and die they must sooner or later or the "I am I" shall perish.

Brooklyn, Oct. 15, 1886

The Path

ENVIRONMENT — *Hadjj Erinn*

To the Western mind the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation contain difficulties which while they seem imaginary to the Eastern student, are nevertheless for the Western man as real as any of the other numerous obstructions in the path of salvation. All difficulties are more or less imaginary, for the whole world and all its entanglements are said to be an illusion resulting from the notion of a separate I. But while we exist here in matter, and so long as there is a manifested universe, these illusions are real to that man who has not risen above them to the knowledge that they are but the masks behind which the reality is hidden.

For nearly twenty centuries the Western nations have been building up the notion of a separate I — of *meum* and *tuum* — and it is hard for them to accept any system which goes against those notions.

As they progress in what is called material civilization with all its dazzling allurements and aids to luxury, their delusion is further increased because they appraise the value of their doctrine by the results which seem to flow from it, until at last they push so far what they call the reign of law, that it becomes a reign of terror. All duty to their fellows is excluded from it in practice, although the beautiful doctrines of Jesus are preached to the people daily by preachers who are paid to preach but not to enforce, and who cannot insist upon the practice which should logically follow the theory because the consequences would be a loss of position and livelihood.

So when out of such a nation rises a mind that asks for help to find again the path that was lost, he is unconsciously much affected by the education not only of himself but also of his

nation through all these centuries. He has inherited tendencies that are hard to be overcome. He battles with phantasms, real for him but mere dreams for the student who has been brought up under other influences.

When, therefore, he is told to rise above the body, to conquer it, to subdue his passions, his vanity, anger and ambition, he asks, "what if borne down by this environment, which I was involuntarily born into, I shall fail." Then when told that he must fight or die in the struggle, he may reply that the doctrine of Karma is cold and cruel because it holds him responsible for the consequences which appear to be the result of that unsought environment. It then becomes with him a question whether to fight and die, or to swim on with the current careless as to its conclusion but happy if perhaps it shall carry him into smooth water whose shores are Elysian.

Or perhaps he is a student of occultism whose ambition has been fired by the prospect of adeptship, of attaining powers over nature, or what not.

Beginning the struggle he presently finds himself beset with difficulties which, not long after, he is convinced are solely the result of his environment. In his heart he says that Karma has unkindly put him where he must constantly work for a living for himself and a family: or he has a life long partner whose attitude is such that he is sure were he away from her he could progress: until at last he calls upon heaven to interpose and change the surroundings so opposed to his perfecting himself.

This man has indeed erred worse than the first. He has wrongly supposed that his environment was a thing to be hated and spurned away. Without distinctly so saying to himself, he has nursed within the recesses of his being the idea that he like Buddha could in this one life triumph over all the implacable

forces and powers that bar the way to Nirvana. We should remember that the Buddha does not come every day but is the efflorescence of ages, who when the time is ripe surely appears in one place and in one body, not to work *for his own* advancement but for the *salvation of the world*.

What then of environment and what of its power over us?

Is environment Karma or is it Reincarnation? THE LAW is Karma, reincarnation is only an incident. It is one of the means which The Law uses to bring us at last to the true light. The wheel of rebirths is turned over and over again by us in obedience to this law, so that we may at last come to place our entire reliance upon Karma. Nor is our environment Karma itself, for Karma is the subtle power which works in that environment.

There is nothing but the SELF — using the word as Max Muller does to designate the Supreme Soul — and its environment. The Aryans for the latter use the word *Kosams* or sheaths. So that there is only this Self and the various sheaths by which it is clothed, beginning with the most intangible and coming down to the body, while outside of that and common to all is what is commonly known as environment, whereas the word should be held to include all that is not The Self.

How unphilosophical therefore it is to quarrel with our surroundings, and to desire to escape them? We only escape one kind to immediately fall into another. And even did we come into the society of the wisest devotees we would still carry the environment of the Self in our own bodies, which will always be our enemy so long as we do not know what it is in all its smallest details. Coming down then to the particular person, it is plain that that part of the environment which consists in the circumstances of life and personal surroundings is only an incident, and that the real environment to be understood and cared about is that in

which Karma itself inheres in us.

Thus we see that it is a mistake to say — as we often hear it said — "If he only had a fair chance; if his surroundings were more favorable he would do better," since he really *could not* be in any other circumstances at that time, for if he were it would not be he but some one else. It must be necessary for him to pass through those identical trials and disadvantages to perfect the Self; and it is only because we see but an infinitesimal part of the long series that any apparent confusion or difficulty arises. So our strife will be, not to escape from anything, but to realize that these *Kosams*, or sheaths, are an integral portion of ourselves, which we must fully understand before we can change the abhorred surroundings. This is done by acknowledging the unity of spirit, by knowing that everything, good and bad alike, is the Supreme. We then come into harmony with the Supreme Soul, with the whole universe, and no environment is detrimental.

The very first step is to rise from considering the mere outside delusive environment, knowing it to be the result of past lives, the fruition of Karma done, and say with Uddalaka in speaking to his son:

"All this Universe has the Deity for its life. That Deity is the Truth. He is the Universal soul. He Thou art, O Svetaketu!"

The Path

A YEAR ON THE PATH — *William Q. Judge*

The present issue of this Magazine closes the first year of its publication. It was not started because its projectors thought that they alone knew the true Path, but solely out of an intense longing to direct inquiring minds towards a way which had seemed to many persons who had tried it, to hold out the possibility of finding an answer to the burning questions that vex the human heart.

The question is always naturally asked "What is the Path?" or "What is the Philosophy?" which is the same thing, for of course the following of any path whatever will depend upon the particular philosophy or doctrines believed in. The path we had in view is held by us to be the same one which in all ages has been sought by Heathen, Jew and Christian alike. By some called the path to Heaven, by others the path to Jesus, the path to Nirvana, and by the Theosophists the path to Truth. Jesus has defined it as a narrow, difficult and straight path. By the ancient Brahmins it has been called, "the small old path leading far away on which those sages walk who reach salvation;" and Buddha thought it was a noble fourfold path by which alone the miseries of existence can be truly surmounted.

But of course mental diversities inevitably cause diversity in the understanding of any proposition. Thus it happens that Theosophists have many different views of how the path should be followed, but none of them disagree with the statement that there must be *one* Truth, and that no religion can be called higher than Truth. We therefore have pursued, as far as possible, a course which is the result of the belief that the prevalence of similar doctrines in the writings and traditions of all peoples

points to the fact that *the true religion is that one which will find the basic ideas common to all philosophies and religions.*

We turned most readily and frequently to the simple declarations found in the ancient books of India, esteeming most highly that wonderful epic poem — the Bhagavad-Gita. And in that is found a verse that seems to truly express in powerful words what philosophers have been blindly grasping after in many directions.

"It is even a portion of myself (the Supreme) that in this material world is the universal spirit of all things. It draweth together the five organs and the mind, which is the sixth, in order that it may obtain a body, and that it may leave it again; and that portion of myself (Ishwar) having taken them under his charge, accompanieth them from his own abode as the breeze the fragrance from the flower." (1)

To catch the light which gleams through this verse, is not for mortal minds an easy task, and thus it becomes necessary to present as many views from all minds as can be obtained. But it seems plain that in every religion is found the belief that that part of man which is immortal must be a part of the Supreme Being, for there cannot be two immortalities at once, since that would give to each a beginning, and therefore the immortal portion of man must be derived from the true and only immortality.

This immortal spark has manifested itself in many different classes of men, giving rise to all the varied religions, many of which have forever disappeared from view. Not any one of them could have been the whole Truth, but each must have presented one of the facets of the great gem, and thus through the whole surely run ideas shared by all. These common ideas point to truth. They grow out of man's inner nature and are not the result of revealed books. But some one people or another must have paid more attention to the deep things of life than another must.

The "Christian" nations have dazzled themselves with the baneful glitter of material progress. They are not the peoples who will furnish the clearest clues to the Path. A few short years and they will have abandoned the systems now held so dear, because their mad rush to the perfection of their civilization will give them control over now undreamed of forces. Then will come the moment when they must choose which of two kind of fruit they will take. In the meantime it is well to try and show a relation between their present system and the old, or at least to pick out what grains of truth are in the mass.

In the year just passing we have been cheered by much encouragement from without and within. Theosophy has grown not only in ten years, but during the year past. A new age is not far away. The huge, unwieldy flower of the 19th century civilization, has almost fully bloomed, and preparation must be made for the wonderful new flower which is to rise from the old. We have not pinned our faith on Vedas nor Christian scriptures, nor desired any others to do so. All our devotion to Aryan literature and philosophy arises from a belief that the millions of minds who have trodden weary steps before ours, left a path which might be followed with profit, yet with discrimination. For we implicitly believe that in this curve of the cycle, the final authority is *the man himself*. In former times the disclosed Vedas, and later, the teachings of the great Buddha, were the right authority, in whose authoritative teachings and enjoined practices were found the necessary steps to raise Man to an upright position. But the grand clock of the Universe points to another hour, and now Man must seize the key in his hands and himself — as a whole — open the gate. Hitherto he has depended upon the great souls whose hands have stayed impending doom. Let us then together enter upon another year, fearing nothing, assured of strength in the Union of Brotherhood. For how can we fear

death, or life, or any horror or evil, at any place or time, when we well know that even death itself is a part of the dream which we are weaving before our eyes.

Our belief may be summed up in the motto of the Theosophical Society "There is no religion higher than Truth," and our practice consists in a disregard of any authority in matters of religion and philosophy except such propositions as from their innate quality we feel to be true.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Bhagavad-Gita*, ch. 15. ([return to text](#))

The Path

PAPYRUS — THE GEM — *Rameses*

The roads were thronged with the people moving toward the great square, for it was a feast of the Goddess. The temples were crowded, while long lines of men and maidens in the robes of "The Sacred" wound in and out toward the river.

Music and song rose and fell upon the evening breeze, like the pulse of a throbbing heart. Here and there could be seen the Scribes, and seated in an open space, the Tale-tellers. One of these, as I rested near him, told the tale of

ONE WHO FOUND THE GEM.

"In the land of the Wise-men, there dwelt a young man. Many years had he labored in a strange mine; the 'Mine of the Priceless Gems;' — hopefully, bravely, but fruitlessly. He had long known that he who should find the Master Stone, would be free, be full of peace and dig no more, for nothing better could be found. He also knew that he who found the stone should seek to share it with all men.

"Many small stones had he found, but they were laid aside to be used when the great stone was reached.

"Silently and steadily he worked on, until one gloomy day when he had grown so weak that he could make but one more effort, that effort was rewarded, and before him lay the great gem. Weary, weak, but joyful, he gathered it into his bosom, and went forth to share it with others; for he who told not of his gem, or shared it not with all men must lose the stone.

"Far he wandered, telling his wonderful story, the *finding of the Priceless Stone* — the stone that made men greater, wiser, more

loving than all things living; the stone that no man could keep unless he gave it away.

"Far he wandered in his own country, seeking to tell his story and give of the Stone to each one he met. Silently they listened — gravely they meditated and gently they said to him: 'This is Kali-yuga, the dark age. Come to us a hundred thousand years from now. Until then — the stone is not for us. It is Karma.'

"Far into another land he wandered, ever trying for the same end. Gravely they listened, quietly they spoke: 'Peace be with you. When the Lotus ceases to bloom and our Sacred River runs dry, come to us. Until then we need not the stone.'

"Over the seas unto another land he went, for fully he believed that there they would hear and share with him. The many days of wandering and the long journey across the sea had made him thin and ragged. He had not thought of this, but as he told his story he was reminded of it and many other things, for here the people answered in many ways, and not always gently.

"Some listened, for his story was new to them, but the gem was uncut, and they wished it polished.

"Others paused and desired him to tell his story in their tents, for that would make them exalted and famous, but they wanted not the gem. As he did not belong to their tribe, it would bring discredit upon them to receive anything from him.

"One paused to listen and desired some of the stone, but he desired to use it to elevate his own position and assist him in overreaching his fellows in bartering and bargaining. The Wanderer was unable to give any of the stone to such as this one.

"Another listened, but inasmuch as the Wanderer refused to make the gem float in the air, he would none of it.

"Another heard, but he already knew of a better stone, and was sure he would find it, because he ate nothing but star-light and moon-beams.

"Another could not receive any of the stone or listen to the story, for the Wanderer was poor and ragged. Unless he was dressed in purple and fine linen and told his story in words of oil and honey, he could not be the possessor of the gem.

"Still another heard, but he knew it was not the gem. As the Wanderer had been unsuccessful before, surely he could not have found the stone. Even had he found it, he could not have the proper judgment to divide it. So he wanted none of the stone.

"Near and far went the Wanderer. Still ever the same. Some wanted it, but the stone was too hard, or not bright enough. He was not of their people, or was ignorant. He was too ragged and worn to suit their ideas, so they wanted none of the stone.

"Saddened, aged and heart-sore, he wandered back to the land of the Wise men. To one of these he went, telling of his journeyings and that no man would share with him the magnificent stone, and also of his sorrow that he too must lose it.

"'Be not troubled, my son,' said the Wise One, 'the stone is for you, nor can you lose it. He who makes the effort to help his fellow man is the rightful owner and still possesses the entire stone, although he has shared it with all the world. To each and every one to whom you have spoken, although they knew it not, you have given one of the smaller stones which you first found. It is enough. When the Master Stone is cut and polished, then is the labor of the fortunate possessor ended. The long journeying and weary wandering, the sorrow-laden heart and tear-dimmed eyes, have cut and polished your gem. Behold, it is a white and a fair stone!'

"Drawing it from his bosom, the Wanderer gazed into the wonderful light of the stone while an expression of great peace stole over his face. Folding the gem close to his bosom his eyelids closed, and he fell asleep, a wanderer no more."

The Path

HERALDS FROM THE UNSEEN — *Jasper Niemand*

"Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." — I Cor. xv, 51. "I have found the small old path leading far away." — UPANISHAD.

To him who without murmuring, confident in the perfect justice of the law, waits and watches, there comes a herald from heights unseen. The just man follows him and attains; the unwise may surprise him and follow also. But when the fool has rushed unbidden in where angels fear to tread, he meets a mailed Truth with a drawn sword, on whose point he dies. Now there are two deaths. From the one he may rise, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, * * * for the dead shall be raised," (1) and this by the vivifying power of truth, if so be he have one identical incorruptible atom in his spiritual make up, or else that rash being is dead forever, and the spirit monad creates another in the dream of three thousand years.

The indivisible Truth in its entirety is incommunicable in the words of our plane. A clue may indeed be given; it is the herald to those who await him. It is useless to turn the page to see who this is that offers the clue. Of myself I know nothing, yet through me may much be made known. I am the trumpet; through it the herald may proclaim a mystery.

It was in a night of silence that a Power bade me waken, and drew me to a dark cave wherein It passed. Not so I, for the entrance was narrow and I had encumbrances about me. Only many nights later, when I had parted with effort, hope and fear, did I stand within. All of me that was essential had entered; this was enough. Then a musical chord breathed low, the darkness dispersed, and I saw the Unknown Land.

It was a circling land of streams, Light everywhere, flowing, flowing, flowing. The flow was cadenced and welled from a mysterious Centre of blackness at the edges of which spouted cataracts of flame. My thought shrank with awe of the Darkness, but an unknown grasp of Might expanded within me and drew me to that flaming verge. On the knees of the soul I fall and am not. I become one with the All, and consciously resting in Omniscience I know the whole. Yet *what* forever dwells, wakeful and brooding with that dark pavillion, nor man nor angel may discover. Profounder than all Being, *It is*, girt about by unfathomed fires. "Ye shall enter the light, but ye shall never touch the flame." (2)

A stir was over that central Dark, a titanic breath, like the sighing of myriad seas, measured, omnipotent. Where its harmonious friction fretted the verges of space, the flames burst forth, and with fecund pulsations gave birth to heat, light, motion and sound. The Centre felt a boundless attraction for the circumference, pouring toward it with inexhaustible energy, for "the heart of it is Love." This was the force centrifugal, which in a dazzle of starry scintillations thrusts the universal glooms apart with a song. Were this all, Discord and Division were the end. But the circumference trembled also with a vast yearning toward the Centre, so that it ever tended to return there, as the prodigal, enriched in experience, returns to the mystic house of the Father. This was the centripetal force, and these two caused the double vibration of the Astral Light, and they are all you shall know though you blend with the infinite forever. "Whatever there is, the whole world when gone forth trembles in His breath: that Brahman is a great terror, like a drawn sword. They who know it become immortal." (3)

Then a voice said — "The Absolute evolves thought from Himself, and the vibration of this thought in the passive wells of space

generates Light and its correlated forces. The Thought is, — 'Creation!' The singing breath is the Word; the Light is the Absolute made manifest, and the Universe begins." At once I saw divergent lances of light pour their serried splendors into the void, and the point of each spear displaced the mist which curling backward from the centre of energy thus formed, communicated the movement to sister vapors in turn. Activities shoot, play back and forth, elongate, crystalize, and so great planets spring into the arena, feel the first instinct of separate Being, struggle to depart, — an estranged Self — in meteoric desolation, when the magnetic impulse of the Centre streams along the creative ray, meets the responsive principle, and lo! each chafing Orb, held in leash by Love, wheels into the circle of attraction and obeys the Law. The astral world has begun!

Thence presently the Light spreads afresh, reflected and repeated from every facet of every star, till arrowy glories, vibrant with each vibration sped forth by the primary pencils of light, in turn create dull planetary masses in the luminous abyss; then ever renewed corruscations quicken their dust with whose initial tremor shining crystals sparkle out and glide together about a glistening ring whose centre is ever a darkness ruffled by the out-reaching current from that first tinted Gloom. So new spheres form, these, repeating the parent movement, with wide spreading auras touch and arouse their neighbors, and interpenetrating, revolving, throwing off, taking on, converging, diverging, modifying and modified, a world of forms is evolved whose final expression of Being is Man. Thus further departing, the infinite variations end in individuality and the greater the individuality, the more it leans to the centrifugal force, and the lack of equilibrium in the forces draws man further from the Eternal and he forgets the Law. His aura, his rays are nerve currents centred in the personality, but linked by star-beam and moon-ray to the

quivering Source of all light, so that each man vibrating, imparts to the Akasa about him his own specific rate of vibration, and all men, all things, suspended as it were in this fine ether which fills the universe, act and react each on each, every one striving to modify the others to his own vibratory ratio, while the Light in the same way attacks all, and the battle of the giants is here. So the final expression of "evil" is inertia, and the highest attribute of Spirit is the Thought which is Life.

Once again the Voice spoke then saying: "What gives Life?" Someone answered: "Vibration." And when It said, "Look back to the earth world," I obeyed. I saw the modern sage reducing all the great forces, all the intoxicating play of colors and the bewildering tangle of harmonies to this one source, — Vibration. I saw wondering students bending over sensitive flames that danced or died at the mandate of sound. I saw a child playing with iron filings on glass, and as he drew a bow athwart the pane they marshalled into tiny mimicries of the primitive crystalline creation. I saw the Frost spirit, tracing his white wonders of tropical forests on vibrant surfaces, blazoning symbols of summer on the grim escutcheon of the snow. I saw Sound disintegrating granite and iron, taming wild beasts with a lure, transforming brothers into demons at the sibilant hiss of a scathing word. (4) I saw Light fecundating the soil, and the teeming battalions of the underworld issuing from the palpitating spark in their germs; the selective art of the flower, choosing the kindred color of her tribe from all the flashing scale, gave up to me its secret of the synchronous vibration of that hue with the astral soul within her fragrant form. Passion I saw also, flaming in two breasts that for one tumultuous moment became one, and knew it for an instant of similar vibration. Aye, and saw that Love was a steadfast quality of motion between loyal hearts, saw too that Anger and Hatred had their rise in the same source, and

mounting upward I saw that Faith was a similitude of vibration with Truth itself. Again the Voice spoke; "Dost thou see aught but Vibration anywhere?" I answered: "Such all life is, and from such all proceeds. He who cons its secret laws and can institute its musical numbers at will, is a God! He can create and destroy." "Go then, and by analogy learn what thou art," said the Voice, and like the rebel fraction of a star I fell from Glory, and found myself alone in the Maya world again, with these words thrilling my brain. "But He, that Highest Person, who wakes in us while we sleep, shaping one lovely sight after another, He indeed is called the Light, He is called Brahman, He alone is called The Immortal. All worlds are founded on It and no one goes beyond. This is that." (5)

It is rarely that a man gets the whole of his thought; often others supply it. Analogy is the power of following a thought into all its correlations, and I shall ask you to do this in a measure with mine. These puny pages cannot contain the theme of cycles, and falling short, it scarce matters by how many pen strokes I fail. Consider this first; what are we? Look abroad over our Society, largely; we see each member working on his own particular line. So it must be with man for ages. When you shall have exhausted your special hobby, when through astral perception, or mesmeric control or mental acumen, you shall have attained high powers, the hour of your limitation will strike, as its awful knell can strike, even from the towers of Futurity, and you will know that you have not found that cornerstone on which alone the Eternal rests, — your indivisible Self. "Great ones fall back, even from the threshold, unable to sustain the weight of responsibility; unable to pass on." (6) Follow from the start that solitary beacon which informs the ultimate goal: *Unity*. Make it your touchstone and your guide; other stars are reflected lights only. The doctrine of unselfishness is no sentiment, but of logical, practical utility. The

individual way lies from limited Being, through Becoming, to unlimited Being, precisely as the universal way lies from sterile Unity, through Division to fecund Unity, or from the one Life through Death to the Life of the All. He who in final choice elects the path of Division, chooses Death eternal. You may indeed wend homeward through the devious tangle of reflected rays, but how long, how hard are such path! I would see your souls with eagle swoop make straight for the Central Sun. Look then within you. Man! Woman! Are you what you seem? Till this thought daily; it will bear the harvest of Life.

With analogy for our guide we observe that the first forms of life are crystalline and have two poles. You man, are also a magnetic sphere with physical and spiritual poles. On the physical side of the subject we find modern scientists telling us that man is matter in a state of low vibration, and thought, matter in a state of high vibration. (7) In this ascertained view, Spirit is a higher state of vibration than we at present cognize. "Does the fact look crass and material, threatening to degrade thy theory of Spirit? Resist it not; it goes to refine and raise thy theory of matter just as much." (8) Nor do I say this is all. Trust your highest ideal to the unconditioned causation lying back of that primal vibration — Absolute Thought.

The vibrant tension of fixed thought must in time heighten the vibratory ratio of the man, for tension excites increased pulsation. This rarefies the density of all bodies, and the friction of intensified chemical action establishes light, heat and odic force. The increased porosity of the physical body tends to disengage the atoms of the astral body, and the generation of a strong odic current forces it out to the astral world, (always attracting it) all the sooner because the intensified pulsation of thought-tension sends the auric emanations further into space, thus draughting a larger portion of the world-soul to the entity.

All vibration being attended with sound (which may or may not escape the ear) we proceed to examine tones and find them varying from the lowest of eight vibrations per second, to the highest known to western science of 24,000 per second. Remember that the tones of anger, hatred, scorn are all deep notes, those of cheerfulness, love, hope are treble. Here we discover the apparently inexplicable effect of spoken words which raise or depress our vibrations to their own by means of the etheric medium. To resist the wildfire spread of passion or anger we have but to check the vibration by holding steadily to our own; this maintained, may raise that of others, precisely as the high musical note constantly sounded, raises all lower ones at all related, to its own pitch. Tyndall says: "Scientific education ought to teach us to see the invisible as well as the visible in nature; to picture with the vision of the mind those operations which entirely elude bodily vision; to look at the very atoms of matter in motion and at rest, and to follow them forth without once losing sight of them * * to see them integrating themselves in natural phenomena." So I shall ask you to imagine a tone at a high rate of vibration, to see it striking the hearer's brain at a certain focus, creating there a centre of energy, which tending to crystalization, fixes the thought in the mind. And the more permanent duration of pleasant (which are high) thoughts and tunes is evident if we glance back over a long period of time and note how the joys stand out and the griefs disappear; so we always forget physical suffering. Moreover we may see this tone raising his vibratory ratio and glancing off at an angle of reflection equal to that of incidence, reacting upon the surrounding ether and upon all hearers. The magical success of eastern mantras depends upon the exact intonation, which governs the vibratory result, and the proper intonation of the sacred books, learned from the priests, doubtless increased their effect. Turning to colors, we find them varying in vibration from violet $1/60000$ inch to red $1/38000$ inch,

and the violet has greater actinism; so it would seem to follow that the more extended the undulation the greater the chemical action and resultant odic force. Hence the tone of animals or man is not such a poor test of their nature as we might suppose, and a certain clue to character is given in a preferred color. The higher sounds thus create greater akasic disturbance through increased undulation. Deleuze in his work on magnetism says: "The word which indicates our will can often exert an action. * * The very tones of the magnetizer, being produced by the vital energy, act upon the organs of the patients." Reichenbach proved that all chemical action is a source of odic force, and the transmersion of air being nothing less, additional witness is born to the occult power of a word. All mesmerizers are now agreed that motions and words are unnecessary; the will suffices; what is this but the tension of fixed thought. Everything in Nature has its own specific rate of vibration; if we know and can reproduce and heighten it we can call the thing into existence or pass ourselves within its consciousness. Hence the old saying that numbers are the names of things. The "lost word" itself is, doubt it not, a sound of the highest possible vibration, represented by the Aum, or sound of the eternal outpour of Light, the Logos of the Christians. The ordinary ear may not grasp this sound, but Tyndall tells us such are not dead because they have passed from our ken. (9) When we remember that this astral vibration can in time elevate that of all matter, we glimpse alike the great factor of Evolution and of the use of Aum. The thought being spiritually fixed, an unbroken vital current sets in between the man and the "One eternal Thinker, thinking non-eternal thoughts. He though one, fulfils the desire of many. The wise, who perceive Him within their Self, to them belong eternal joy, eternal peace!" (10) — Here we perceive the force of the repeated injunction to be calm; how else can the harmonious medium act upon us?" The man who is not calm and subdued, or whose mind is not at rest, he can never obtain the

Self, even by knowledge." (11)

Follow me now to the plane of soul. As all things from planet to molecule have their mystic centre, that of man is found in the heart, whose systole and diastole are regulated by the double movement of the Astral Light. There, hemmed about by the light of the semi-material soul, is the dusky centre, where the spirit may awaken and breathe. "The self is smaller than small, greater than great, hidden in the heart of the creature." Air is breathed by the lungs; the soul breathes the astral light. As that spiritual monad who is your own Augoides, breathed first upon the plastic Akasa and drew together, the principles of a man, so It must again breathe upon this silent centre to create the spiritual man. It does not inhabit him, It overshadows him. It is his "Father in Heaven" to whom Jesus bade him pray; his Creator. In each heart stands this shrouded altar to an unknown God. "Whom ye therefore ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you." He has created the physical man hundreds of times, for His mission is unfulfilled until through Evolution, He shall have made "one higher than the angels." In that illimitable future which evades the mind, my soul sees ultimate beings in their glory, raise the swelling tide of Being higher still. So Divinity raises Itself by Itself and man expands God. Here is the adhesion of Jesus to the destiny latent in Humanity. "Be ye perfect as your Father in Heaven is also perfect."

(Concluded in April.)

FOOTNOTES:

1. I Cor. xv ([return to text](#))
2. *Light on the Path.* ([return to text](#))
3. Vedanta. ([return to text](#))

4. It is known that in Ireland and other places, many peasants possess words whose sound can thrill a man and make a horse unmanageable. [Ed] ([return to text](#))
 5. Vedanta. ([return to text](#))
 6. *Light on the Path*. ([return to text](#))
 7. See Fiske, Stuart, *et al.* ([return to text](#))
 8. Emerson. ([return to text](#))
 9. On sound, P. 54. ([return to text](#))
 10. Vedanta. ([return to text](#))
 11. Idem. ([return to text](#))
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The Path

THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE: II — *Pilgrim*

The votaries of Religions that preach salvation only through the acceptance of their dogmas must inevitably be more or less animated by the proselytising spirit, and the more pretentious the claims of power to save by the inculcation of orthodox opinion, the more urgent must appear the necessity to spread those opinions as widely as possible. Indeed it seems imperative on one who holds such a faith in his heart of hearts, that he should spend his life in trying to spread it.

But when the true philosophic thought is attained and the law of Karma with its infinite ramifications realized as the all prevading power, how vain will seem all attempts to control or even deeply affect the destiny of others. Truly Occultism teaches the widest tolerance, and though its student will doubtless as formerly try to influence all who are brought into contact with him in his journey through life, and if possible instil into them the thoughts that actuate him and give his life a definite purpose, yet will he realize that over his own life alone has he paramount power. He may exercise his wordly wisdom as the sower of seed, may avoid what is most patently the rocky or the thorny ground, but he will gradually learn to cease to look for results from even the most promising, and will rise more and more on the wings of devotion to the true giver of the increase.

While therefore it is a subject for satisfaction if the Theosophical Society should indeed prove to be the dawn of that better hope for mankind the nucleus of that Universal Brotherhood which shall overspread all lands, and which shall plant in the hearts of men the Science-Religion along whose lines will move the spiritual progress of all future Humanity, yet as a Society it can

scarcely be expected to be free from the imperfections inherent in all organization, which being of the earth is necessarily earthly — and after all it is a matter of very small moment in what form truth is given to the world. This only is certain that truth must advance that no man can stay the wheel of evolution — that the Divine Wisdom which we believe animates us will one day be recognized by all mankind as the only solution of the problem of the Universe, and as the guide to Life Eternal.

And Destiny will not be hurried — spite of our impatience — any more than she can be retarded. The evil Karma of the World must work itself out. The unclean man let him be unclean still, let him measure every depth of vice and taste of every spring of passion till the hour strikes for him also and his painful upward progress has to begin. So have the Rishis done who went before us, so have we done in past existences, indeed we may have but extricated ourselves from the slough, and the mire may still be clinging to our feet. For no man can transcend experience, and all earthly places, foul and clean alike, must be trodden by him. Nor when the words or acts of others come into direct antagonism with our own personality, any more than when the cruelty and injustice in the world at large are brought painfully before us, shall we continue to blame the actors, or allow the old prejudices "with their lurid colourings of passion" to dominate us any longer, for the true philosophic thought will have taught us to recognize that all acts are but the result of the "Three Qualities" blended in infinite combination — the great Karma of the World working itself out.

The deeper one looks into this Western Civilization of ours, and the more one realizes in what degrading depths its masses are sunk, in what heartless frivolity so many of the more opulent spend their lives, and in what superstitious intolerance its so-called Religious World moves, it seems indeed a forlorn hope to

attempt to carry conviction of the Occult Truth or expect a widespread acceptance of it. But though this age of Darkness may exhibit an appalling depth of materiality, yet in all ages of the world, the blind multitude are many and the lovers of Wisdom few. And indeed this love of Wisdom is no light attainment, but one for which the soul has been educated through life times of experience and paroxysms of pain, for while the gratification of any of the senses still continues to give supreme satisfaction, there is no room in the soul for Theosophic thought. Not until by the slow education of repeated experience it is realized that the senses can no longer satisfy, that even the higher joys of communion with ones kind — though culminating in the ideal union of two souls — are but steps in the ladder to the Supreme Thought, can any true idea of the Divine Wisdom have been formed. Indeed a time will come for the student when the gratification of the senses will actually cause pain. It may be ushered in for one through the sense of sight, when the most beautiful scenery of earth, and the most perfect combinations of mountain wood and water only accentuate by their faint reflex the passionate desire for that land which no eye hath seen, that land which no eye can see. Or the symphonies of earthly music which once enthralled the soul may raise the longing for the song of the celestial choir to that ecstatic point where it becomes unrecognisable from pain. And so the student is driven inward to find at last his refuge in pure Thought, and he begins to perceive that the Eternal World of ideas is the only real World, the only one in which pure Being is to be found, and that this phenomenal existence is indeed but the circling of the nets of delusion, the restless, tossing of the false salt waves of sense which reward "with droughts that double thirst" the deluded souls that float on them.

The more the student lives in this ideal world, the more will he

find that the association with those whose interests are exclusively centred on earthly things becomes repugnant to him, and that even the calls of duty to descend from the tranquil heights of Thought, to the jarring discord of action in the world, are responded to with increasing pain, though duty in such cases is likely to be in process of changing her sphere of action. When the inner struggles of one still bound by ties of earth suggest such thoughts as these, surely the isolation from contact with the rude world of the most spiritual men, those who have achieved the sublime heights of Mahatmaship, is no longer a thing to wonder at, but becomes apparent as an absolute necessity.

The desires above referred to of seeing the invisible, and realizing the divine, will probably if practised continuously enough, and with sufficient intensity, be the prelude to some partial lifting of the veil, when the ecstatic may reap in a moment of beatific vision more than he ever dreamed of, and receive accretion of strength for the coming years, though this is more likely to be the immediate reward of some supreme self-devotion whether in act or thought, and when the words of Krishna, "near to renunciation — very near — dwelleth eternal peace" will flash upon the soul as truth that requires no word of mortal man to give it authority.

But woe to the man who unduly cultivates his spiritual faculties without being a complete master of his lower nature — the beast below will turn and rend him some day — the little bit of lust unconquered may be the means of his complete undoing. For as his astral consciousness develops, his whole being intensifies, including the small unconquered part of his physical nature, which he will then have to fight upon the Astral plane, in far more terrible struggle than had he conquered on the physical. It becomes in fact what is symbolically known as the "Dweller on the threshold" that has to be fought and conquered before the neophyte can aspire to gain the first glimmering of vision on the

true spiritual plane. For it must always be remembered that our nature is threefold, "body, soul and spirit" as the initiate St. Paul expressed it, and until the personality has transferred all its forces unto the soul plane, it cannot expect to attain to that of spirit. From this it will be evident how necessary it is to live more and more continuously in the Eternal Thought until all fleshly appetites and desires of sense die off by sheer inanition.

The vague dreams with which life began, and which the child with memories fresh from "that imperial palace whence he came" pictured in a material way of a golden city with walls of jasper and with gates of pearl, and into which no unclean thing was permitted to enter, are lost for a while in the frenzied rush of youth and early manhood, but maturer years bring them back with an added pathos and a more spiritualized meaning. It is indeed the Golden city we all seek for — "the city that hath foundations whose builder and whose maker is God."

The Path

HINDU SYMBOLISM: IV — *Isaac Myer*



AUM symbolized as in unison with the attributes of the Trimurti, as the symbolic foundation of the elementary universe. This has a certain connection with figures Nos. 1 and 2 and 3.

The idea is to represent the mystic body of Brahman (neuter) and the ideal type of the Trimurti. The representation is of a four-handed cloud picture. A wreath of clouds forms the outline of the head which is without any tiara. Two suns indicate the eyes without lids, always open. This symbolism is also found in the Hebrew books, *e.g.* the Zohar. The nose and eyebrows are formed by a palm tree divided on the top, in the centre. This tree was considered as androgynous. The mouth is merely an opening in the clouds; from it emanate, four principal rays, the four-worlds of the Kabbalah. AUM is winged, Brahman (neuter) is not, for the latter is also AUM — Prana, the breath of the highest life and mystic carrier of the Will of Brahman (neuter). AUM is the bird of the Brahman Desire or Wish.

The four hands of AUM are holding the archetypes of the four

elements, fire, water, air, earth, in their height and depth. The lower are supporting the Himalayan Mountains, the mountains of the gods. From which comes the German Himmel *i.e.*, Heaven. The linga yoni is shown as the symbol of all the creative and emanative powers which lie in the mystic cloud garment of AUM. In this figure are nearly all the principal symbols of the Brahmanical religious metaphysics.

The bond which unites Prakriti to Brahman (neuter) is Prana, the subtle body of Brahman, the form of the Being, the divine breath, the principle of the organism, the respiration so to say, of the Deity; in Sanskrit it also means "breath of man," more correctly it is AUM, the first form of the creator, the Sun engendered before Time, the first Word (the Logos) which went from Its mouth, the 'Hokmah or Wisdom of the Kabbalah, when It prepared its work, the creative Word. Prana and AUM are confounded in Maya, and as it, they have formed the Cow. AUM is the son of Maya as he is the son of Brahman (neuter), because Maya is Brahman. AUM is the first born Word or Logos of the Deity, the Memrah of the Jews, the Honover of the Persians, the origin of the Vedas. It has revealed and manifested all the emanated things, the so-called creation. It appeared before all things, and contains all qualities, all the elements, and is the name and body of Brahman (neuter), and consequently as infinite as It. The Will, Desire, Word is the master architect and creator of all the things. Brahma meditating upon the divine Word, therein found the primitive water, the common bond of all the creatures, the primitive fire, and the Trimurti of the Vedas, also the worlds and universal harmony of all the things. The image of AUM is the Cow, which is also a symbol of the universe. The universe was concealed and at first was hidden under the waters, and the waters were in Atma. These waters are those without any shores, all that which exists is water, and the water and AUM make but

one; these primitive waters are the sea of Maya, the celestial ocean of all existence.

There are to be found further in this symbolical picture many other suggestions flowing from the Ancient Aryan or Hindu system. That system is believed to contain in germ all the others which have since arisen, as: the Hermetic, the Jewish, the Christian and others. Space, however, forbids a more extended explanation at present, and the student is recommended to study the four which have appeared in this magazine.

The Path

THROUGH THE GATES OF GOLD

The most notable book for guidance in Mysticism which has appeared since *Light on the Path* was written has just been published under the significant title of "Through the Gates of Gold." (1) Though the author's name is withheld, the occult student will quickly discern that it must proceed from a very high source. In certain respects the book may be regarded as a commentary on *Light on the Path*. The reader would do well to bear this in mind. Many things in that book will be made clear by the reading of this one, and one will be constantly reminded of that work, which has already become a classic in our literature. Through the Gates of Gold is a work to be kept constantly at hand for reference and study. It will surely take rank as one of the standard books of Theosophy.

The "Gates of Gold" represent the entrance to that realm of the soul unknowable through the physical perceptions, and the purpose of this work is to indicate some of the steps necessary to reach their threshold. Through its extraordinary beauty of style and the clearness of its statement it will appeal to a wider portion of the public than most works of a Theosophical character. It speaks to the Western World in its own language, and in this fact lies much of its value.

Those of us who have been longing for some thing "practical" will find it here, while it will probably come into the hands of thousands who know little or nothing of Theosophy, and thus meet wants deeply felt though unexpressed. There are also doubtless many, we fancy, who will be carried far along in its pages by its resistless logic until they encounter something which will give a rude shock to some of their old conceptions, which

they have imagined as firmly based as upon a rock — a shock which may cause them to draw back in alarm, but from which they will not find it so easy to recover, and which will be likely to set them thinking seriously.

The titles of the five chapters of the book are, respectively, "The Search for Pleasure," "The Mystery of Threshold," "The Initial Effort," "The Meaning of Pain," and "The Secret of Strength." Instead of speculating upon mysteries that lie at the very end of man's destiny, and which cannot be approached by any manner of conjecture, the work very sensibly takes up that which lies next at hand, that which constitutes the first step to be taken if we are ever to take a second one, and teaches us its significance. At the outset we must cope with sensation and learn its nature and meaning. An important teaching of *Light on the Path* has been misread by many. We are not enjoined to kill out sensation, but to "kill out *desire* for sensation," which is something quite different. "Sensation, as we obtain it through the physical body, affords us all that induces us to live in that shape," says this work. The problem is, to extract the meaning which it holds for us. That is what existence is for. "If men will but pause and consider what lessons they have learned from pleasure and pain, much might be guessed of that strange thing which causes these effects."

"The question concerning results seemingly unknowable, that concerning the life beyond the Gates" is presented as one that has been asked throughout the ages, coming at the hour "when the flower of civilization had blown to its full, and when its petals are but slackly held together," the period when man reaches the greatest physical development of his cycle. It is then that in the distance a great glittering is seen, before which many drop their eyes bewildered and dazzled, though now and then one is found brave enough to gaze fixedly on this glittering, and to decipher something of the shape within it. "Poets and philosophers,

thinkers and teachers, all those who are the 'elder brothers of the race' — have beheld this sight from time to time, and some among them have recognized in the bewildering glitter the outlines of the Gates of Gold."

Those Gates admit us to the sanctuary of man's own nature, to the place whence his life-power comes, and where he is priest of the shrine of life. It needs but a strong hand to push them open, we are told. "The courage to enter them is the courage to search the recesses of one's own nature without fear and without shame. In the fine part, the essence, the flavor of the man, is found the key which unlocks those great Gates."

The necessity of killing out the sense of separateness is profoundly emphasized as one of the most important factors in this process. We must divest ourselves of the illusions of the material life. "When we desire to speak with those who have tried the Golden Gates and pushed them open, then it is very necessary — in fact it is essential — to discriminate, and not bring into our life the confusions of our sleep. If we do, we are reckoned as madmen, and fall back into the darkness where there is no friend but chaos. This chaos has followed every effort of man that is written in history; after civilization has flowered, the flower falls and dies, and winter and darkness destroy it." In this last sentence is indicated the purpose of civilization. It is the blossoming of a race, with the purpose of producing a certain spiritual fruit; this fruit having ripened, then the degeneration of the great residuum begins, to be worked over and over again in the grand fermenting processes of reincarnation. Our great civilization is now flowering and in this fact we may read the reason for the extraordinary efforts to sow the seed of the Mystic Teachings wherever the mind of man may be ready to receive it.

In the "Mystery of Threshold," we are told that "only a man who

has the potentialities in him both of the voluptuary and the stoic has any chance of entering the Golden Gates. He must be capable of testing and valuing to its most delicate fraction every joy existence has to give; and he must be capable of denying himself all pleasure, and that without suffering from the denial."

The fact that the way is different for each individual is finely set forth in "The Initial Effort," in the words that man "may burst the shell that holds him in darkness, tear the veil that hides him from the eternal, at any moment where it is easiest for him to do so; and most often this point will be where he least expects to find it." By this we may see the uselessness of laying down arbitrary laws in the matter.

The meaning of those important words, "All steps are necessary to make up the ladder," finds a wealth of illustration here. These sentences are particularly pregnant: "Spirit is not a gas created by matter, and we cannot create our future by forcibly using one material agent and leaving out the rest. Spirit is the great life on which matter rests, as does the rocky world on the free and fluid ether; whenever we can break our limitations we find ourselves on that marvellous shore where Wordsworth once saw the gleam of the gold." Virtue, being of the material life, man has not the power to carry it with him, "yet the aroma of his good deeds is a far sweeter sacrifice than the odor of crime and cruelty."

"To the one who has lifted the golden latch the spring of sweet waters, the fountain itself whence all softness arises, is opened and becomes part of his heritage. But before this can be reached a heavy weight has to be lifted from the heart, an iron bar which holds it down and prevents it from arising in its strength."

The author here wishes to show that there is sweetness and light in occultism, and not merely a wide dry level of dreadful Karma, such as some Theosophists are prone to dwell on. And this

sweetness and light may be reached when we discover the iron bar and raising it shall permit the heart to be free. This iron bar is what the Hindus call "the knot of the heart!" In their scriptures they talk of unloosing this knot, and say that when that is accomplished freedom is near. But what is the iron bar and the knot? is the question we must answer. It is the astringent power of self — of egotism — of the idea of separateness. This idea has many strongholds. It holds its most secret court and deepest counsels near the far removed depths and centre of the heart. But it manifests itself first, in that place which is nearest to our ignorant preceptions, where we see it first after beginning the search. When we assault and conquer it there it disappears. It has only retreated to the next row of outworks where for a time it appears not to our sight, and we imagine it killed, while it is laughing at our imaginary conquests and security. Soon again we find it and conquer again, only to have it again retreat. So we must follow it up if we wish to grasp it at last in its final stand just near the "kernel of the heart". There it has become an iron bar that holds down the heart, and there only can the fight be really won. That disciple is fortunate who is able to sink past all the pretended outer citadels and seize at once this *personal devil* who holds the bar of iron, and there wage the battle. If won there, it is easy to return to the outermost places and take them by capitulation. This is very difficult, for many reasons. It is not a mere juggle of words to speak of this trial. It is a living tangible thing that can be met by any real student. The great difficulty of rushing at once to the centre lies in the unimaginable terrors which assault the soul on its short journey there. This being so it is better to begin the battle on the outside in just the way pointed out in this book and *Light on the Path*, by testing experience and learning from it.

In the lines quoted the author attempts to direct the eyes of a very

materialistic age to the fact which is an accepted one by all true students of occultism, that the true heart of a man — which is visibly represented by the muscular heart — is the focus point for spirit, for knowledge, for power: and that from that point the converged rays begin to spread out fan-like, until they embrace the Universe. So it is the Gate. And it is just at that neutral spot of concentration that the pillars and the doors are fixed. It is beyond it that the glorious golden light burns, and throws up a "burnished glow." We find in this the same teachings as in the Upanishads. The latter speaks of "the ether which is within the heart," and also says that we must pass across that ether.

"The Meaning of Pain" is considered in a way which throws a great light on the existence of that which for ages has puzzled many learned men. "Pain arouses, softens, breaks, and destroys. Regarded from a sufficiently removed standpoint, it appears as a medicine, as a knife, as a weapon, as a poison, in turn. It is an implement, a thing which is used, evidently. What we desire to discover is, who is the user; what part of ourselves is it that demands the presence of this thing so hateful to the rest?"

The task is, to rise above both pain and pleasure and unite them to our service. "Pain and pleasure stand apart and separate, as do the two sexes; and it is in the merging, the making the two into one, that joy and deep sensation and profound peace are obtained. Where there is neither male nor female, neither pain nor pleasure, there is the god in man dominant, and then is life real."

The following passage can hardly fail to startle many good people: "Destiny, the inevitable, does indeed exist for the race and for the individual; but who can ordain this save the man himself? There is no clew in heaven or earth to the existence of any ordainer other than the man who suffers or enjoys that which is ordained."

But can any earnest student of Theosophy deny, or object to this? Is it not a pure statement of the law of Karma? Does it not agree perfectly with the teaching of the Bhagavat-Gita? There is surely no power which sits apart like a judge in court, and fines us or rewards us for this misstep or that merit; it is we who shape, or ordain, our own future.

God is not denied. The seeming paradox that a God exists within each man is made clear when we perceive that our separate existence is an illusion; the physical, which makes us separate individuals, must eventually fall away, leaving each man one with all men, and with God, who is the Infinite.

And the passage which will surely be widely misunderstood is that in "The secret of strength." "Religion holds a man back from the path, prevents his stepping forward, for various very plain reasons. First, it makes the vital mistake of distinguishing between good and evil. Nature knows no such distinctions." Religion is always man-made. It cannot therefore be the whole truth. It is a good thing for the ordinary and outside man, but surely it will never bring him to the Gates of Gold. If religion be of God how is it that we find that same God in his own works and acts violating the precepts of religion? He kills each man once in life; every day the fierce elements and strange circumstances which he is said to be the author of, bring on famine, cold and innumerable untimely deaths; where then, in The True, can there be any room for such distinctions as right and wrong? The disciple, must as he walks on the path, abide by law and order, but if he pins his faith on any religion whatever he will stop at once, and it makes no matter whether he sets up Mahatmas, Gods, Krishna, Vedas or mysterious acts of grace, each of these will stop him and throw him into a rut from which even heavenly death will not release him. Religion can only teach morals and ethics. It cannot answer the question "what am I?" The Buddhist ascetic

holds a fan before his eyes to keep away the sight of objects condemned by his religion. But he thereby gains no knowledge, for that part of him which is affected by the improper sights has to be known by the man himself, and it is by experience alone that the knowledge can be possessed and assimilated.

The book closes gloriously, with some hints that have been much needed. Too many, even of the sincerest students of occultism, have sought to ignore that one-half of their nature, which is here taught to be necessary. Instead of crushing out the animal nature, we have here the high and wise teaching that we must learn to fully understand the animal and subordinate it to the spiritual.

"The god in man, degraded, is a thing unspeakable in its infamous power of production. The animal in man, elevated, is a thing unimaginable in its great powers of service and of strength," and we are told that our animal self is a great force, the secret of the old-world magicians, and of the coming race which Lord Lytton foreshadowed. "But this power can only be attained by giving the god the sovereignty. Make your animal ruler over your self, and he will never rule others."

This teaching will be seen to be identical with that of the closing words of "The Idyll of the White Lotus": "He will learn how to expound spiritual truths, and to enter into the life of his highest self, and he can learn also to hold within him the glory of that higher self, and yet to retain life upon this planet so long as it shall last, if need be: to retain life in the vigor of manhood, till his entire work is completed, and he has taught the three truths to all who look for light."

There are three sentences in the book which ought to be imprinted in the reader's mind, and we present them inversely:

"Secreted and hidden in the heart of the world and the heart of man is the light which can illumine all life, the future and the

past."

"On the mental steps of a million men Buddha passed through the Gates of Gold; and because a great crowd pressed about the threshold he was able to leave behind him words which prove that those gates will open."

"This is one of the most important factors in the development of man, the recognition — profound and complete recognition — of the law of universal unity and coherence."

FOOTNOTES:

1. Through the Gates of Gold; A Fragment of Thought. Boston: Roberts Brothers. 1887. Price 50 cents. ([return to text](#))

The Path

CONSIDERATIONS ON MAGIC — *Pythagoras*

We hear a good deal nowadays and are likely to hear still more of occult science. In this regard we may as well accept the inevitable. All things have their day, and all things revolve in cycles; they come and go, and come again, though never twice the same. Even our very thoughts conform to this universal law. The life, the teachings, and the fate of Pythagoras are involved in mystery, but the fate of the schools which he established and of the followers who succeeded him are matters of history. The slaughter of the Magi stands over against the abuses and abominations which were perpetrated in their name, and doubtless by many styling themselves Magicians.

It is not the object of this brief paper to attempt to define magic, or elucidate occult Science as such, but rather to suggest a few considerations which are of vital import at the present time, equally important to those who utterly deny to magic any more than an imaginative basis, as to those who convinced of its existence as a science, are, or are to become investigators. In both the publications and conversations of the day, frequently occur the expressions "black magic," and "white magic" and those who follow these studies are designated as followers of the "*left hand path*," or the "*right hand path*". It ought to be understood that up to a certain point all students of magic, or occultism, journey together. By and by is reached *a place where two roads meet*, or where the common path divides, and the *awful voice from the silence*, heard only in the recesses of the individual soul utters the stern command: "*Choose ye this day whom ye will serve.*" Instead of black and white magic, read, black and white *motive*.

The student of occultism is rushing on his destiny, but up to a

certain point that destiny is in his own hands, though he is constantly shaping his course, freeing his soul from the trammels of sense and self, or becoming entangled in the web, which, with warp and woof will presently clothe him as with a garment without a seam.

If early in the race he finds it difficult to shake off his chains, let him remember that at every step they grow more and more tyrannical, and often before the goal is reached where the ways divide, the battle is lost or won, and the decision there is only a matter of form. That decision once made is irrevocable, or so nearly so that no exception need be made. Man lives at once in two worlds: the natural and the spiritual, and as in the natural plane he influences his associates, and is in turn influenced by them, so let him not imagine that in the spiritual plane he is alone. This will be a fatal mistake for the dabbler in magic, or the student in occultism. Throughout this vast universe, the good will seek the good, and the evil the evil, each will be unconsciously *drawn to its own kind*.

But when man faces his destiny in full consciousness of the issues involved, as he must before the final decision is reached, he will be no longer unconscious of these influences, but will recognize his companions: companions, alas! no longer, *Masters* now, inhuman, pitiless; and the same law of attraction which has led him along the tortuous path, unveils its face, and by affinity of evil, the slave stands in the presence of his master, and the fiends that have all along incited him to laugh at the miseries of his fellow men, and trample under his feet every kindly impulse, every tender sympathy, now make the measureless hells within his own soul resound with their laughter at him, the poor deluded fool whose selfish pride and ambition have stifled and at last obliterated his humanity.

Blind indeed is he who cannot see why those who are in possession of arcane wisdom, hesitate in giving it out to the world, and when in the cycles of time its day has come, they put forth the only doctrine which has power to save and bless, UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD with all that the term implies.

There may be those who have already in this new era, entered the left-hand road. But now as of old, "by their works ye shall know them". To labor with them is in vain. Selfishness, pride and lust for power are the signs by which we may know them. They may not at once cast off disguise, and they will never deceive the true Theosophist. They can nevertheless deceive to their ruin the ignorant, the curious, the unwary, and it is for such as these that these lines are penned, and the worst of it is, that these poor deluded souls, are led to believe that no such danger exists, and this belief is fortified by the so-called scientists, who are quoted as authority, and who ridicule everything but rank materialism. Yet notwithstanding all this, these simple souls flutter like moths around the flame till they are drawn within the vortex. It is better a million times, that the proud, the selfish and time-serving should eat, drink and be merry, and let occultism alone, for these propensities unless speedily eradicated, will bear fruit and ripen into quick harvests, and the wages thereof is death, literally the "*second death*".

The purpose of Theosophy is to eradicate these evil tendencies of man, so that whether on the ordinary planes of daily life, or in the higher occult realms, the Christ shall be lifted up, and draw all men unto him.

"Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn."

The Christs of all the ages have preached this one doctrine: Charity and Brotherhood of Man. To deny the law of charity is to

deny the Christ. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for unveiling to the present generation the occult nature of man. Modern Spiritualism had already done this; nor is the responsibility to be charged to the Spiritualists, for these unseen forces had revealed themselves in the fullness of time, and many millions had become convinced, many against their wills, of the reality of the unseen universe. These things *are here*, and neither crimination, or recrimination is of any use. The responsibility therefore, rests entirely with the individual, as to what use he makes of his opportunities, as to his purposes and aims, and as he advances in his course, involved in the circle of necessity, he influences whether he will or no, those whose spheres of life touch at any point his own. *As ye sow, so shall ye also reap.* By and by the cycle will close and both the evil and the good will return like bread cast upon the waters. This is a law of all life.

Imagine not that they are weak and vacillating souls who enter the left-hand road: Lucifer was once a prince of light, admitted to the councils of the Most High. He fell through pride, and dragged downward in his fall all who worshiped the demon pride. This is no foolish fable, but a terrible tragedy, enacted at the gates of paradise, in the face of the assembled universe, and reenacted in the heart of man, the epitome of all. Only Infinite pity can measure the downfall of such an one, only Infinite love disarm by annihilation, and so put an end to unendurable woe, and that only when the cycle is complete, the measure of iniquity balanced by its measure of pain. Occultism and magic are not child's-play, as many may learn to their sorrow, as many visitants of dark circles have already and long ago discovered. Better give dynamite to our children as a plaything, than Magic to the unprincipled, the thoughtless, the selfish and ignorant. Let all who have joined the Theosophical Society remember this, and search their hearts before taking the first step in any magical

formulary. *The motive determines all.* Occult power brings with it unknown and unmeasured responsibility.

If in the secret councils of the soul, where no eye can see, and no thought deceive that divine spark conscience, we are ready to forget self, to forego pride, and labor for the well-being of man, then may the upright man face his destiny, follow this guide and fear no evil. Otherwise it were far better that a millstone were hung about his neck, and he were cast into the depths of the sea.

The Path

UNIVERSAL UNITY — *Henry Turner Patterson*

'Tis said they who the starry heavens watch
Spending their time in silent contemplation
And view the worlds and systems moving round
Become so filled with peace and perfect trust
That unto them life, death, grief, care and fear
Are almost naught. So, I, a long time past
Having passed my time in watching night by night
The stars move in their orbits; and my days
In making out their past and future course
One August night, while that the quiet moon
Flooded tree and bush, and vale and hill-top
Stream, and bank and spire and roof with light
And whistling and rustling leaves added
Their voices to the myriad sounds
Of insect life, fell fast asleep. And then
I saw the moon swinging slowly to and fro,
And round our Sun the earth and other satellites
Revolving ceaselessly. And as they moved
I heard a sweet melodious sound
And felt a soft and mellow light
And still I saw our Sun with other suns
All circling round one common central point
All these centres round some other centre circling.
The sound increased till all things seemed but sound
The light increased till all things seemed but light
The heat increased till all things seemed but heat
And then I felt my soul beat rapturously
Against the throbbing pulsing central life.
From thence I felt the light, the heat, the sound,

The life, the love, the peace pass out unceasingly.
From thence I knew all life to flow. And passing out
I knew all life was part of it, and it of life;
I knew that I was it, and it was I;
That sound and light, and life, and I and it were one
That life and death and tree and bush and stream
And bank and flower and seed and it are one
Then there passed into my soul, a perfect,
Great content. And rising from my sleep,
I passed into my life a happy man.

The Path

HERALDS FROM THE UNSEEN: II — *Jasper Niemand*

(Concluded.)

"Yet mark it well, man cannot compel the God. The self cannot be gained by the Veda, nor by the understanding, nor by much learning. He whom the Self chooses, by him alone the Self can be gained. The Self chooses him as His own." (1) How then would you attract the Shining One? You must first strive to raise your own vibrations. Tension does this, the tension of lofty thought, benevolent feelings, the living spirit of holy books, communion with high minds, any and every elevating practice, the mind fixed on the True. And, look you, this is no matter where you may dissect from the outset; you must have Faith. If you institute the conditions, the event follows; such is the economy of the occult world. What is faith but the institution of conditions? "He cannot be reached by speech, by mind, or by the eye: He cannot be apprehended except by him who says, '*He is*'." You must bear some relation to Spirit, or its eternal vibrations cannot raise you. Knowledge attained, you will find it submitting triumphantly to every test. Calm is the essence of Faith because a similitude of vibration with Truth (in its living record) is only possible when you are no longer at the mercy of astral currents. Then "regard most earnestly your own heart." (2) The soul is there; all may feel its heat, some hear its musical tones as it expands. Sink your thoughts down to that heat: the Spirit (Buddhi) enters by the head, and your final object is to bind heart and head together in an abiding consciousness of Unity. The Bhagavad-Gita tells us plainly that when the mind roams man "should subdue it, bring it back, and place it within his own breast;" not, as you see, in the brain. Now by "mind" the intellect is not meant, but manas, the collective thoughts and desires upon which Reason (or Buddhi)

may act as guide or control. You will find that you can think from the heart, just as all strong emotions, — such as fear, love, suspense, — take their rise in the heart and spread wave-like over the chest, and have no similarity to the flash of an idea in the brain. In the ordinary man the brain is only the focus for the thoughts streaming in through the solar plexus, and many are lost, just as millions of seeds in nature are lost. So the Upanishad echoes the warning: — "The mind must be restrained in the heart till it comes to an end; — that is knowledge, that is liberty; all the rest are extensions of the ties." When we are able to think from the centre we shall realise what is now difficult to believe, — that our present intellection is not the highest avenue of knowledge.

"When a man is delivered from his mind, that is the highest point." We sink our thoughts then into the flowing Light as men sink nets into the sea, — withdrawn, they are full to breaking.

A distinguished confrere, speaking of this subject in the October *Theosophist*, says that the right "Word" must be known, when we may sink it down to the heart where it becomes a living power: he adds that *Om* is used for this purpose in India and *Jao* in Europe. These are good words as we all know, and represent high vibrations. The Upanishad says plainly: — "Om is the sound-endowed body of him:" and again; "The syllable Om is what is called the Word and its end is the silent, the soundless, fearless, * * * immovable, certain Brahman. We are told by the authors of Man that "in incantations, sound is so modulated as to produce the same state of the body as that which invariably accompanies the generation of any desired psychic or spiritual force." Nor is it difficult to find the rationale of this use of sound when we consider that there exists in the Akasa a latent and eternal power called Yajna, which is supposed to form a bridge between mortals and spirits, or gods, like the ladder in Jacob's dream. "Isis" states that it can be called into play by the lost Word receiving impulse

through will power. This sound is the Vach, or dormant "Word" of the sacred Mantras, evoked by those who know their proper intonation. Krishna says that as Adhiyajna (Lord of Yajna) he is present in this body. Reflect deeply on this. He who can fret the sensitive akasic chords with heat-compelling tones may see this stupendous electric force burst outward from its hidden lair and rend for him the veil of Isis. So indeed he mounts to the Gods.

When Hartmann adds, however, that attempts to carry on this practice without first obtaining a "Word" just suited to our condition from an Adept are dangerous, he tends to frighten away those who would try to find the "Lord of all worlds" for themselves, as if an Adept were needed when "Ishwar resideth in the breast of every mortal being." (3) An Adept can impart an impulse, stimulate our vibrations momentarily; he cannot strain his powers to raise us to an artificial status and hold us there. Knowledge is Being; you *cannot* know more than you are. You have within you the eternal motor, — Thought. Apply it through the universal vehicle, — Will. I do not say that such external impetus as Adepts can give is not a great advantage, *provided it is in your Karma*. Otherwise it is useless except to teach you a lesson through premature failure, and The Brothers, foreseeing the end, will if left to themselves deal more wisely with the man of desires than he with himself. Anyone may follow Krishna's behest and "raise himself by himself." Students should give serious attention to the point that mere automatic processes have as such no place in the higher science of the Wisdom-Religion. Astral perception confuses and retards; it is but a period of synchronous vibration with that sphere; "ye cannot *serve* two masters:" though, all service ended, you may become astral serpent and spiritual dove in one. Yogees in India who pronounce Om for years with fixed thought often make no apparent progress; its full application is beyond their ken; it would seem beyond Hartmann's also. For the

article in question somewhat belittles the practice of Charity, Devotion, and the like, whereas all precedence comes to naught in the final test, (and I consider nothing short of that,) if these sacred principles do not constitute the integral make up of the heart. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass." I repeat, men have fallen into a way of considering such injunctions as mere adornment, whereas they are structural necessities, truths as demonstrable as any mathematical equation. How shall I think as a god if I have not the large outlook of a god? I would not willingly behold any differentiation in the universe which is not visible from the standpoint of the polar star! The sum of Karma consists of all deeds referable to the self; the deeds done for self increase the sense of self, while spiritual life consists in the absence of self. Thus the fundamental necessity of spiritual growth is that all be done for all. Whatever tends to raise the vibration is of value, your intuitions must direct you to a wise admixture. Persevere; "to the persevering mortal the blessed Immortals are swift." (4) In some quiet moment you will feel a touch upon the heart as if a spent bullet had lodged there, or a soft stir, as a nestling dove. Later, sounds will ensue, sounds like singing sands, or piping winds, or the surge of golden bells chiming adown far coasts. Sometimes a fine aerial music attends the august vibrations, as heralds announce the King. *For when the sound arises, the Light is near.* Then control the mind, whose centrifugal tendency is immense; it is a Ulysses who must be tied to the mast when these syren voices echo, lest it lose itself in the sea of sense. Attend only to those ideas to which the sounds give rise in the heart. Other wonders accrue, fields of color, flashing sights and psychic sense unfolding, but to describe these is to leave the student at the mercy of a vivid imagination. I can only state that something is born again under the potency of the *Word*, and this *Word* is a fixed rate of high vibration.

You have now a clue; try. On the doors and walls of the temple the word "Try" is written. The entrance found, use this key. "The mouth of the true Brahman is covered with a golden lid, open that, O Sun, that we may go to the true One, Who pervades all. He who is that person in the sun I am He."

"After having left behind the body, the organs of sense and the objects of sense (as no longer belonging to us), and having seized the bow whose stick is fortitude and whose string is asceticism (the true kind), having stricken down with the arrow consisting of freedom from egotism the first guardian of the door of Brahman, having killed that guardian, he crosses by means of the boat Om to the other side of the ether within the heart, and when the ether is revealed (as Brahman), he enters slowly, as a miner seeking minerals enters a mine, into the hall of Brahman. After that let him by means of the doctrine of his teacher, (trying his intuitive way and not that of another), break through the first shrine of Brahman (consisting of the four nets of food, breath, mind and knowledge), till he reaches the last shrine of Brahman. Thenceforth pure, clean, tranquil, breathless, endless, imperishable, firm, unborn, and independent, he stands in his own greatness, and having seen the Self standing in His own greatness, he looks at the wheel of the world, (therefore he may still be in the world,) as one who having alighted from a chariot looks on its revolving wheel." (5)

Take up the analogy. Get to the wondrous centre and ask of the latent Light, and "all shall be changed." Then Brothers, give, give what you receive. Cast all your treasures to all the winds of morning; the closing pinions of the night will bring them back transformed. *Fear nothing!* Bend the inner ear and you shall hear that royal Watch who calls across the Darkness, "All's well! All's well!"

Ishwar, Lord of the Light! Make me to be a channel through which Thou flowest. Teach me to know Thy voice in other hearts as well as in mine own, and inform us with Thine effulgence through the generating cycles — Om!

FOOTNOTES:

1. Vedanta. ([return to text](#))
2. *Light on the Path*. ([return to text](#))
3. Upanishad. ([return to text](#))
4. Bhavagad-Gita. ([return to text](#))
5. Zoroaster. ([return to text](#))

The Path

SUGGESTIONS AS TO PRIMARY CONCEPTS — *J. D. Buck*

"The world for us" is our *idea* of the world, nothing more, nothing less. "God for us" is our idea of God; likewise each individual is an embodiment of his idea of himself.

There is also a world of ideas, the aggregate of which constitutes the Ideal world.

No one imagines that this present existence is the Ideal world, but all admit that it is at best, a *striving towards it*.

These propositions may be taken tentatively, and it will thus be seen, if they are found true, that our ideals are the patterns after which our lives are formed.

If there is a world of ideas of which the ideal, or perfect, man forms a part, the ideas which we entertain may have a great deal to do in facilitating our progress toward the realization of our highest possibilities. In other words, if our ideas conform to the cosmic or Divine ideal we shall become "Co-workers with God" toward that ideal. If it be true that "There is a Power that shapes our ends, rough hew them as we may," instead of "kicking against the pricks" we should follow the line of least resistance, and, instead of rebellious children, wounded and bruised continually by the sharp rocks of daily experience, we shall become willing and obedient, and thus, in facilitating our own upward progress, we shall be enabled to help others in innumerable ways toward the same end.

It therefore makes a great deal of difference how we look at things. Our belief or idea of anything does not alter the thing itself, though this might seem to be the case. One may imagine the moon to be a big cheese, or the sun a ball of fire consuming

millions of tons of coal per second, or God to be a huge half-human monster, but that such belief could make these things other than they are, no one but the imbecile or the insane will imagine.

Since the advent of Theosophy in these latter times, many words and ideas have been imported from the East, and the result has often been to add to our former bewilderment rather than to make more clear the duties and the possibilities of man. Even when these words and ideas have been translated into English, they have been but partly successful in removing our obscurity.

It is for this reason that the whole Theosophic movement has been often designated as an attempt to supplant Christianity by Buddhism; and though this has been again and again denied, in the absence of clear concepts not of theosophy but of the existence of things, (which concepts have been long lost to the Western world), this denial has not changed opinion or enlightened individuals. Thus do additional reasons appear why our primary concepts should be clear, rational, and therefore true, as far as we go.

While therefore it is true that many of our ideas come from these Eastern sources, it is equally true that they may be clothed in Western garb, and thus become comprehensible to Western minds. One may by great labor learn to read Sanskrit, Hindustani, or German, but there are few aliens who are ever able to think in any language save their mother tongue. Our forms of thought, *i.e.*, our ideas, will still be clothed in the nursery garb wherein we were cradled.

The first object of every earnest seeker should be *to find himself*. This he cannot do all at once. Most of us would be objects of pity if we could, and we might turn with loathing and despair from the reality, divested of all conventional or imaginary accessories. If

we would enter in and possess the land of promise, we must drive out the giants, not all at once, but "*little by little*;" as we drive out the giants and subdue the wilderness, we must cultivate the soil and so *enter into the land*, TO POSSESS IT. Man lives at once in two worlds, the outer, physical, natural world, and the inner or spiritual. If we take man as he is, and nature as we find it, we shall find a two-fold division running through both, and we shall ultimately find that DUALITY is everywhere the basic condition in the manifestation of all things.

If we examine the world about us, as to its real character, and describe it in the language of science, we find Matter, Force, and Motion. Matter is that which occupies space and resists motion. Force is that which produces motion in matter. Matter is indestructible, it changes form and combination. Force is indestructible; and finally matter and force are inseparable, indissoluble. This leads to the concept of the persistence of motion. If we conceive of atoms or molecules, we must think of them as never for an instant at rest. A motionless atom therefore is unthinkable; as soon as it ceases to move, it ceases to be. Now this moving physical panorama we call the phenomenal world, its essence is motion, and motion implies change.

Matter, both mass and molecule, is continually appearing and disappearing; and whenever, wherever, and howsoever it appears, force accompanies it.

Now suppose we call the line of its appearance and final disappearance the boundary of the phenomenal or the Ether, and think of this ether as the ocean in which both matter and force dissolve and motion ceases, or, that the ether is potentially both matter and force, latent, unmanifested. When therefore an appearance or manifestation occurs, even of a single atom, matter, force, and motion represent it, and the substratum in

which it appears, commonly called space, is the all surrounding, all pervading ocean of ether.

Science calls this Ether "Luminiferous." This is the Astral Light, and yet this luminosity is not light as we think of it. The difference between luminosity and light is similar to that between magnetism and electricity. Light is luminosity plus polarity, and polarity implies duality, hence motion, hence phenomena, transition, change.

The center of man is consciousness: the avenues through which this center of consciousness comes in contact with the external world of phenomena are the senses. If the essence of phenomena is change, so is change the essence of the senses. Sensory and motor impressions are simply changes apprehended or appreciated by the nerves, the result of which is transmitted to consciousness. A nerve channel therefore, incapable of change, is incapable of either sensory or motor impressions, and hence is out of communication with the centre, consciousness; or, in other words, that part of the body is "paralysed." The realm of consciousness heretofore in communication with that realm is latent, but is not paralysed. The brain is the seat or center of consciousness, but it is not the office of the brain to manifest consciousness; that is the office of the body, and particularly of the muscular system by bodily motion and facial expression. There are bodily conditions in which consciousness remains, yet the individual is unable to manifest it. The brain is therefore the house in which consciousness dwells, in which it is *usually*, but not necessarily, confined. The delicate surface of the gray matter of the brain is the canvas on which is exhibited to the indwelling consciousness the panorama of events occurring in the outer world of phenomena. Here we find the origin, the basis, and the conditions of thought, of all intellectual processes whatsoever. In health these moving pictures are geometrical in form, and

mathematical as to number, rhythm, and movement. The action of the heart conforms to, or again determines, this rhythm. Mental emotions change the action of the heart; disturbance of the heart's action gives rise to emotion, *i. e.*, there is a close sympathy between heart and brain, and hence between the functions of each. The mistake in modern physiology is in supposing that the brain originates consciousness, whereas it only is related to its manifestation. It would be far more correct to say that consciousness originates the brain. It is quite probable that all sensations and functions, other than the purely organic, originate from the single sense of feeling, and consciousness as related to the phenomenal world is a development of feeling, *viz.*; experience.

It may thus be seen what is the nature of the phenomenal universe, and of man's being as related thereto, *viz.*: change, transition, the past is dead, the future is not, the present is an *instant of change*, and our consciousness of it is a consciousness of change, and that only; what it is *in itself*, we do not know. This is what our Eastern Brothers call M_AY_A, a moving panorama of illusions, which generally lead to delusion.

All this is related to the physical world, but one side of the nature of man, but one-half of the world itself. Oken says of the sun that "it shines *by virtue of its standing in the midst.*" The sun of the Microcosm is consciousness. If we call the light of consciousness luminosity, then are the sensory and motor impulses passing too and fro along the nerves polarized light, qualification, analysis, the vibrations of which break on the shore of consciousness, to be merged in its mysterious deeps. Sensations precipitated, deprived of motion, are experienced, and the recorded result is consciousness. As already remarked, this is consciousness related to one side of existence. The other half of the problem is the Noumenal. All existence is an equation: duality and manifestation

are synonymous terms. Consciousness is the lamp which stands in the midst between the two worlds, the phenomenal and the noumenal, in the place of the sign of equality.

(To be continued.)

The Path

THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE: III — *Pilgrim*

CONTENT AND SATISFACTION.

The ideas these words represent lie at opposite poles of the circle. The former should stand for the philosophic calm, the minor peace, the comparative equability of Soul which the disciple has attained, while the latter implies the stagnation of Will, the death of aspiration and of all true progress.

When the first impetuous burst of feeling is over, and time with her slowly disenchanting hand has begun to blur the outlines of the first vivid creation of thought, the knowledge gained seems to be the only possession left, — the knowledge that there is a Path to thread and that no thought is worth thinking, and no word worth uttering that has not for its aim the one supreme object — the finding and the treading of this path that leads to deliverance from conditioned existence. But it is one thing to be possessed of this merely intellectual knowledge, and another to have the Will, the Courage, and the Strength to find and to tread the path.

After much uncertain questioning and many anxious thoughts about the path, remembering always that "it is not found by devotion alone, by religious contemplation alone, by ardent progress, by self sacrificing labour, by studious observations of life, that none alone can take the disciple more than one step onwards, and that all steps are necessary to make up the ladder," a clue may yet be obtained from the lines in the *Bhagavat-Gita*, so beautifully rendered by Mr. Edwin Arnold

Some few there be

By meditation find the Soul in self

Self-schooled, and some by long philosophy

And holy life reach thither; Some by works:
Some never so attaining hear of light
From other lips and seize and cleave to it
Worshipping; yea! and those — to teaching true
Overpass Death!

Aye! "The aids to noble life are all within," — the path indeed lies there, in other words there are as many pathways to perfection as there are individual Souls.

There is no doubt a saturation point for Energy as there is for Truth in the individual; — it may come in the form of lethargic weariness, or it may come in the form of satisfaction. To the old man, weary of life, the rest of death is sweet, but even though he may seem to have earned repose, such feeling still appertains to the quality of "Tamas," and should be resisted at any cost. The feeling of satisfaction is far more insidious, — indeed it is the limit to any further possible advance placed by the man's own deepest sub-conscious self. Around us are to be seen men in all stages of moral growth who have attained to this satisfaction. Though the mere gratification of the senses and the social amenities of civilized countries may become to the majority of the votaries of pleasure a dull meaningless treadmill, we yet see some to whom such life affords true satisfaction. They have reached their goal. And if we turn to the Religious world, who does not know one or two of the many happy Souls who have attained the complete rest of satisfaction? Burning questions do not exist for them — they deem that they have solved the insolvable — They too have reached their goal. Nor does this sphere of objective life in which we dwell alone exemplify the working of this law of nature. The realm of the Deva-lokas, could we penetrate to those serene heights of being, would show us Souls who had attained to their Sainly rest, who had reached their supreme satisfaction — rest and satisfaction however that must along with all

conditioned existence come to an end some time. But to the god in the Deva-loka, as to the worldly epicure, the satisfaction he has reached is the evidence of the limit of advance, — the advance made in the different cases being merely one of degree. Each has shown an incapacity for further endurance, whether of suffering or of joy, though in most cases it must be suffering, and their progress has therefore come to an end. But man has within him the potentiality of Godhead, not the Deva (god) in his realms of bliss, but the absolute unity with the divine Spirit of Life of which nature is a manifestation, — the Being where all individuality is merged in one, — the one ever-permanent state of Nirvana — the Peace of God that passeth all understanding.

When after long years of incessant goading the goad within ceases to act, a minor peace is attained. It is a matter of wonder to the disciple, who cannot understand why it should be so, — he has had no hand in the slackening of the torture cords, — he only knows that the strain is withdrawn and that in the quietude his thought can range undisturbed. But with the removal of the pain, he seems to feel as if his search were less intense, and then follows the inexplicable paradox of the actual invocation of pain by one part of his nature, while the other part of him regards with fear and dismay any recurrence of it. Nevertheless this tranquility of contents continues. It goes without saying that this state includes the perfect content in all outward conditions. It may not have reached the transcendent light, where fear of any earthly catastrophe as well as desire for any earthly gain are alike non-existent. The disciple still remains a creature of habit, and imagination can easily conjure up situations where the equanimity would be entirely overthrown. But at least fresh desire for earthly objects has, as a rule, ceased to operate. All earthly life, indeed, stands before his mind, in its true colour, as possessing value only so far as giving opportunity of recognizing

its utter valuelessness, and of stretching forward to those things which have permanence and value, and the one all-absorbing desire that remains is that, when the burden of earthly existence has again to be taken up, the progress gained in the last life may not be lost; that, in the words of Plato, we may so pass through the waters of Lethe as not to defile our souls with absolute oblivion.

In one of the early numbers of the *Theosophist* the aspirants for chelaship are warned against too soon undertaking a life for which they are not yet fitted, and all are advised to master first their most apparent weaknesses — their most besetting sins. The mastering of such, and the continuing to be the master until relapse is constitutionally impossible, (though this may imply a period which one life may not cover), would indeed seem to be for most the necessary entrance to the Path. While by this exercise of self restraint the aspirant is acquiring the necessary Will, Strength, and Courage for the treading of the Path when found, "new hands and new feet are being born within him" with which to scale the heights that lie beyond. The search for perfection may well find its simile in the scaling of some seemingly inaccessible peak. After journeying for long years through the dim forest on the plain, and falling into many a slough of despond, with torn garments and with bleeding feet the climber has at last emerged. The forest lies below him and he sees the dim plain stretching to the horizon, but it is only the first plateau of the mountain he has scaled, and straight in front of him rises a seemingly perpendicular face of rock. Yet up this face of rock he has to go, for there can be no turning back when it is realized that what he has undertaken is the one thing worth doing.

But while insisting on the necessity of the gradual strengthening of the character by victory over all the faults of which the disciple is conscious, the common mistake of the religious must not here

be made, and the conquering of any one sin or of all sins be mistaken for the goal, instead of a mere preparation for the treading of the path. Indeed — given a sufficiently ardent desire for the ultimate goal — all sins and weaknesses that stand between the disciple and the object of his desire will by that very fire of desire be annihilated in a flash of thought. One of the most important means of keeping alive and intensifying this desire is by keeping the goal constantly in view. And as it must have been the failure of all earthly things to satisfy the heaven-born longings of the aspirant that first set his face towards the path, so the bringing back before the mind's eye the past experience of futile longings and disillusionings will best serve as impetus for the next transport of Heavenward flight.

What a man sets his whole heart on, that he will undoubtedly attain sooner or later. The man whose desires do not rise above the gratification of his physical senses gets what he desires, and that, as a rule, quickly. He whose life is concentrated in the emotional nature will in time achieve his "*summum bonum*" in the union of love he has dreamt of with another soul. He to whom the acquirement of knowledge is the one thing needful must attain what he desires, and that in exact ratio with his energetic search for it, while the philanthropist whose aim is to do good to others — whether on the material or the moral plane, and who feels impelled to the so-called sacrifice of self in some definite course of action, — though this lies far apart from the "killing out of all sense of separateness" which constitutes the true "self-sacrifice" — will doubtless also achieve his reward, though in some less obvious way. But

"Narrow

"The heart that loves, the brain that contemplates,

"The life that wears, the spirit that creates

"*One* object and *one* form and builds thereby

"A sepulchre for its eternity."

We who recognize the finger of Maya in all these things, and whose search is for that intuitive Wisdom in which they are all embraced, but which transcends them all, does it not behoove us to lift our minds more and more continuously to the Supreme? and to free our thoughts more and more from all limitations? for as it was the inability to fix the soul in worship on the attributeless Deity (though he had freed himself from *all* personal desires) that prevented the devotee from straightway attaining Nirvana, and instead landed him in the heavens of the Devaloka, where the conditions of bliss he had pictured to his mind as the Supreme were his inevitable reward, so should we even now begin to free our minds from all limited conceptions, and strain more and more towards the infinite.

I cannot better conclude than by quoting the last few lines in Faridu-d-din Attar's description of the seven stages in the road leading to union with the Divine Essence.

"Last stage of all is the Valley of Annihilation of Self; of complete Poverty, (1) — the seventh and supreme degree which no human words can describe. There is the great ocean of Divine Love. The world present and the world to come are but as figures reflected in it — And as it rises and falls how can they remain? He who plunges in that sea and is lost in it finds perfect peace."

FOOTNOTE:

1. This is the common term among the Muslim Mystics for the highest degree of the contemplative life. ([return to text](#))

PARACELSUS I: — S. B.

It is a noteworthy fact in Occultism that the great Masters who in the body have worked among men have been members of the healing craft, the noblest of all the learned professions. It is the noblest, because in its true character it combines the functions of both priest and physician: healer of the soul as well as of the body. Such will be the master minds of the nobler civilization which will some day dawn upon the world; the spiritual chiefs of a people will also guard the health of their bodies as well as of their souls. Hermes, we are told, was a great physician and the head of a grand brotherhood of Adepts. Both Jesus of Nazareth and John the Baptist were members of the Essene fraternity, an order of therapists. Apollonius of Tyana served his novitiate in the temple of Hippocrates and became a healer of men. In the middle ages and the beginning of modern times in Europe, we find the Brotherhood of the Rosicrucians devoted to the attainment and application of medical, as well as spiritual, knowledge. Even in primitive society, among wild tribes like the red Indians, we find their sacred orders composed of "medicine men," and there is good reason to believe that some of these possess valuable occult powers. To these spiritual and therapeutic esoteric brotherhoods, found throughout history, may probably be traced all the progress made by mankind, material as well as intellectual and spiritual. Through their knowledge of the secret forces of nature there have come into the world at large those beginnings of mechanical and chemical science which lie at the base of those physical achievements that constitute the power and pride of our present material civilization, — little mindful of its indebtedness though the latter be. Why is it that these two great functions are combined in the Master Teachers of mankind,

— the care of the body as well as of the soul? It is not to lead man, by slow degrees, up to the condition of bodily perfection that shall characterize the glorious "Coming Race"? — a race combining the godly and the human in the attributes described in *Through the Gales of Gold*, which tells us: "The animal in man, elevated, is a thing unimaginable in its great powers of service and of strength." Thus shall we see realized a divine race with powers over Nature beside which the potency of the intricate mechanical devices of the present age, attained at the cost of the enslavement and degradation of toiling millions, shall be more puny than are the crude implements of cave-dwelling man in comparison with those of which our age so arrogantly boasts.

Paracelsus, there is high authority for saying, was really one of the greatest Masters ever known upon the earth. In rank he may be compared with Hermes Thrice-Master. Although he was the father of modern chemistry, his name has not yet ceased to be a by-word among men, for his revolutionary methods in medicine naturally gained him the hostility of the doctors and druggists of his day, whose pretensions he ruthlessly overturned. Being the "regulars," they naturally had the ear of the public, and their denunciations have therefore colored history so that, although science is now beginning to recognize its debt to him, he is still widely regarded as having been a noisy impostor.

The world is therefore much indebted to Dr. Hartmann's admirable book. (1) It is particularly appropriate that a physician should write the best popular account of the great master of medicine. Dr. Hartmann has done his work with thorough sympathy, and has made it his most important contribution to Occult literature, good though his previous work has been. It is notable how great Adepts who have worked visibly among men have made their appearance at the turning point of a cycle. Apollonius and Jesus came when the Roman Empire was at the

height of its glory and approaching its fall. Paracelsus appeared at the dawn of the modern era which is coming into bloom today, and his teachings laid the foundations for our present physical science. How great these teachings were may be seen in the substance of his writings as given by Dr. Hartmann. The date of his birth is significant; 1493, the year after the discovery of America by Columbus. We see him, a greater Columbus, standing on the threshold of the new world, — not only the enlargement of the known domain of the globe, the opening up of vast continents to the dominant race, but of the expansion of wealth, of the intellect, of religion. He was the contemporary of Luther; but, though the radical reform effected by the father of Protestantism was one of the main features of the change in the cycle, Paracelsus stood on a plane too high to take part in sectarian quarrels, and said: "Among all sects there is none which possesses intellectually the true religion. We must read the Bible more with our hearts than with our brains, until at some time the true religion will come into the world."

Concerning the Adeptship of Paracelsus Dr. Hartmann remarks: "An old tradition says — and those who are supposed to know confirm the tale — that his astral body having already during physical existence become self-conscious and independent of the physical form, he is now a living Adept, residing with other Adepts of the same Order in a certain place in Asia, from whence he still — invisibly, but nevertheless effectually — influences the minds of his followers, appearing to them occasionally even in visible and tangible shape." It is considered by some students to be still more likely that, at this period, He who was once known as Paracelsus is in a body whose astral meets with others in Asia. The present being an important period in the world's history, it has been hinted that a great Teacher may be expected to appear among men. The multitude, however, will hardly be likely to fall

down and worship Him when he comes; indeed, his treatment at their hands would probably be something quite different. Comparatively few would be likely to recognize Him, for only spirit can perceive spirit.

There is a passage in Dr. Hartmann's work concerning the physical appearance of Paracelsus which calls for some comment. The fact that he was beardless gave rise to a tradition that he was emasculated in his infancy. This could not have been. The requirements of Adeptship necessitate a body complete in all its parts. Paracelsus was one of the Rosicrucians, and there are reasons why he could not have been a member of that fraternity, had he been thus physically defective. It is more likely that his beardlessness had another significance. It is said that the physical characteristics of the great teachers have been those of a race superior to that among which they worked. Gautama Buddha, for instance, established the religion for the greater part of the Mongolian race, but not only was he an Aryan; according to tradition he was light haired, and of blonde complexion, and Abbe Huc so describes the beautiful presentation of him in the magnificent temporary sculptures in the great Festival of the Flowers annually given at the lamassery of Kunbum in Tibet. The personal appearance of Jesus of Nazareth is unknown to the world, but there is reason for believing that he was not of a Jewish type and was wholly unlike the conventional representations. To those who have read Bulwer's *Coming Race*, possibly a hint of the reason for the beardlessness of Paracelsus may occur.

Dr. Hartman calls attention to the short and concise manner in which Paracelsus expressed his thoughts. This quality of his writings will be perceived in the extracts given, which are translated into admirable English. There is no ground for the charge that he was inflated and boastful in his style. He simply

spoke with self-confidence, like all men who speak with authority. Apollonius said, when asked how the wise man should speak concerning that which he knew: "He should speak like the law-giver. For the law-giver must present to the multitude in the form of commandments that which he knows to be true." It was thus that Paracelsus taught. As Dr. Hartmann well says: "It is a daily occurring fact that he who exposes and denounces the faults of others appears to the superficial observer as boasting of his own superiority, although no such motive may prompt him."

It is highly unlikely that the charges of drunkenness brought against Paracelsus had any foundation. He had a host of bitter enemies, and the making of such charges by them without warrant would be very natural. Ground for this accusation has been supposed to be found in a letter to some students at Zurich, in which he addressed them as *Comibones optimi*. But it seems most likely that this referred to fellowship in drinking the "wine" of wisdom, particularly since the letter is a very serious and pathetic one. As Arnold remarks in his "History of Churches and Hermetics": "A man who is a glutton and a drunkard could not have been in possession of such divine gifts."

That Paracelsus obtained his great knowledge not by study of books is evident from the fact that he read very little. For ten years he did not read a book, and his disciples testify that he dictated his works to them without memoranda or manuscripts. His spiritual precepts are of the most exalted character, and agree thoroughly with what has recently been given out from Eastern sources. He asks: "What is a philosophy that is not supported by spiritual revelation?" Concerning prayer, or a strong aspiration for that which is good, he said: "It is necessary that we should seek and knock, and thereby ask the Omnipotent Power within ourselves, and remind it of its promises and keep it awake, and if we do this in the proper form and with a pure and sincere heart,

we shall receive that for which we ask, and find that which we seek, and the doors of the Eternal that have been closed before us will be opened, and what was hidden before our sight will come to light. The next point is Faith; not a mere belief in something that may or may not be true, but a faith that is based upon knowledge, an unwavering confidence, a faith that may move mountains and throw them into the ocean, and to which everything is possible, as Christ has Himself testified. The third point is imagination. If this power is properly kindled in our soul, we will have no difficulty to make it harmonize with our faith. A person who is sunk into deep thought, and, so to say, drowned in his own soul, is like one who has lost his senses, and the world looks upon him as a fool. But in the consciousness of the Supreme he is wise, and he is so to say, the confidential friend of God, knowing a great deal more of God's mysteries than all those that receive their superficial learning through the avenues of the senses; because he can reach God through his soul, Christ through faith, and attract the Holy Ghost through an exalted imagination. In this way we may grow to be like the Apostles, and to fear neither death nor prison, neither suffering nor torture, neither fatigue nor hunger, nor anything else."

The preceding very important passage illustrates the profound thought of Paracelsus. The nature of mystic development is very clearly outlined. The relation is evident between the sentence about a person "drowned in his own soul" and the end of Rule 16, First series, in *Light on the Path*: "And that power which the disciple shall covet is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men." The closing chapter in *Through the Gates of Gold* is devoted particularly to this subject, as may be seen in the words concerning the man who has once really won the victory: "Those burning sensations which seemed to him to be the only proofs of his existence are his no longer. How, then, can

he know that he lives? He knows it only by argument. And in time he does not care to argue about it. For him there is then peace; and he will find in that peace the power he has coveted. Then he will know what is that faith which can remove mountains."

The wide wanderings of most occult students are a significant fact. Pythagoras journeyed to Egypt and to India. Apollonius also went thither, and spent nearly all his life in journeying over the world. Nearly all well-known students of Occultism of today have travelled extensively. Madam Blavatsky, for instance, has made repeated visits to nearly all quarters of the earth, and has had many strange adventures. Paracelsus was also a great traveler; he journeyed far in the East and was taken prisoner by the Tartars. It is said that he even went as far as India, and it is not unlikely that he may have visited the Masters in Tibet. Of the reason for his roamings he said: "He who wants to study the book of Nature must wander with his feet over its leaves. Books are studied by looking at the letters which they contain; Nature is studied by examining the contents of her treasure-vaults in every country. Every part of the world represents a page in the book of Nature, and all the pages together form the book that contains her great revelations." This is an application of the injunction, "Learn from sensation and observe it."

A deep scientific perception is manifest in the works of Paracelsus, and he evidently saw far into the future. Dr. Hartmann points out that his doctrine bears a great resemblance to that of Darwin and Haeckel. The quality of mind which we call modern, but which may better be termed universal since it is evident in the words of the greatest men of all ages, was inherent in Paracelsus. The following prophetic passage from his "Occult Philosophy" is a witness to his thoroughly enlightened spirit: "True science can accomplish a great deal; the Eternal Wisdom of the existence of all things is without a time, without a beginning,

and without an end. Things that are considered now to be impossible will be accomplished; that which is unexpected will in future prove to be true, and that which is looked upon as superstition in one century will be the basis for the approved science of the next."

This is now being found true by modern science concerning the teachings of Paracelsus. For instance, it is acknowledged that the germ theory of disease, generally supposed to be one of the original discoveries of recent medical investigators, was promulgated by Paracelsus himself; while Jaeger, the eminent German scientist, finds his own discoveries agreeing with the theories of Paracelsus, and he pronounces certain medical proceedings recommended by the latter, which have been held to be based upon the crudest superstitions, to be really in accordance with the highest scientific teachings concerning molecular action.

FOOTNOTE:

1. The Life of Philippus Theophrastus, Bombast of Hohenheim, known by the name of the Paracelsus; and the Substance of his Teachings concerning Cosmology, Anthropology, Pneumatology, Magic and Sorcery, Medicine, Alchemy and Astrology, Philosophy and Theosophy, extracted and translated from his rare and extensive works and from some unpublished manuscripts. By Franz Hartmann, M. D., author of "Magic," etc. London: George Redway, 1887. ([return to text](#))

THE BHAGAVAD-GITA: I — *William Brehon*

If the title of this sacred Hindu poem were paraphrased, it would read:

The Holy Song of God Himself, who, at the beginning of Kali-Yuga or the dark age, descended upon earth to aid and instruct Man.

GITA means song, and BHAGAVAD is one of the names of Krishna. Krishna was an Avatar. According to the views of the Brahmins, we are now in Kali-Yuga, which began about the time of Krishna's appearance. He is said to have descended in order to start among men those moral and philosophical ideas which were necessary to be known during the revolution of the Age, at the end of which — after a brief period of darkness — a better Age will begin.

The composition of this poem is attributed to Vyasa, and as he is also said to have given the Vedas to men, a discussion about dates would not be profitable and can well stand over until some other occasion.

The Bhagavad-Gita is a portion of the Mahabharata, the great epic of India. The Mahabharata is so called because it contains the general history of the house of Bharat, and the prefix *Maha* signifies *great*. Its more definite object, however, is to give an account of the wars of the Kooros and Pandoss, two great branches of the family. And that portion included in our poem is the sublime philosophical and metaphysical dialogue held by Krishna with Arjuna, on the eve of a battle between the two aspirants for dominion.

The scene of the battle is laid on the plain called "Kuru-Kshetra," a strip of land near Delhi, between the Indus, the Ganges, and the

Himalayan mountains. Many European translators and commentators, being ignorant of the psychological system of the Hindus — which really unlies every word of this poem, — have regarded this plain and the battle as just those two things and no more; some have gone so far as to give the commercial products of the country at the supposed period, so that readers might be able, forsooth, in that way to know the motives that prompted the two princes to enter into a bloody internicine conflict. No doubt such a conflict did take place, for man is continually imitating the higher spiritual planes; and a great sage could easily adopt a human event in order to erect a noble philosophical system upon such an allegorical foundation. In one aspect history gives us merely the small or great occurrences of man's progress; but in another, any one great historical epoch will give us a picture of the evolution in man, in the mass, of any corresponding faculty of the Individual Soul. So we see, here and there, western minds wondering why such a highly tuned metaphysical discussion should be "disfigured by a warfare of savages." Such is the materializing influence of western culture that it is hardly able to admit any higher meaning in a portion of the poem which confessedly it has not yet come to fully understand.

Before the Upanishads can be properly rendered, the Indian psychological system must be understood; and even when its existence is admitted, the English speaking person will meet the great difficulty arising from an absence of words in that language which correspond to the ideas so frequently found in the Sanskrit. Thus we have to wait until a new set of words have been born to express the new ideas not yet existing in the civilization of the West.

The location of the plain on which this battle was fought is important, as well as are also the very rivers and mountains by which it is bounded.

And equally as needful to be understood, or at least guessed at, are the names of the respective princes. The very place in the Mahabharata in which this episode is inserted has deep significance, and we cannot afford to ignore anything whatever that is connected with the events. If we merely imagine that Vyasa or Krishna took the Sacred Plain of Kuru-Kshetra and the great battle as simply accessories to his discourse, which we can easily discard, the whole force of the dialogue will be lost.

Although the Bhagavad-Gita is a small work, there have been written upon it, among the Hindus, more commentaries than those upon the Revelation of St. John among the Christians.

I do not intend to go into those commentaries, because on the one hand I am not a Sanskrit scholar, and on the other it would not tend to great profit. Many of them are fanciful, some unwarrantable; and those that are of value can be consulted by any one anxious to pursue that line of inquiry. What I propose here to myself and to all who may read these papers is, to study the Bhagavad-Gita by the life of that spiritual lamp — be it small or great — which the Supreme Soul will feed and increase within us if we attend to its behests and diligently inquire after it. Such at least is the promise by Krishna in the Bhagavad-Gita — the song Celestial.

(To be continued.)

The Path

REINCARNATION — *E. D. Walker*

A WESTERN STUDY OF THE SUBJECT.

Although commonly rejected throughout Europe and America, reincarnation is unreservedly accepted by the majority of mankind at the present day, as in all the past centuries. From the dawn of history it has prevailed among the largest part of humanity with an unshaken intensity of conviction. Over all the mightiest Eastern nations it has held permanent sway. The ancient civilization of Egypt, whose grandeur cannot be overestimated, was built upon this as a fundamental truth, and taught it as a precious secret to Pythagoras, Aristotle, Plato, Plotinus and Ovid, who scattered it through their nations. It is the keynote of Plato's philosophy, being stated or implied very frequently in his dialogues. "Soul is older than body," he says. "Souls are continually born over again from Hades into this life." In his view all knowledge is reminiscence. To search and learn is simply to revive the images of what the soul saw in its pre-existent state in the world of realities. The swarming millions of India also have made this thought the foundation of their enormous achievements in government, architecture, philosophy and poetry. It was a cardinal element in the religion of the Persian Magi. Alexander the Great gazed in amazement on the self-immolation by fire to which it inspired the Gymnosophists. Caesar found its tenets propagated among the Gauls. The circle of metempsychosis was an essential principle of the Druid faith and as such was impressed upon our forefathers the Celts, the Gauls and the Britons. It is claimed that the people held this doctrine so vitally that they wept around the new born infant and smiled upon death — for the beginning and end of an earthly life were to them the imprisonment and release of a soul, which must

undergo repeated probations to remove its earthly impurities for final ascent into a succession of higher spheres. The Bardic triads of the Welsh are replete with this thought, and a Welsh antiquary insists that an ancient emigration from Wales to India conveyed it to the Brahmins. In the old civilizations of Peru and Mexico it prevailed universally. In the mysteries of Greece, Rome and Britain the ceremonial rites enacted this great truth with peculiar impressiveness for initiates. The Jews generally adopted it from the Babylonian captivity. John the Baptist was a second Elias. Jesus was commonly thought to be a reappearance of John the Baptist or of one of the old prophets. The Talmud, the Kabbala and the writings of Philo are full of the same teaching. Some of the late Rabbins assert many entertaining things concerning the repeated births of the most noted persons of their nation. This idea played an important part in the thought of Origen and several other leaders among the early Church Fathers. It was a main portion of the creed of the Gnostics and Manichaeans. In the middle ages the sects of the Cathari, the Bogomiles and many scholastics advocated it. It has cropped out spontaneously in many Western theologians. The elder English Divines do not hesitate to inculcate pre-existence in their sermons. The Roman Catholic Purgatory seems to be a makeshift improvised to take its place.

Men of profoundly metaphysical genius like Scotus, Kant, Leibnitz, Lessing, Schopenhauer, Schlegel and the younger Fichte have upheld reincarnation. Scientists like Flammarion have earnestly believed it. Theological leaders like Julius Muller, Dorner, H. Ernesti Ruckert and Edward Beecher have maintained it. In exalted intuitional natures like Boehme and Swedenborg its hold is apparent. Most of the mystics bathe in it. Of course the long line of Platonists from Socrates down to Emerson have no doubt of it. Even amid the predominance of materialistic

influences in Christendom it has a considerable following. Traces of it are found among the aborigines of North and South America and in many barbaric tribes. At this time it reigns without any sign of decrepitude over the Burmese, Chinese, Japanese, Tartar, Tibetan, and East Indian nations, including at least 750,000,000 of mankind and nearly two-thirds of the race. Throughout the East it is the great central thought. It is no mere superstition of the ignorant masses. It is the chief principle of Hindu metaphysics, — the basis of all their inspired books. Such a hoary philosophy, upheld by the venerable authority of ages, ruling from the beginning of time the bulk of the world's thought, is certainly worthy of the profoundest respect and study.

But the Western fondness for democracy does not hold in the domain of thought. The fact that the majority of the race has agreed upon reincarnation is no argument for it to an Occidental thinker. The conceit of modern progress has no more respect for ancient ideas than for the forgotten civilizations of old, even though in many essentials they anticipated or outstripped all that we boast of. Therefore we propose to treat this subject mainly from a Western standpoint, showing,

I. Some reasons which may assure us of the truth of reincarnation.

II. The most interesting poetical expressions of this idea in our own tongue.

I. — WESTERN EVIDENCES OF REINCARNATION.

The old Saxon chronicler, Bede, records that at a banquet given by King Edwin of Northumbria to his nobles, a discussion arose as to how they should receive the Christian missionary Paulinus who had just arrived from the continent. Some urged the sufficiency of their own Druid and Norse religions and advised the death of the invading heretic. Others were in favor of hearing

his message. At length the King asked the opinion of his oldest counsellor. The sage arose and said "O King and Lords. You all did remark the swallow which entered this festal hall to escape the chilling winds without, fluttering near the fire for a few moments and then vanishing through the opposite window. Such is the life of man, whence it came and whither it goes none can tell. Therefore if this new religion brings light upon so great a mystery, it must be diviner than ours and should be welcomed." The old man's advice was adopted.

We are in the position of those old ancestors of ours. The religion of the churches, called Christianity, is to many earnest souls a dry husk. The germinant kernel of truth as it came from the founder of Christianity, when it is discovered under all its barren wrappings is indeed sufficient to feed us with the bread of life. It answers all the practical needs of most people even with the husks. But it leaves some vital questions unanswered which impel us to desire something more than Jesus taught — not for mere curiosity but as food for larger growth. The divine law which promises to fill every vacuum, and to gratify at last every aspiration has not left us without means of grasping a portion of these grander truths, by independent methods.

The commonest idea of the soul throughout Christendom seems to be that it is created specially for birth on this world and after its lifetime here it goes to a permanent spiritual realm of infinite continuance. This is a very comfortable belief derived from the appearances of things, and those holding it may very properly say "My view agrees with the phenomena and if you think differently the burden of proof rests upon you." We accept this responsibility. But a careful observer knows that the true explanation of facts as a rule is very different from the appearance. Ptolemy thought he could account for all the heavenly motions on his geocentric theory and his teachings were

at once received by his contemporaries. But the painful studies of Copernicus and Galileo had to wait a century before they were accepted, although they introduced an astronomy of immeasurably nobler scale. Is it not a relic of the old confidence in appearances to consider the orbits of human souls as limited to our little view of them?

There are six arguments for Reincarnation which seem conclusive.

1. That the idea of *immortality* demands it.
2. That *analogy* makes it the most probable.
3. That *science* confirms it.
4. That the *nature of the soul* requires it.
5. That it *explains* many *mysterious experiences*.
6. That it alone *solves* the problem of *injustice* and *misery* which broods over our world.

1. Immortality demands it.

Only the positivists and some allied schools of thought, comprising a very small proportion of Christendom doubt the immortality of the soul. But a conscious existence after death has no better proof than a pre-natal existence. It is an old declaration that what begins in time must end in time. We have no right to say that the soul is eternal on one side of its earthly period without being so on the other. Far more rational is the view of certain scientists who, believing that the soul originates with this life, also declare that it ends with this life. That is the logical outcome of their premise. If the soul sprang into existence specially for this life, why should it continue afterward? It is precisely as probable from all the grounds of reason that death is the conclusion of the soul as that birth is the beginning of it. On the contrary all the indications of immortality point as unflinchingly to an eternity preceding this existence: the love of prolonged life,

the analogy of nature, the prevailing belief of the most spiritual minds, the permanence of the ego principle, the inconceivability of annihilation or of creation from nothing, the promise of an extension of the present career, the injustice of any other thought.

All the probabilities upon which the assurance of the soul's immortality rests, confirm the idea that it has an eternal existence in the past as well as in the future. What the origin of the soul may have been does not affect this subject, further than that it antedates the present life. Whether it be a spark from God himself, or a divine emanation, or a cluster of independent energies, its eternal destiny compels the inference that it is uncreated and indestructible. Moreover, it is unthinkable that from an infinite history it enters this world for its first physical experience and then shoots off to an endless spiritual existence. The deduction is rather that it assumed many forms before it appeared as we now see it and is bound to pass through many coming lives before it will be rounded into the full orb of perfection and reach its ultimate goal.

2. The argument from analogy is especially strong.

The universal spectacle of incarnated life indicates that this is the eternal scheme everywhere, the variety of souls finding in the variety of circumstances an everlasting series of adventures in appropriate forms. For many centuries in the literature of nations a standard simile of the soul surviving its earthly decay has been drawn from the transformation of the caterpillar into the butterfly. This world is the grub state. The body is the chrysalis of the soul. But the caterpillar came from a former life, in the egg. The violent energy of the present condition argues a previous stage leading up to it. It is contended with great force of analogy that death is but another and higher birth. This life is a groping embryo plane implying a more exalted one. Mysterious

intimations reach us from a diviner sphere,

"Like hints and echoes of the world
To spirits folded in the womb."

But the same indications argue that birth is the death of an earlier existence. Even the embryo life necessitates a preparatory one preceding it. So complete a structure must have a foundation. So swift a momentum must have travelled far. As Emerson observes "We wake and find ourselves on a stair. There are other stairs below us which we seem to have ascended; there are stairs above us, many a one, which go upward and out of sight."

The grand order of creation is everywhere proclaiming, as the universal word, "change". Nothing is destroyed but all is passing from one existence to another. Not an atom but is shifting in lively procession from its present condition to a different form, running a ceaseless cycle through mineral, vegetable and animal existence, though never losing its individuality, however diverse its apparent alterations. Not a creature but is constantly progressing to something else. The tadpole becomes a fish, the fish a frog, and some of the frogs have turned to birds.

"There is a spirit in all things that live
Which hints at patient change from kind to kind
And yet no words its mystic sense can give
Strange as a dream of radiance to the blind."

Evolution has remoulded the thought of Christendom, expanding our conception of physiology, astronomy and history. The more it is studied the more universal is found its application. It seems to be the secret of God's working. Now that we know the evolution of the body, it is time that we learned the evolution of the soul. The biologist shows that each of us physically before birth runs through all the phases of animal life — polyp, fish, reptile, dog,

ape and man — as a brief synopsis of how the ages have prepared our tenements. The preponderance of special animal traits in us is due, he says to the emphasis of those particular stages of our physical growth. So in infancy does the soul move through an unconscious series of existences, recapitulating its long line of descent, until it is fastened in maturity. And why is it not true that our soul traits are the relics of former activities?

3. Furthermore, the idea that the soul is specially created for introduction into this world is antagonistic to all the principles of science. All nature proceeds on the strictest economical methods. Nothing is either lost or added. There is no creation or destruction. Whatever appears to spring suddenly into existence is derived from sufficient cause — although as unseen as the vapor currents which feed the clouds.

Physiologists contend that the wondrous human organism could not have grown up out of mere matter but implies a pre-existent spiritual idea which grouped around itself the organic conditions of physical existence and constrained the material elements to follow its plan. This dynamic agent — or the soul — must have existed independent of the body before the receptacle was prepared. The German scientists Muller and Stahle, have especially illustrated in physiology this idea of a pre-existent soul monad.

The common resurrection idea makes immortality an arbitrary stroke of God at the end of the earthly drama. But science allows no such exceptional miracle. It recognizes rather the universality of resurrection throughout all nature. We have no experience whatever of the resurrection taught by theologians; but we constantly see new appearances of souls in fresh bodies. These cannot have darted into their first existence as we behold them. From the hidden regions of some previous existence they must

have come.

4. A much more weighty and penetrative argument is that the nature of the soul requires reincarnation. The conscious soul cannot feel itself to have had any beginning any more than it can conceive of annihilation. The sense of persistence overwhelms all the interruptions of forgetfulness and sleep, and all the obstacles of matter. This incessant self-assurance suggests the idea of the soul being independent of the changing body, its temporary prison. Then follows the conception that as the soul has once appeared in human form so it may reappear in many others. The eternity of the soul past and present leads directly to an everlasting succession of births and deaths, disembodiments and reembodiments.

The identity of the soul surely does not consist in a remembrance of all its past. We are always forgetting ourselves and waking again to recognition. But the sense of individuality bridges all the gaps. In the same way it seems as if our present existence were a somnambulant condition into which we have drowsed from our earlier life, oblivious of most of that former activity, and from which we may after a while be roused into wakefulness.

The study of infancy shows that the mental furniture with which we begin this life presupposes a former experience. The moral character of children, especially the existence of evil in them long before it could have been implanted by the present existence has forced many acute observers to assume that the human spirit had made choice of evil in a pre-natal sphere.

The unsatisfied physical inclinations of a soul are indestructible and require a series of physical existences to work themselves out. And the irrepressible eagerness for *all the range of experience* necessitates a course of reincarnations which shall accomplish that result.

5. Reincarnation explains many curious experiences. Most of us have known the touches of feeling and thought that seem to be reminders of forgotten things. Sometimes as dim dreams of old scenes, sometimes as vivid lightning flashes in the darkness recalling distant occurrences, sometimes with unutterable depth of meaning. It appears as if Nature's opiate which ushered us into this arena had been so diluted that it did not quite efface the old memories, and reason struggles to decipher the vestiges of a former state. Almost everyone has felt the sense of great age. Thinking of some unwonted subject often an impression seizes us that somewhere, long ago, we have had these reflections before. Learning a fact, meeting a face for the first time, we are puzzled with an obscure assurance that it is familiar. Travelling newly in strange places we are sometimes haunted with a consciousness of having been there before. Music is specially apt to guide us into mystic depths where we are startled with the flashing reminiscences of unspeakable verities which we have felt or seen ages since. Efforts of thought reveal the half-obliterated inscriptions on the tablets of memory, passing before the vision in a weird procession. Everyone has some such experiences. Most of them are blurred and obscure. But some are so remarkably distinct that those who undergo them are convinced that their sensations are actual recollections of events and places in former lives. It is even possible for certain persons to trace quite fully and clearly a part of their by-gone history prior to this life.

Sir Walter Scott was so impressed by these experiences that they led him to a belief in pre-existence. He writes (in "Guy Mannering"), "How often do we find ourselves in society which we have never before met, and yet feel impressed with a mysterious and ill defined consciousness, that neither the scene nor the speakers nor the subject are entirely new; nay feel as if we could anticipate that part of the conversation which has not

yet taken place." Bulwer Lytton describes it as "that strange kind of inner and spiritual memory which often recalls to us places and persons we have never seen before and which Platonists would resolve to be the unquenched and struggling consciousness of a former life." Explicit occurrences of this class are found in the narratives of Hawthorne, Coleridge, DeQuincy and many other writers. A striking instance appears in a little memoir of the late Wm. Hone, the Parodist, upon whom the experience made such a profound effect that it roused him from thirty years of materialistic atheism to a conviction of the soul's independence of matter. Being called in business to a house in a part of London entirely new to him, he kept noticing that he had never been that way before. "I was shown" he says, "into a room to wait. On looking around, to my astonishment everything appeared perfectly familiar to me: I seemed to *recognize* every object. I said to myself, what is this? I was never here before and yet I have seen all this, and if so there is a very peculiar knot in the shutter." He opened the shutter and there was the knot.

A writer of reputation mentions the following instance: A friend's child of four years was observed by her elder sister to be talking to herself about matters of which she could not be supposed to know anything. "Why, Winnie," exclaimed the elder sister, Louisa, "What do you know about that? All that happened before you were born!" "I would have you know, Louisa, that I grew old in heaven before I was born!" Similar anecdotes might be produced in great number.

Objectors ascribe these enigmas to a jumble of associations producing a blurred vision like the drunkard's experience of seeing double, a discordant remembrance, snatches of forgotten dreams — or to the double structure of the brain. In one of the lobes, they say, the thought flashes a moment in advance of the other and the second half of the thinking machine regards the

first impression as a memory of something long distant. But this explanation is unsatisfactory as it fails to account for the wonderful vividness of some of these impressions in well balanced minds, or the long trains of thought which come independent of any companions, or the prophetic glimpses which anticipate actual occurrences. Far more credible is it that each soul is a palimpsest inscribed again and again with one story upon another and whenever the all-wise Author is ready to write a grander page on us He washes off the old ink and pens his latest word. But some of us can trace here and there letters of the former manuscript not yet effaced.

6. The strongest support of this theory is its happy solution of the problem of moral inequality and injustice and evil which otherwise overwhelms us as we survey the world. The seeming chaos is marvellously set in order by the idea of soul-wandering. Many a sublime intellect has been so oppressed with the topsyturviness of things here as to cry out "There is no God. All is blind chance." An exclusive view of the miseries of mankind, the prosperity of wickedness, the struggles of the deserving, the oppression of the masses, or on the other hand, the talents and successes and happiness of the fortunate few, compels one to call the world a sham without any moral law to regulate it. But that consideration yields to a majestic satisfaction when one is assured that the present life is only one of a grand series in which every individual is gradually going the round of infinite experience for a glorious outcome, — that the hedging ills of to-day are a consequence of what we did yesterday and a step toward the great things of to-morrow. Thus the tangled snarls of earthly phenomena are straitened out as a vast and beautiful scheme, and the total experience of humanity forms a magnificent tapestry of perfect poetic justice.

The crucial test of any hypothesis is whether it meets all the facts

better than any other theory. No other view so admirably accounts for the diversity or conditions on earth, and refutes the charge of a favoritism on the part of Providence. Hierocles said, and many a philosopher before and since has agreed with him, "Without the doctrine of metempsychosis it is not possible to justify the ways of God." Some of the theologians have found the idea of pre-existence necessary to a reasonable explanation of the world, although it is considered foreign to the Bible. Over thirty years ago Dr. Edward Beecher published "The Conflict of Ages," in which the main argument is this thought. He demonstrates that the facts of sin and depravity compel the acceptance of this doctrine to exonerate God from the charge of maliciousness. His book caused a lively controversy and was soon followed by "The Concord of the Ages" in which he answers the objections and strengthens his position. The same truth is taught by Dr. Julius Muller, a German theologian of prodigious influence among the clergy. Another prominent leader of theological thought, Dr. Dorner, sustains it.

But, it is asked, why do we not remember something definitely of our previous lives, if we have really been through them?

It has been shown that there are traces of recollection. The reason of no universal conviction from this ground is that the change into the present career was so violent and so radical as to scatter all the details and leave only the net spiritual result. As Plotinus said "Body is the true river of Lethe; for souls plunged into it forget all." The real soul life is so distinct from the material plane that we have difficulty in recalling many experiences of this life — especially when an abrupt departure from old associations severs the connecting links. Who retains all of his childhood's life? And has anyone a memory of that most wonderful epoch — infancy? Our present forgetfulness is no disproof of the actuality of past lives. Every night we lose all knowledge of what has gone

before, but daily we awaken to a recollection of the whole series of days and nights. So in one life we may forget or dream and in another recover the whole thread of experience from the beginning — or the substance of it. In the cases of decrepit old age we often see the spirits of strong men divested of all memory of their life's experience and returning to a second infancy — in a foretaste of their entrance upon the next existence.

We conclude, therefore, that Reincarnation is necessitated by immortality, that analogy teaches it, that science upholds it, that the nature of the soul needs it, that many strange sensations support it, and that it alone grandly solves the problem of life. The fullness of its meaning is majestic beyond appreciation, for it shows that every soul from the lowest animal to the highest archangel belongs to the infinite family of God and is eternal in its conscious essence, perishing only in its temporary disguises; that every act of every creature is followed by infallible reactions which constitute a perfect law of retribution; and that these souls are intricately interlaced with mutual relationships. The bewildering maze thus becomes a divine harmony. No individual stands alone, but trails with him the unfinished sequels of an ancestral career, and is so bound up with his race that each is responsible for all and all for each. No one can be wholly saved until all are redeemed. Every suffering we endure apparently for faults not our own assumes a holy light and a sublime dignity. This thought removes the littleness of petty selfish affairs and confirms in us the vastest hopes for mankind.

In this connection the following extracts from distinguished writers are specially interesting: —

Schopenhauer, the German Philosopher, writes (in "The World as Will and Idea"): "The fresh existence is paid for by the old age and death of a worn out existence which has perished, but which

contained the indestructible seeds out of which this new existence has arisen. They are one being."

The doctrine of metempsychosis springs from the earliest and noblest ages of the human race and has always been spread abroad in the earth as the belief of the great majority of mankind — as the teaching of all religions excepting that of the Jews and the two which have proceeded from it. The belief in this truth presents itself as the natural conviction of man wherever he reflects at all in an unprejudiced manner; where it is not found it must have been displaced by positive religious doctrine from another source. It is obvious to everyone who hears of it for the first time. See how earnestly Lessing defends it (in the last seven paragraphs of his 'Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts').

Lichtenberg also says: 'I cannot get rid of the thought that I died before I was born!' Even the skeptical Hume says in his radical essay on immortality: 'The metempsychosis is therefore the only system of this kind that philosophy can hearken to.'

What resists this belief is Judaism and its two descendants (Christianity and Mohammedanism) because they teach the creation of man out of nothing. Yet how difficult it has been to link the conception of future immortality to this is shown by the fact that most of the old heretics believed in reincarnation — Simonites, Manicheans, Basilidians, Valentinians, Marcionists and Gnostics. Tertullian and Justinian inform us that "even the Jews themselves have in part fallen into it."

From a letter written by that curious genius William Blake (the artist) to his friend John Flaxman (the sculptor); (see Scoones' English Letters, p. 361):

"In my brain are studies and chambers filled with books and

pictures of old which I wrote and painted in ages of eternity before my mortal life; and these works are the delight and study of archangels.

"You, O dear Flaxman, are a sublime archangel, my friend and companion from eternity. I look back into the regions of reminiscence and behold our ancient days before this earth appeared and its vegetative mortality to my mortal vegetated eyes. I see our houses of eternity which can never be separated, though our mortal vehicles should stand at the remotest corners of heaven from each other."

The novelist Bulwer thus expresses his opinion of this truth: "Eternity may be but an endless series of those migrations which men call deaths, abandonments of home after home, even to fairer scenes and loftier heights. Age after age the spirit may shift its tent, fated not to rest in the dull Elysian of the heathen, but carrying with it evermore its two elements, activity and desire."

One of Emerson's earliest essays ("THE METHOD OF NATURE") contains this paragraph: "We cannot describe the natural history of the soul, but we know that it is divine. I cannot tell if these wonderful qualities which house to-day in this mortal frame, shall ever re-assemble in equal activity in a similar frame, or whether they have before had a natural history like that of this body you see before you; but this one thing I know, that these qualities did not now begin to exist, can not be sick with my sickness nor buried in my grave; but that they circulate through the Universe: before the world was, they were. Nothing can bar them out, or shut them in, but they penetrate the ocean and land, space and time, form and essence, and hold the key to universal nature."

Edgar A. Poe writes (in "EUREKA"): "We walk about, amid the destinies of our world existence, accompanied by dim, but ever present memories of a Destiny more vast — very distant in the by-gone time and infinitely awful.

"We live out a youth peculiarly haunted by such dreams, yet never mistaking them for dreams. As *memories* we know them. During our youth the distinctness is too clear to deceive us even for a moment. But the doubt of manhood dispels these feelings as illusions."

The second portion of our study will be — Reincarnation in the Light of our own Poets.

The Path

THE DOCTRINE OF INNATE IDEAS — *E. D. Fawcett*

[A PROBLEM OF WESTERN METAPHYSICS SOLVED IN THE LIGHT OF THE ESOTERIC DOCTRINE.]

The controversy as to whether our ideas of causation, substance, time and space are innate and referable to the original constitution of the mind or complex notions acquired from our experience of sensations, is one that cannot fail to be of interest to the student of occultism. The Intuitionist school headed by Kant regard these ideas as existing in the mind independently of experience, as a necessary condition of our subjectivity; the Sensationalists — who include in their number some of the most eminent psychologists of the day — as due to our sensations and traceable to the operation of the Laws of Association. Mr. Herbert Spencer occupies a middle position between these contending parties. According to him they are the expression of the racial experience in the mental heredity of the individual. Take as an illustration our idea of space. According to the Intuitionists it is innate — a condition of our perception of objects; in contradistinction to this view it is held by others that "space in the abstract is merely the community or similarity of extended bodies and of the intervals between them commonly called empty space" (1) our conception of space is contingent on our perception of objects; these latter again on our sensations, and the fact of our inability to perceive objects which do not occupy some position in relation to one another, produces so powerful an association between these two ideas, that we are unable to think of any object without the accompanying notion of its location *somewhere*. Hence the idea of space. The Spencerian Evolutionist, however, while admitting the justice of the Sensationalist contention with regard to the primary development of the idea, recognises in the

phenomenon as present in the mind of the infant, an ancestral legacy bequeathed in the vehicle of heredity, an heirloom representing the experience of the countless organisms that constituted the evolutionary ascent up to civilized man. As, however, it is impossible to conceive of the heredity of a *form of thought* and in addition this explanation is purely materialistic, I shall not have occasion to regard it in the course of these brief remarks.

It is clear then that we can look for no decisive answer to Western psychology. To quote the forcible remarks of Buckle on European metaphysics: (2) "Whoever will take pains to estimate the present condition of mental philosophy must admit, that, notwithstanding the influence it has always exercised over some of the most powerful minds, and through them over society at large, there is, nevertheless, no other study which has been so zealously prosecuted, so long continued and yet remains *so barren of results*. * * * * Men of eminent abilities, and of the greatest integrity of purpose have in every civilized country, for many centuries, been engaged in metaphysical inquiries; and yet at the present moment their systems, so far from approximating towards truth, are diverging from each other with a velocity which seems to be accelerated by the progress of knowledge." The too confident advocacy of them by their respective supporters as the truth, and nothing but the truth, he adds, has, "thrown the study of the mind into a confusion *only to be compared to that in which the study of religion has been thrown by the controversies of the theologians*." It would be difficult to frame a more severe indictment than this drawn up by so impartial and justly renowned a critic. It merely shows, that the physical intellect alone is absolutely inadequate to embrace the vast domain of Psychology or to formulate the more remote laws of being. *Eastern* psychologists — the masters of occult science — are

therefore right in asserting that to form a true conception of the nature and potentialities of mind, it is necessary to develop faculties which enable the inquirer to rise altogether above the plane of our present consciousness. The contradictions and barrenness of the European "science" of mind are too palpable to escape remark even from the most unobservant critic. At the present day instead of being merely the accessory support to, Physiology has become the *basis* of, Psychology. The revival of mysticism, however, justifies us in questioning the durability of this tendency to subordinate the mental to the physical. Impermanency of influence is not the least noticeable feature of Western metaphysical speculation — a fact which has unquestionably caused the study of psychology and philosophical subjects generally to be now regarded by the majority of persons with positive aversion. The Truth has long proved a Will o' the Wisp to the Pure Reason. When intellectual giants like Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Mill and Bain only succeed in evolving mutually-exclusive and contradictory systems, it is evident that the physical intelligence must eventually resign its place to INTUITION in the search after Abstract Knowledge. But we are digressing.

The solution proposed of the long-standing problem before us is based on the philosophy of our Revered Teachers. It concedes a portion of truth to the speculations both of the Associationalists and Sensationalists. While it relegates the *primary* acquisition of such ideas to Sensation it declares them to be *innate in the mind of the human infant*. The Esoteric Doctrine shows the differentiation of individualities — *i.e.* the capacity of mind to exist as an entity apart from brain on the dissolution of its material substratum — taking place in the higher animal kingdom. It is admitted that animals acquire their notions of time, space, etc., — where present — from sensation, as described by the Associationalists.

On the other hand owing to the *impress* of these ideas in the soul (3) in its upward evolutionary journey, they are undoubtedly, as claimed by the Intuitionists, innate in the human "subject" — the *generalized experience of former objective existences rising once again into consciousness*. If this contention is true we have here a solution in the light of the Esoteric Doctrine of one of the most stoutly debated of metaphysical problems.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Dr. Alex Bain, Logic, Part I, p. 11. ([return to text](#))

2. H. T. Buckle, "Hist. of Civilisation in England," Vol. I, p. 165-6. ([return to text](#))

3. The higher portion of the 5th principle (Manas) which united with the Buddhi constitutes the "Transcendental Subject" of Kant and du Prel, the Monad. This Higher Self — the *individuality* as opposed to its innumerable *faint reflects* in physical incarnation — passes from birth to birth and like a bee amidst flowers, only absorbs into its essence the loftiest experiences — the honey — of each terrestrial life; consequently it will be apparent that the decision of the question "How much of our present personality will be immortal?" rests wholly with ourselves. ([return to text](#))

[The Path](#)

PARACELSUS: II — S. B.

It is a notable fact that the life of Paracelsus formed the theme for the first important work of one of the greatest of modern poets, Robert Browning, in whom the mystical tendency forms one of the strongest characteristics of his thought. *Paracelsus* is a wonderful composition; almost marvelous when it is considered that it was written when the poet was but 28 years old. It exhibits a noble maturity of intellect; in the exalted spirituality of its thought it has never been surpassed by any of the poet's subsequent works. It shows that Browning had a true appreciation of the greatness of the Master. In his note he says that he has taken very trifling liberties with his subject and that "the reader may slip the foregoing scenes between the leaves of any memoir of Paracelsus he pleases, by way of commentary." Browning must have studied the writings of Paracelsus closely, and with his inner vision, for throughout the poem there runs a deep vein of occultism. Although he has followed the historical accounts of the Master, and therefore depicts some blemishes upon his character which could hardly have existed in reality, it seems not unlikely that a mind of the lofty spiritual quality of Browning's may, in its aspiration for true knowledge of his theme, have been impressed by that of Paracelsus himself, or of the one formerly known by that name.

The poem has the form of a drama in five acts. The first act has its scene at Wurzburg, where Paracelsus is studying under Tritheim, in 1512, a youth of 19 years. With him is Festus, his boyhood's friend, older than he, and Michal, the betrothed of Festus. The three are together in a garden, and Paracelsus is about to enter upon his long wanderings through the world. To these two he confides the secret of his aspirations. Festus, who has a

conservative nature, endeavors to dissuade him from his enterprise, and to pursue knowledge in the ordinary channels. Paracelsus then tells something of the extraordinary nature which has distinguished him from his fellowmen. He says:

"From childhood I have been possessed
By a fire — by a true fire, or faint or fierce,
As from without some master, so it seemed,
Repressed or urged its current: this but ill
Expresses what I would convey — but rather
I will believe an angel ruled me thus,
Than that my soul's own workings, own high nature,
So become manifest. I knew not then
What whispered in the evening, and spoke out
At midnight. If some mortal, born too soon,
Were laid away in some great trance — the ages
Coming and going all the while — till dawned
His true time's advent, and could then record
The words they spoke who kept watch by his bed, —
Then I might tell more of the breath so light
Upon my eyelids, and the fingers warm
Among my hair. Youth is confused: yet never
So dull was I but, when that spirit passed,
I turned to him, scarce consciously, as turns
A water-snake when fairies cross his sleep."

These words characterize the born Adept and show that the poet really apprehended the nature of the memories of past existences. Paracelsus confesses how the impulse was ever with him to devote himself to the good of mankind and do some great work in its behalf. In his youth, as he sat under Trithem's teachings, he felt somehow that a mighty power was brooding, taking shape within him, and this lasted till one night, as he sat revolving it more and more, a still voice from without spoke to

him, and then it was that he first discovered his aim's extent,

"Which sought to comprehend the works of God,
And God himself, and all God's intercourse
With the human mind."

The voice continued:

"There is a way —
'Tis hard for flesh to tread therein, imbued
With frailty — hopeless, if indulgence first
Have ripened inborn germs of sin to strength:
Wilt thou adventure for my sake and man's,
Apart from all reward?' And last it breathed —
'Be happy my good soldier; I am by thee,
Be sure, even to the end!' — I answered not,
Knowing Him. As He spoke, I was endued
With comprehension and a steadfast will;
And when He ceased, my brow was sealed His own.
If there took place no special change in me,
How comes it all things wore a different hue
Thenceforward? — pregnant with vast consequence —
Teeming with grand results — loaded with fate;
So that when quailing at the mighty range
Of secret truths which yearn for birth, I haste
To contemplate undazzled some one truth,
Its bearings and effects alone — at once
What was a speck expands into a star,
Asking a life to pass exploring thus,
Till I near craze."

This voice is that which speaks to all true Mystics. It is the higher Self that speaks; the voice of the Warrior, spoken of in *Light on the Path*, "He is thyself, yet infinitely wiser and stronger than thyself." It may also be the voice of a Master, as well. For, at the

stage where the bonds of the personality are loosened, the sense of separateness has disappeared, and the higher Self of one is that of all. In this passage, the poet gives beautiful utterance to the fact of the spiritual rebirth, the moment when the lower consciousness becomes united with the higher.

Again, in the following words, the fact of reincarnation is expressed:

"At times I almost dream
I too have spent a life the sages' way,
And tread once more familiar paths. Perchance
I perished in an arrogant self-reliance
An age ago; and in that act, a prayer
For one more chance went up so earnest, so
Instinct with better light let in by Death,
That life was blotted out — not so completely
But scattered wrecks enough of it remain,
Dim memories; as now, when seems once more
The goal in sight again."

This feeling of the truth of reincarnation finds utterance throughout Browning's work. It would be difficult to account for the greatness of a person like Paracelsus except under the theory of pre-existence.

"The dim star that burns within," and the reason for its dimness, is gloriously expressed in the following words:

"Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise
From outward things, whate'er you may believe:
There is an inmost center in us all,
Where truth abides in fulness; and around
Wall upon wall, the gross flesh hems it in,
This perfect clear perception — which is truth;

A baffling and perverting carnal mesh
Blinds it, and makes all error: and 'to know'
Rather consists in opening out a way
Whence the imprisoned splendor may escape,
Than in effecting entry for a light
Supposed to be without. Watch narrowly
The demonstration of a truth, its birth,
And you trace back the effluence to its spring
And source within us, where broods radiance vast,
To be elicited ray by ray, as chance Shall favor."

This passage, which is pure mysticism, is too long to quote entire, but the reader will find that it continues in the same exalted strain, showing how the unveiling of the soul, the higher self, may, through various means, be accomplished by what seems chance, or, as it says in *Through the Gates of Gold*, man may "tear the veil that hides him from the eternal at any point where it is easiest for him to do so; the most often this point will be where he least expects to find it." The poet has seen clearly, with Paracelsus himself, how it is that matter bars in the spirit, and he asks:

"May not truth be lodged alike in all,
The lowest as the highest? some slight film
The interposing bar which binds it up,
And makes the idiot, just as makes the sage
Some film removed, the happy outlet whence
Truth issues proudly? See this soul of ours!
How it strives weakly in the child, is loosed
In manhood, clogged by sickness, back compelled
By age and waste, set free at last by death:
Why is it, flesh enthralles it or enthrones?
What is this flesh we have to penetrate?
O not alone when life flows still do truth
And power emerge, but also when strange chance

Ruffles its current; in unused conjuncture,
When sickness breaks the body — hunger, watching,
Excess or languor, — oftenest death's approach —
Peril, deep joy, or woe."

It was to give clearer hints for this setting free of the soul that *Through the Gates of Gold* was written. In the second act Browning shows us Paracelsus in Constantinople in the year 1521, where history tells that he was at that time, having spent something like seven years in the Orient, "among the Tartars," a term that permits a wide range for his whereabouts. The Master was accordingly then 28 years old. He is said to have received the "Philosopher's stone," in reality the Great Jewel or Master Stone, described in the beautiful story called "Papyrus," — printed in the March THE PATH — from a German Adept, Solomon Trismosinus. Browning, however, lays the scene at "the House of the Greek conjuror." This act, though very beautiful, is of slight value historically, as it was designed to carry out the motive of the poem that Paracelsus failed by seeking to attain his end through knowledge alone, leaving love out of account. In this regard Browning failed to grasp the full greatness of the Master, for Paracelsus could not have held his exalted position in the Rosicrucian brotherhood without being inspired by the most unbounded love for humanity.

To carry out this idea of the necessity of both knowledge and love, Browning introduces an Italian poet, Aprile, who has sought to attain the same end as Paracelsus through love alone. Aprile dies in the arms of Paracelsus and thus teaches him the lesson of love. This passage may be taken as symbolic of the union of the distinctive traits of the individuals and the assimilation of their essences by him who has arrived at the stage of killing out the sense of separateness. This is shown in the words addressed by Paracelsus to Aprile:

"Are we not halves of one dissevered world,
Whom this strange chance unites once more? Part? never!
Till thou, the lover, know; and I, the knower,
Love — until both are saved."

In this act are the following glorious words spoken by the dying Aprile:

"God is the PERFECT POET,
Who in creation acts his own conceptions.
Shall man refuse to be ought less than God?
Man's weakness is his glory — for the strength
Which raises him to heaven and near God's self,
Came spite of it: God's strength his glory is,
For thence came with our weakness sympathy
Which brought God down to earth, a man like us."

We will pass over the next two acts as comparatively unimportant to our purpose. In the last act we find Paracelsus, in the year 1541, at the age of 48, dying at Salzburg, alone with his faithful friend Festus. He tells Festus of the sensations of his dying moments in a passage in which occur inspired words, depicting the soul in the state of Eternity, where time and space are as nought. He tells Festus "You are here to be instructed. I will tell God's message," and he describes his experiences on the threshold of the Eternal as containing his entire past life:

"If I select
Some special epoch from the crowd, 'tis but
To will and straight the rest dissolve away,
And only that particular state is present,
With all its long-forgotten circumstance,
Distinct and vivid as at first — myself
A careless looker-on, and nothing more!

Indifferent and amused, but nothing more!
And this is death: I understand it all.
New being waits me; new perceptions must
Be born in me before I plunge therein;
Which last is Death's affair, and while I speak,
Minute by minute he is filling me
With power; and while my foot is on the threshold
Of boundless life — the doors unopened yet,
All preparations not complete within —
I turn new knowledge upon old events,
And the effect is — But I must not tell;
It is not lawful."

What follows may be taken, perhaps, in a sense, for a mystic initiation. Mustering superhuman strength Paracelsus stands upon his couch, dons his scarlet cloak lined with fur, puts his chain around his neck, his signet ring is on his finger, and last he takes his good sword, his trusty Azoth, in his grasp for the last time, and says:

"This couch shall be my throne: I bid these walls
Be consecrate; this wretched cell become
A shrine; for here God speaks to men through me:"

Then he tells the story of his birth to power, and of the wisdom he has attained. He tells how

"I stood at first where all aspire at last
To stand: the secret of the world was mine.
I knew, I felt, (perception unexpressed,
Uncomprehended by our narrow thought,
But somehow felt and known in every shift
And change in the spirit, — nay, in every pore
Of the body, even,) — what God is, what we are,
What life is — how God tastes an infinite joy

In infinite ways — one everlasting bliss,
From whom all being emanates, all power
Proceeds; in whom is life forevermore,
Yet whom existence in its lowest form
Includes."

It is a long address, and so full of the most spiritual thought that it seems a pity space will not allow it to be quoted entire. There is one passage which corresponds very closely to a passage in Hartmann's work, from one of Paracelsus's writings, describing the union in man of the attributes of this sphere of life which had, here and there

"Been scattered o'er the visible world before,
Asking to be combined — dim fragments meant
To be united in some wondrous whole —
Imperfect qualities throughout creation,
Suggesting some one creature yet to make —
Some point where all those scattered rays should meet
Convergent in the faculties of man."

This point of convergence is spoken of in *Through the Gates of Gold* as "that primeval place which is the only throne of God, — that place whence forms of life emerge and to which they return. That place is the central point of existence, where there is a permanent spot of life as there is in the midst of the heart of man." Again we see the same subject treated in the closing part of the *Gates of Gold*, the mighty results to be attained through the subjugation of the animal nature in man to the godly nature, looked forward to by Paracelsus, as Browning makes him speak, with prophetic vision, in the following words:

"But when full roused, each giant limb awake,
Each sinew strung, the great heart pulsing fast,
He shall start up, and stand on his own earth,

And so begin his long triumphant march,
And date his being thence, — thus wholly roused,
What he achieves shall be set down to him!
When all the race is perfected alike
As Man, that is: all tended to mankind,
And, man produced, all has its end thus far;
But in completed man begins anew
A tendency to God."

And it is given significantly, as a trait of completed man, that such

"Outgrow all
The narrow creeds of right and wrong, which fade
Before the unmeasured thirst for good; while peace
Rises within them ever more and more.
Such men are even now upon the earth,
Serene amid the half-formed creatures round,
Who should be saved by them and joined with them."

These words of Paracelsus are almost the last in the poem:

"As yet men cannot do without contempt —
'Tis for their good, and therefore fit awhile
That they reject the weak, and scorn the false,
Rather than praise the strong and true, in me.
But after, they will know me!
If I stoop into a dark tremendous sea of cloud,
It is but for a time; I press God's lamp
Close to my breast — its splendor, soon or late,
Will pierce the gloom: I shall emerge one day!

We believe that the time is not far distant when he will be understood, will be known, and shall emerge.

SUGGESTIONS AS TO PRIMARY CONCEPTS: II — J. D. Buck

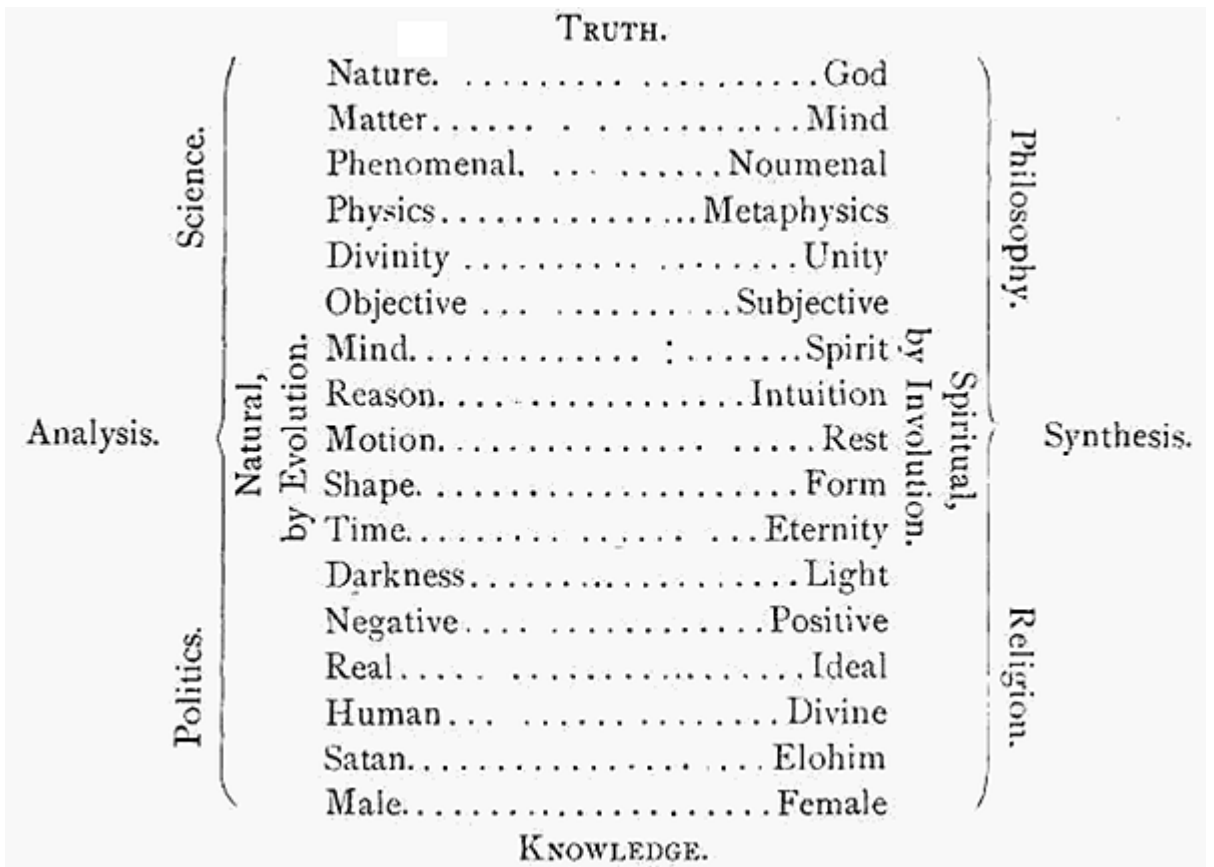
[Continued from April, Volume 2, number 2]

In our former article we had arrived at the fact of consciousness, as the representative of the noumenal in existence. Consciousness is also the alembic in which the experiences of the outer life are precipitated. It may justly then, be called the *central sun* of individual existence. Consciousness is not the one life, nor is it spirit, though it partakes of both, for life is diffused and participated in by plants and animals, in which may also be discerned the dawn, or germs of consciousness. But as the life of man on the physical side has its root in matter, so the life of man on the noumenal side has its root in spirit. Matter and spirit are thus the two extremes of cosmic substance. We may say crudely, that spirit precipitated, consolidated, is matter, while the intermediate condition is the ether. Oken has shown that self-consciousness belongs only to man. An animal is conscious of hunger or lust, and follows blindly the all absorbing passion, but no animal is self-conscious, that is: conscious of self, as a whole. A very common mistake is made in reading accounts of creation recorded in ancient scripture, in regarding it (creation) as a process once for all completed, when the fact is that the process of creation is forever repeated, and the process is for ever the same, and we can observe it now as "at the dawn of creation:" "eternity," applying to a limitless past, as to an endless future. Another fatal mistake may here be pointed out, though not in its natural order, and that is the vagueness of our concepts of the idea "God." Our ideas of God can have but two sources, viz: external nature and internal nature of man, there are no other sources from which the God-idea can be derived. From the one — nature at large — our ideas of an underlying force holding the stellar orbs in place and moving them in cyclic order, adjusting and adapting all things great and small are purely Pantheistic. From the other — the inner nature of man — endowed with intelligence, love, and aspiration, our ideas are purely anthropomorphic, and these two views of the ONE, the BOUNDLESS, are not, as

commonly supposed, antagonistic, but perfectly consistent, as will presently appear, for the idea is not only fortified by scripture, but no other concept can for a moment be entertained when this is once comprehended, for it illuminates alike the soul of man and the sacred page.

Mr. J. Ralston Skinner, a most able Caballist, thus translates the first utterance of the books of Moses: "*In (or out of) His own essence as a womb, God, in the manifestation of two opposites in force, created the two heavens, i. e., the upper, or light, and the lower or dark; signifying the equivalents of heat and cold, day and night, expansion and contraction, summer and winter; in short, the all embracing cosmic relations.*" (1)

The meaning of this and its exceeding value will not at once appear to one who has not carefully considered its bearings. It is well known that the word here translated as God is *Elohim*, and that it is plural, and while this fact has been ignored in the current version, the real idea has at the same time been lost sight of. The idea of One Power operating in a twofold way or by opposites, will be found to be not only a key to the text, but to cosmic unfoldment. Our primary concepts must agree with the constitution and existence of things, or they are worthless, and but little investigation is required to show us that this idea of polarity or DUALITY, lies at the foundation of all created things, and when it is once clearly apprehended it furnishes a key to creative energy. The following table will illustrate this antithesis, though it is approximate and by no means exhaustive, but if found true in principle it may assist to more exact and comprehensive concepts.



Let it be borne in mind that our present purpose is not to build up a system or elaborate a theory, but to suggest concepts which are fundamental in the nature of things, and which therefore must be included in all systems of thought that undertake to grasp existence. This duality of existence is so intimately blended in our every day experience as to be practically overlooked. Moreover, owing to the materialistic tendency of the age, it is the custom to express spirit in terms of matter, and so to ignore practically one-half of existence. It may readily be seen that volumes might be written to illustrate this antithesis of nature, or the duality of existence.

Now it must be borne in mind that all living organisms spring from a germ, and that in the preparation or vivification of this germ, male and female elements or agencies are employed. Here then are the conditions in which to observe the processes of creation, and these conditions are by no means past finding out.

A vivified organic cell contains potentially the complete organism, and by its study we learn not only the process in any given case, but *nature's plan*.

Every germ is therefore a *Center of Life*. In the vivification of the germ or cell, both male and female elements are employed. All activities whether in germ, or completed organism, consist in currents or movement to, and from the center, *i.e.*, outflowing and inflowing, or "circulation," and development is *always a living equation*, of which *evolution is one-half* and *involution the other half*, in strict accordance with the basic condition of duality. We hear a great deal nowadays of the "polarity of the human body" A magnet is a body whether of iron or "flesh" in which there is an orderly or systematic arrangement of the polarity of its atoms, molecules, or cells, and this polar arrangement may be according to a single system, or a series of systems, the lower subordinate to the higher, as in animals or man. Crystallization and organization depend on this systematic polar arrangement. Every cell of a living body (as of a magnetic bar of steel the atoms) is a polarized cell, for to say that it "lives" is to say that it is dual, *i.e.*, polarized. (2)

A hint in this direction is all that time and space will at present allow, yet the philosophical continuity of concepts must be apparent, and the more the idea is followed out and unfolded, the more apparent will the truth and universality of these concepts become.

All this is best comprised and comprehended in the language of symbolism. Let us imagine in space or in the Ether a "geometrical point," (say where two rays of light cross or intersect). This geometrical point is "position without dimension," *i. e.*, an "ideal point." Now let this "ideal" point become "real," that is let it "*appear*" as the light, the water, and the dry land "*appear*" as recorded in the sacred text.

Coincident with this appearance, at this point is the birth of matter and force from the bosom of ether or the womb of cosmos; movement of the atom is the result. It "whirls in space" viz., in the ether, it has an "atmosphere" of its own, is a world in itself, a minature world, and its new relations to the surrounding ether assigns it a "circumference," it is

polarized, evolves and involves, *i. e.*, has centre and circumference the moment it *realizes* existence. This is the "centre that is everywhere and the circumference that is nowhere." This centre of "cosmic dust" is at first "without form and void." The spirit of all things is at its center, as it floats in the ocean of ether; its primary or cosmic form is a globule, and its first evolution is an emanation from its centre, but as it is polarized this emanation occurs in opposite directions. If in one direction only, it would form a radius, but in opposite directions it forms an equator or diameter line. Matter, space, time and motion are thereby for it determined. It is definitely related to itself and its surroundings. These relations are, for diameter I ; for circumference $3,14159+$ or π . It will be seen that these are the facts and the true relations as we find them, and it matters not whether these emanations from the bosom of the ether occur singly, or in groups of myriads, or sufficient to form a planet, the principle is the same. If each atom so emanating associates with fellows this association must be by virtue of inherent similarity, attraction, or consonant rhythm. These basic principles may be conveniently studied in the process of crystallization, and are exemplified in every snowflake formed from a drop of water, as in the unfolding of every germ, leaf, or flower. We now see that there is a *world* of meaning in the Smaragdine Tablet to which we have previously referred; only those ridicule it who are too stupid to understand, or too conceited to "consider the lilies," and who will therefore never behold them arrayed in all their glory.

(To be continued.)

FOOTNOTES:

1. "The Ancient of Days" by J. Ralston Skinner, p. 39. ([return to text](#))
2. Sea Herbert Spencer's "Physical Synthesis" Part 5 — Psychology. ([return to text](#))

THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE: IV — *Pilgrim*

As said Solomon the wise, "there is no new thing under the sun." Our thoughts are but the thoughts of preceding ages. That this must be so will be apparent when one considers the Eternity behind. All possibilities of nature must have been realized and all thoughts thought in the — to us — dim past. And while the wheel of evolution still turns this must be so. At the apex of the orbit in each revolution, a few of the greatest souled ones have attained emancipation, a few have been able to lift the latch of the Golden Gate. But the remainder of the candidates in nature's school who have failed at the final test have again to begin the weary round, along with those evolving from lower conditions, with only so much light to guide them through the labyrinth of life as may have been enshrined in the traditions or religions evolved during the previous efflorescence of Humanity. How are they to regain the thoughts of the past and obtain some true interpretation of the mystery of life? All thoughts indeed are writ in the Akasa from which the Prophets and Poets of all ages have drawn their inspiration and in proportion to a man's striving to get below the mere surface of things, will be the degree in which he succeeds in making part of that inheritance of the ages his own possession.

The scholar too would seem to have a part to play. What worthier object can be his than that of rendering intelligible in the speech of his epoch, the thoughts and ideas enshrined in the dead languages of the great thinking races of the past? The scholars of to-day, those who have drunk deep at the wells of Sanskrit and Greek learning, have indeed a heavy responsibility upon their shoulders. Were it not a worthier aim of life to make common property the thoughts and ideas of the sublime ancients than to wrap themselves as so many do — though there are one or two

notable and glorious exceptions — in the self-gratulation of exclusive culture and stagnate in the memory of past achievement?

Those too who are animated by the Theosophic spirit, and who feel the supreme desirability of the path they are striving to tread, are bound to find words more or less appropriate to carry to the world a conviction of this supreme desirability, words which may convey some idea of the animating life within which is quite as much an embodiment of the scientific spirit of the seeker after truth, and the single-eyed determination of the man of the world to achieve his object, as of any devotional or religious feeling. Religion — in Christian countries at least — has been made far too much a thing of sentiment, it has its use no doubt in prompting to the initial effort, but when the path is chosen it would seem that singleheartedness of aim and firm determination were the dominant qualities required.

The thought that prompted the present paper was expressed in a footnote written by a friend in that mystical work of the middle ages "Theologia Germanica." The text expresses the thought that all that is, is well pleasing and good in God's eyes, while the footnote by citing one out of the many instances of earthly action so diametrically opposed to what the most optimistic could consider as pleasing to God, commands as the necessary corollary to the text its converse proposition.

Search as deeply as we may into Nature's life, and obtain though we may some intuition of the love which may be regarded as "creation's final law," that law in its working throughout all objective existence must still appear to us as unutterably hideous. The cosmos exists indeed for those who have extended enough vision, in other words the faith to see it, its picture may be seen in the depths of the soul, that very throne of God, but to us who

tread the pathways of the world, who are daily brought in contact with the social evils of this generation, the crime, the ignorance? the poverty, the suffering, how can such existence appear to us other than a chaos? Is it not a veritable Hell on Earth? But is there no "best Philosophy" such as Shelley speaks of

"Whose taste

"Makes this cold common Hell — our life — a doom

"As glorious as a fiery martyrdom?"

The reproach of being unpractical is often made against those who are deeply imbued with the philosophic spirit — they may not have the ready panacea for the cure of existing evils demanded by the philanthropist, whose partial remedy he is so apt to consider as such, and to apply with ill-considered action — but they who look deep down see the real remedy, though their words may fall as vain sounds on the ears of the world.

The forces too that have long been set in motion are not lightly to be diverted from the goal towards which they have been hastening, and that goal is for us beginning to loom but too clearly in view. That child born of man's deep seated sense of justice (perverted though it may be) out of the dam, dire poverty, the shrieking red-clad socialist stalks among us, and following the inevitable law of retribution, over the people who have fallen deepest in the slough of materialism, and have been most dominated by the lusts of the flesh, is beginning to tremble the moan of the coming storm, while in their most populous cities the cries rise loudest. It may be too late now entirely to ward off the storm, but surely its fury might be mitigated were we even now to read the lesson aright.

To a people whose upper classes are pandered to by nameless lusts, and whose lower classes breed like beasts of the field, without recognizing, as the beasts do, a non-breeding season, to

this adulterous and lascivious generation were it not a worthy aim to show by word and deed that *it is* possible to dissociate love from lust, and that the loftiest emotion of which Humanity is capable has no necessary connection with the sexual bond? But what advance can be made till society recognizes that instead of offering a premium on marriage, they rather are worthy of admiration who can guard inviolate the sacred seed, under the influence of an aim the worldling knows not of — the aim of transferring the life-force from the material into the spiritual plane, with whatever results may accrue from this transformation of energy, of transcendental powers, or sweeter far the realization of the Platonic dream of union with our other half, the finding that within ourselves lay the twin soul which has been the object of our life-long search, in other words that in the microcosm, man, as in the macrocosm, God, are contained both the male and the female elements of existence.

What a contrast to this age of materiality to read of that old time when to prevent the depopulation of the country, it was necessary to enjoin each true-hearted Brahman to marry and beget one child before devoting himself to the main object of existence which should be to-day as it was then, the practise of Yoga.

But besides helping to counteract the dominant evil of our time another reason can be given for the practise of celibacy, though this lies more on the interior plane, and is therefore more a subject of speculation. For it is a satisfaction to think that by refusing further to swell the already overteeming populations, the ranks of the unborn are lessened to a smaller degree, that a few more souls continue to enjoy the rosy dreams of Heaven.

But though the general acceptance of a less gross form of life would greatly tend towards the amelioration of human existence,

to expect it from this generation would seem like putting the effect before the cause, for what is there to impel towards any curbing of the passions while Ignorance holds almost undivided sway? All evils under which Humanity groans may indeed be ascribed to that baleful influence, and it is useless to lop off one of the hydra heads of the monster, while she is capable of replacing it by a still more hideous growth. Andromeda truly pictures Humanity to-day, but where is the redeemer Perseus to be looked for save under the shining garb of the occult wisdom? The worldly knowledge with its glittering train of physical sciences and mechanical inventions can never set Humanity free, it but weaves round its votaries still more deluding webs of darkness. But we may hope that Reason will once more "shed her beams of dawn" over the dim world, and that true faith will once more shine in the hearts of men, for when the knowledge has filtered in that this life is but one of an endless chain of similar existences, will not the futility of gratifying every whim of the senses, which must so often before have been gratified give place to the desire for freedom from such dominance, and to the yearning for some more lasting bliss? and when it is realized that our present thoughts and acts are the factors that determine our future lives and that the pain (or joy) of the present is the retribution of the past, will not a goad be fixed in the hearts of many to drive them on the right way? and finally, when it is dimly perceived that the soul in past existences has experienced all heights and depths of earthly things — has realized all the sweets of wealth, of honor, of power, of love — that the bitter has been very bitter indeed and that the sweetest of the sweet has failed to give permanent satisfaction, will there not spring up in the soul a deep distaste for this loathsome life, a firm intent to pierce the veil of Maya that hides from us the celestial region?

This piercing of the veil, or to adopt a simile which will carry us a

little further, this scaling of the mountain is conceived of in very different ways. To some it seems as the culmination of one gigantic effort, to others as the result of infinitely slow progress. It is now pictured as "the killing of the deadly serpent of self for which Supreme moment is needed a strength such as no hero of the battle field needs." Elsewhere it is described as the steadfast toil of the will "till efforts end in ease and thought has passed from thinking," as the gradual centering of all thought in the eternal thought till all earth-born desires and fears die out through sheer lack of the nourishment whereby they may be kept alive. The truth may lie in the union of these two apparently contradictory modes of thought, or it may be that as the different natures of men impel them to different lines of action, the pathways are really different though conducting to the same goal, or it may be suggested that the desperate effort referred to above, the supreme moment when the strength of the hero is needed, may be symbolised in the action of one of the mountain climbers, who has strayed from the true mountain side, into some rocky cul-de-sac, up some misleading pinnacle. A desperate leap will doubtless be required of him to reach the true breast of the mountain again. But he who has started on the ascent with a true guide will not mistake the rocky pinnacle for the snow-clad summit. His progress will be fast or slow as the strength and will within him shall decide. Therefore to the aspirant should it ever seem like the steady ascent of the mountain for which are demanded all his combined energies of courage, prudence and steadfastness. And as the summit is approached, all dread anticipation of what the future may bring as well as the fever of personal desire and earthly passion will be left behind like the mist of the valley. Hope and Fear alike will disappear in the purity of that serene air.

And the love which could no longer identify itself with any one

object of desire, or find any resting place on earth will have been gradually purged from all taint of animal passion, and will daily become more Godlike in its diffusion, until personal likes and dislikes melt away before its intensity of worship of the one supreme Perfection. All appearances of difference will then be blotted out — friends and enemies, kinsmen and aliens, yea, good and evil men — all will appear alike — for God only will be seen in all, and the bliss of Yoga will be attained.

The Path

LETTERS ON THE TRUE: I — *Jasper Niemand*

MY COMRADES

A renowned occultist said recently; "Do not write like the Peripatetics, but put your soul into it." The wisdom of this advice becomes at once apparent. We may not all attain those brave pinnacles in the distance, but the first hard steps lie close at hand, to be taken by every earnest man. He takes them more or less in the dark. Now our struggle is for Union; not merely to be in Union, but to be that Union itself. This idea should attend us from the outset, for ideas create men. So in considering the subject of Truth, and how to become It, I find myself confronted with my individual experience, and my conception of its value soon enlarges as I find it repeating itself in many another life. It would seem that I might thus come to you, a friend to friends, speaking plainly of such hidden essences as I may find in diurnal things. I do not offer a universal panacea. I point out that which is for me The Way. Yet I say also with Ulysses: "I am a part of all that I have met," and to those sharers of my larger nature I manifest that which I have found. You are very present with me, oh, my Comrades! Distance cannot shut you from me. Maya cannot hide you. As we breast the tide of this Dark Age, I seem to feel your hearts beating time with mine. I meet one, and he becomes identical with me; then perhaps another and still another, until merged in the pulsation of a single Hope, we are but so many throbs in the Great Heart of All. I salute you out there in the Unknown, and may we one day come together with the large homeric joy of fellow warriors! Now you know in what spirit I address you.

Would to God Truth were more believed in! I say this amid

frequent surprise. Yet it is a mimic Truth by which we live. This puppet virtue emasculates. It cozens our judgment, disowns our intuitions and divides our motives. We drift to and fro with the material scum of Being. When do we come face to face, speaking entire thoughts? We look each at the other's mask, and Truth is dumb. Shy as schoolboys we are before the tricky illusion of form. As friends commune best in the twilight, so we shrink back within the veiled recesses of the mind, and if we speak our conviction, it is in parable. Who has a true relation in life? Between the closest lovers there arises this impalpable wall of fictitious personality. We do not break through it. The heart pants for the True, but it cannot reveal its necessities to those whose thirst is slaked at shallower streams. If we dared be what we are with one another, we might get down to bed rock, and begin to understand somewhat of this great mine called Life, and the lay of its ore veins, and where a man may blast through to everlasting riches. You will say to me; "Shall I disclose the sacred core of my soul to be gapped at and appraised as the thing for which I have paid just so much blood and so many tears?" *Never!* I know well that even those who under ties of birth and law have a right to confidence, do not always know of its existence. You sit among them in the twilight, gazing towards the horizon, striving to catch the first divine harmonies of the on-coming night, and when they say to you, "Of what are you thinking?" you answer; — "I wondered if tomorrow will bring good harvest weather." For you have tried it and found no scale to measure, no bottom to the box. It is a common need that I specify. We are delivered up at the bar of custom, impressed under arbitrary standards, bidden accept the verdict of self impanelled citizens for the swift mandate of our own soul. She mocks at this usurped authority. We have too long allowed others to bind us in the names of the great Verities, and now we discover beneath those august mantles, plastic little gods of civic creation. It is a tale as old as the

world.

It lies within our power to change this in some degree at least. He who would have true relations, must himself be true. Let him distrust names, and sift facts. Give nothing the right to pass you unchallenged. The most trifling opinion must give the eternal countersign before I admit it within my lines. I receive no idea until I have tested it by all the laws known to me, whether natural or supra-natural. For if I give out some false thought to another, I poison his spring. I have a corsican feud with that lying word — "*Independence*." I would raze it from the memory of men. There is no such thing. The True repudiates it. Exact Science protests her ignorance of this fabled monster. Even on the physical plane, each man, himself a glowing sphere in action, throws off and inhales by every pore, particles of matter, of mind stuff, of cell stuff, of all that goes to the making of the mere flesh and blood man. Case him up in plaster of paris with but the necessary orifices for organic functions, and see how long he will live. Put him into solitary confinement and mark what becomes of his "independent" brain. We interchange bodies with one another and recruit them even from the dead. Reject me; put the Atlantic between us, and I will send a shaft to your heart in the shape of my thought. I have seen proud men chafe at a comrade's suggestions, and accept unconsciously the alms of a thousand stranger minds. We have a tremendous lien upon one another. All Humanity impinges upon every man, at every instant, on every plane. Where among the worlds do you find Independence? Is your constitution larger than that of Orion? Shall continuity be displaced, that you may stretch yourself? Accept the reign of Law: and instead of Independence write "*Interdependence*" on the lintel of the heart. I do not say this procedure is always painless. Truth is a goddess who demands a human sacrifice. For my part, give me facts, though they crush me. Something finer will spring up

from the remains.

Being true friends we shall find them. Here in this perplexed world if hearts could get together, and together — untinged by sense — go out through one another's real experience, much might be found out. Such friends love truly because each in the other sees the true self reflected. They do not hold silence but reveal hidden thoughts, and by mutual comparison, which is greater and surer, eliminate error, realize the True in all things and "keep each other awake in Him." They hold intercourse also, at times which they do not recollect, as we do with all higher souls who love us, and who certainly exist, though not now known to our mortal eye and memory, and who drink perhaps often with us the little ambrosia that we are able to reach. For this infrequent boon doubtless all people languish, knowing not what it is that they desire, and thus many a soul goes through life seeking it for years, and often, too often, concludes that it is a search for Utopia, because the rough experience of long seasons proves apparently that "friends such as we desire are dreams and fables." (1) It need not be so, if you will not have it so. Be wholly true and you must find within your circle at least one heart equal to yours, with whom you can establish this priceless interchange. Seek one another; break up the ice and get out into free air. The man of the world and the deifier of the practical, will alike bear witness that in such union is strength indeed, no matter to what issue. It can be maintained where lives have a mutual lodestar. Yet be on your guard against the intellectual tramp, who is ever ready to refresh himself in your inner domain and gape at your wonders. The curious and the idle have no right of way through my mind.

The awakening soul demands a plain and vital relation. She cries to all her environments: "Hereafter I am bound by no arrogant claims. Does your word reverberate in me? I follow! Does your

thought attract mine? Take it! I will give you all that is yours in me; I will not give you one jot more. Hope not to mould me within given limits. I shape myself only to the True. I will no longer be merely virtuous. I am Virtue!" Such is the language of the soul, to whom her own Being is sufficient fact, who offers no explanations, no excuses, but faces the interlocutor boldly, and answers: "Thus have I done. Am I or am I not free?" When the eternal comparison is established, however, she bears herself humbly before it, so long as she has not herself become that Eternal in very fact. She knows that there is but one place in the universe whereon a man may make a square stand, and he does so with the Law to back him. That place is his Duty. The equation of the Past has brought him there. All these paltry concerns, this material pressure are outcomes of the energies of that Astral Medium which is at once his flux and his teacher. He and others about him are making these things themselves. He must learn why and how; for this lesson there is no better place than that wherein his soul first rouses from her stupor.

I spoke of Virtue. What is that? Emerson once told us: "Virtue is the adherence in action to the nature of things." That commanding Nature, which is the True, stands above the adherent virtue. Growth and decay advance through retrogression, the fermenting and cathartic processes, these are Nature's. She gives, not opiates, but astringents. To sin, which is to go off at a tangent from the True; to suffer, which is discordant vibration; to return when a latent attraction, developed through pain, sets out towards the sphere of harmonious action; all this is natural. To lose a thousand vintages through the evolution of finer forces, to make here a rose and there a desert, these, with many transmuting and conserving powers, Nature offers as analogies to the student of the True and forbids him to condemn any of them. Sometimes convention establishes this natural

order, simply because it is too massive to be overlooked, as when well-bred people select only topics of general interest to all. Then the crowd follow, not because it is true, but because it is convention. This cold acceptance freezes up the vitality of the germ. Let a man agree with his own soul that he will not lie because he galvanizes non-being into Being; that he will not steal because he goes behind the law which gives him all that is his own and will demand restitution at compound interest for the very word of which he may have deprived another. Let him not covet aught because his true manhood depends on his balance of power, his control of desire. Let him demand of himself the *Why*, of every impulse. Let him seek out the basic reason of his thoughts and actions, and assuring himself of his hidden motive, kill or exalt that as it may deserve. This is vital. What I say here of man applies once and for all to woman also. I am considering that fontal essence in which is no sex, no condition, no division — the True. If the whole tendency be to that, the greatest secrets in occultism can be known. Loyalty must be a sum, not a fraction. Take Truth alone for your headlight, thereby the world may see your course, and children and jejune idlers be warned from its track. I do not say you should rise up and cast off the outer life all at once. That is your protection; you will need it for some time to come. But I say that you should look sleeplessly for the true kernel of these external things. Our advance must even be made with discrimination, often in befriending silence. Remember that under the present social constitution, as long as Theosophy seems to unfit men for their private capacities and obligations, so long will the world condemn it as lacking in moral and in common sense. Its exponents may not deal violently with established relations. You are to work out, not to jump out. If we love the True, we shall fulfil every personal claim, every formal pledge incurred by our position in life, at no matter what cost, rather than allow a false deduction to be drawn which shall implicate

the good faith of our moral philosophy. Those to whom we are due alone can free us. An Adept wrote recently: "To find masters, you must be unclaimed by man or woman." Unfulfilled duties are ropes which drag us back. Men are eager to serve this cause; let them bear the result of their actions for its honor until the high law sets them free. Only an overwhelming certainty of a divine mission, of a certified call to Adeptship and the service of Humanity at large frees us from these present considerations by removing us to a higher plane, wherein we stand justified. While I live among men I wear the garment appointed to their assembly. Hours befall when I am called to quit this communion for that of the gods! Then I only know the laws of the soul and emerge from these platitudes of this lower world.

We cannot too deeply inhale the knowledge that Truth is not a surface growth. How often I have seen the clue overlooked by seekers; how often seen the messenger refused! Perhaps the tenor of his speech was too foreign, or too unassuming; or time was lost in questioning his methods, or the student flung away in fancied independence, forgetting that men do not own their own minds, but are debtors to the great currents of Thought. These flow through us like a river; the individual mind is but one of a million ripples, yet the force gathers momentum from ripple to ripple and all are the river. Only a large nature can receive a gift with grace and integrity; it has no fear of belittling itself by acceptance, for it knows that in the True we only receive in due proportion to our gifts, and that it must speedily bestow this bounty elsewhere. You do not hesitate to accept the services of a bank clerk because he is paid for them. Do you suppose that equity is confined to men, and that the Eternal gives us no retainer? Dismiss this commercial weighing and counting; give and take as the winds do! If an archangel stood within a body whose exterior did not announce that divine prompter, men of average standing would

reject him while searching for him. "I faint with the desire to find those who will unselfishly accept me and work for the rest. I give myself in all things for your benefit and would be glad if by my death or by my loss you could reach enlightenment. I would transfer, could I do so, all my experience to your soul and give it away to you. For what? For nothing at all save your acceptance. You know very well we can do no more than offer these goods. We set up the wooden image before the eyes of men and not one taking the sword cuts it in two, to find the jewels within. Then we sadly go on again." (2) That is the language of spiritual power and self confidence ignores it daily. If Jesus and Buddha walked the earth to-day without followers or protestations, how many men who clamor for the mysteries would recognize Them by an innate perception of Their qualities? I marvel that others suppose the Great Spirits of all ages to have passed onward to realms of bliss, without a second thought for the belated brotherhood behind. By the inexorable laws of Their perfected natures, some must have returned, in renunciation and bondage, to live and humbly teach and cheer reluctant men.

Do not take any man at his surface valuation or yours, but look to the spirit within his words. This discernment of spirits is a great power; it can be cultivated. Close your eyes, summon up the man before your thought and try to *feel his total effect* as it impresses itself on your passive mind. Then regard him impersonally as a problem solved, not forgetting that a foolish man may at times become the mouthpiece of unseen powers. Our perception is often tested thus; be vigilant, lest unawares you reject the fruit of life. But you wish to pluck it for yourself without the aid of any man? Friend! Such fruit never grew. *The One Itself can only realize through the many.* Are you higher than that?

Others again fall into the besetting error of students who are tempted at the outset to elaborate a system. The wish to set our

intellectual acquisitions in order is natural enough, but as on our present plane we can only attain to partial conceptions, we may harden them into a finality, become insensibly attached to them as being our very own, and reject all that does not accord with them. Must the universal march up and toe my chalk line? Eschew mental habit; it is a great encruster. Submit the outer and inner man to the solvent of will. Heed the indications of Nature. Observe the bird as it folds its wings and drops down the air to the predetermined spot. Consider the lightning, when from the lurid sheeted flow it forges a bolt and darts it to the mark. Every bullet that scores must first be liquid lead. Fix your motive, then make your thought fluidic and free. We are much conjured in the name of consistency. In heaven's name then, let us be consistent, but to the Truth itself, through all its varied manifestations. Each man need care only for what he is this moment, and pass on easily with life to the next. There are times when we rise into an instant perception of Truth through the total nature of the soul. Then I feel myself great, by reason of this power, yet infinitely small, in that I do not hourly contain it. The laws governing this tidal wave form part of my inner consciousness, just as many of my forces are out yonder in the infinite correlations of cosmic energy. A full perception of them enables a man to hold up hand and lure, and the hawks swoop down. When a comrade displays this touchstone of the soul we know one another without any words. Many men of positive nature think that they also have fallen heir to this power because they test and are confident. They stand fast in reality by the lower knowledge of the delusive self, and can no more apprehend this internal aurora which throbs and gleams through the expanded man than a child discriminates between Northern Lights and the glare of distant conflagrations. The reason for this, as for all mistakes, inheres deeply in the elemental nature of man, and suggestions can be given whereby he may first recognize and then if he be a strong man — conquer

it. To this end let us unite our efforts, for you know it is through sharing this faulty nature that I have been led to an earnest contemplation of possible remedies.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Emerson. ([return to text](#))
2. Letter from a friend. ([return to text](#))

The Path

SUGGESTIONS AS TO PRIMARY CONCEPTS: III — *J. D. Buck*

(*Concluded*)

As a man thinketh, so he is. — *Christian Scripture.*

All that we are, is the result of what we have thought. —
Buddhist Scripture.

Man contains within himself the fountains of wisdom, and the keys of knowledge. He who looks outside of himself for wisdom will search in vain. The unfoldment of *understanding*, this is true wisdom. Man is ignorant, not because wisdom inhabits a deep well, but because man's understanding is so shallow. The grandest truths of nature lie open all around us; the veil of Isis is but another name for the blindness of man. "As above, so below, as on earth, so in heaven." The same law which rounds a drop of water and crystallizes a snow-flake, forms a planet and builds a mountain. There is law, and rhythm, and melody, and exact proportion, in all created things. Exact geometry determines the form of all things. Every atom of matter in the universe is set to music. The parts of every complex body, whether of man or mountain are related to the whole by exact ratios, definite multiples. The proportion of every element in a compound is definitely fixed. So are the conditions for the development of every seed or germ, from monad to man. If you alter these conditions, nature gives no response, she is *silent*, and she *waits*. What to her are "time and space"? Hers is the eternal! the everlasting! the boundless! She never argues, never wrangles, never complains. The Caballa Denudata has been at last translated into English. Yet where are the ancient secrets "*laid bare*." We shall search for them in vain. He who knew these secrets in the olden time sometimes *hid* them in books, but

revealed them there, *never!* There are three that bear witness, the instructive tongue, the listening ear, and the faithful breast. The instructive tongue could only babble to the gaping crowd, hence it is silent. Ears have they but they hear not, was said of them of old time. In the faithful breast the demons of pride, lust, and mammon have long ceased to bear witness. Silence reigns in heaven. There was never one who *led the life*, who did not at last come to *know the doctrine*.

We have already shown that the nature of the phenomenal universe and the bodily senses are the same. Each exists by virtue of change, motion, unrest, transition, that is their *essence*.



Therefore *they are, because they are not!* You can neither detain nor repeat them. Even our thoughts are of the same nature, you cannot detain, or control them. They come and go, and come again, yet never twice the same, something is added, something wanting. Sum up our sensations as pleasure and pain, the two poles of feeling, each necessary to the other, each the exact complement of the other. How vainly do we strive to retain the pleasure and get rid of the pain. He who never suffers, never enjoys; he who is incapable of suffering is incapable of enjoyment. He who has suffered shall surely enjoy, measure for measure, for such is the law of life.


The first great division under the conception of the duality of all things is, on the one side, the phenomenal, the outer, visible changing universe; on the other the noumenal, the opposite; and the reason why this side of being is so little known, and so seldom even recognized, is that we live so largely in the things of sense and time, and this fact will presently make apparent the reason why we know nothing of any previous incarnation. If we recognize the duality of existence and discover that life is an equation, death becomes the great cancellation of the excess on the side of time. We have, already shown that individual self-


consciousness is the centre in man. The sphere of consciousness is the monad that incarnates, the nucleolus of the cell. This conscious monad stands in the center between the phenomenal and the noumenal. This is the Life of which the poet speaks,


"Between two worlds life hovers like a star,
"From morn till eve on the horizon's verge."

The language of symbolism is very expressive in this direction, and may embody in a picture the size of a halfpenny the whole science of man. Cross the palm of the hand with two pins, and he who knows how to read and unfold will give you the whole of



Caballa,  Connect the upper and the lower points thus  and you have a double triangle, or a double mountain, literally, Mt. Sinai, (1) or Mountain of Light. Next take the cell from which

man's organism springs.  with its cell wall, cell contents, nucleus (and contents), nucleolus (and contents), and let the apices of the triangles meet at the border of the nucleolus, thus,

 Now let the lower triangle represent the three lower principles of man, those related to the phenomenal world, and the upper triangle represent the three principles related to, or drawn from the noumenal world, and let us suppose the above diagram to represent the conditions at birth, at the dawn of consciousness. We have already shown that the development of all germs is a two-fold process, from "vivification" to "birth," and from birth to death, viz: the shape and physical life *evolves*, while the essential or typical form and spiritual life *involves*, thus maintaining the equation or equilibrium. In the above diagram the nucleolus represents the central sphere. Let the dawning of consciousness be represented by the interlacing of the triangles,

thus,  The lower triangle still represents the phenomenal world, the things of time and sense, the upper triangle the

noumenal; and as by evolution the lower triangle advances upward, so by involution the upper triangle advances downward, while the central space, formed by coalescence of the two, represents consciousness.

Now suppose this coalescence, approximation or interlacing continues, thus,  till we have at last a complete geometrical figure,  our familiar double triangle, or six-pointed star. This would involve an exact equation, evolution equal to involution, with progressive expansion of the central area of consciousness.

Our geometry fortifies our proposition still further, for if we fold each of the points of the triangles toward the center we shall form a complete hexagon, the six sides and six angles thereof representing the angles and sides of the two original triangles, thus making our symbolism complete. *The realm of consciousness has absorbed both the phenomenal, and the noumenal*, and the perfect or Divine Man stands revealed, and thus, and thus only, can man be made in the image of God. A spark of the Infinite expanding in self-consciousness till *at one* with the *All*, "as above, so below, to accomplish the purpose of *one thing*" viz.: the Anthropomorphic God, the Godlike man. Now suppose we represent the lower triangular space as dark, and the upper as light, the coalescence would then be mixed in the central area.

How then can this central space, consciousness, be illuminated? By conscience, the "voice of God" within the soul, and the result of this illumination is *righteousness*. But suppose this process of illumination — grand expansion — goes on naturally until the seventh year in the life of the child, and that from that time worldliness sets in, and the "dark world" gains the ascendancy and holds it throughout life. Consciousness *i. e.*, experience, pertains almost wholly to the lower triangle, the spiritual life

(noumenal) is lost sight of, ignored, and at last ridiculed and denied. "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die." Suppose that two substances naturally unite in equal proportions to form a chemical compound, and that for one pound of the one substance we place in the crucible one hundred of the other, what is the result? If there be *conditions for combining at all*, we shall find in the crucible when emptied, exactly *two pounds* of the compound, and the balance "REFUSE." How many such incarnations would it take to make man master of two worlds, twice born, a son of light. Is it any wonder we have lost our birthright, and forgotten our last incarnation? How many of the men and women of the world have any consciousness of spiritual existence? How many declare with pride that they are materialists, *i e.*, outcasts disinherited by their own act? How many will be born into the next world like the weak sickly wailing waifs that are born into this, who after one feeble gasp sink back into the great unknown from whence they came. How many have discerned the Gates of Gold?" He that would lose his life for *My* sake, shall surely find it."

These are but primary concepts, true or false according to him who reads. It is not enough to suppress the appetites and passions, we must "press forward to the mark of our high calling." We are not to despise or to destroy, but to transmute, and to aspire. If we but listen in silence, "sink down into the abyss" there is one who is ever ready to exalt us. Our ears have been so long accustomed to the clash and clangor of time, that we hear not the voice of the silence, or if we hear we are afraid. According to the desires of the heart, and the *fergency* thereof shall be the fruition. Strong passions, strong appetites, indicate strength of life, and if the *desire* but once seize hold of righteousness *to possess it*, and if we *persist* and are *determined*, and refuse to let it go, coy and shy as a bride at first, it will at length come like a heavenly guest to rest in our bosom.

FOOTNOTE:

1. See J. Ralston Skinner's Notes on Caballa. ([return to text](#))

The Path

NOTES ON THE ASTRAL LIGHT: I — *B. N. Acle*

To the student of occultism few more absorbing subjects present themselves than that of the Astral Light; and when one considers its strange sights and sounds, the mysterious creatures by whom it is inhabited, the enormous and incalculable influence it exerts on our lives and destinies, it is not surprising that information should eagerly be sought from the explorers of so fascinating a region. One of the most indefatigable of these inquirers was the late Abbe Constant — better known, perhaps, under the non de plume of "Eliphas Levi." As his works, however, are not translated, there are many would-be readers to whom they are not accessible; and it is in the belief that, to such, a brief compendium of his more important remarks would be not unwelcome, the following Notes made by a theosophist in the course of his own studies are offered.

If they should seem lacking in symmetry, or even entire continuity, it must be borne in mind that they are only what they profess to be — "Notes"; or, more correctly speaking, verbatim extracts from the various volumes in which this subject is treated of, often in connection with other, though kindred topics; they may fairly claim to be faithful and accurate translations — as any one may verify — but they make no pretense to literary finish; they are simply the words of the author, without alteration or comment; for this reason quotation marks are unnecessary, all that follows this paragraph being translation pure and simple.

The primordial light vehicle of all ideas, is the Mother of all forms, and transmits them from emanation to emanation, diminished or altered only by the density of the surroundings; the forms of objects, being modifications of this light, remain in the

light where they are reflected back; thus the Astral Light, or the terrestrial fluid termed the Grand Magical Agent, is saturated with images or reflections of all kinds, which the soul can evoke and submit to what the Kabbalists call its "lucidity."

These images are always before us, and are only temporarily obscured by the more obtrusive impressions of reality during our waking hours, or by the pre-occupation of our thoughts, which render our imagination inattentive to the shifting panorama of the Astral Light; when we are asleep, they present themselves to us of their own accord and thus dreams are produced; dreams which are vague and incoherent, unless some dominant wish remains active during our sleep and gives, although unknown to us, a direction to the dream, which thus becomes a vision.

The Astral Light acts directly upon the nerves, which are its conductors in the physical economy, and which convey it to the brain; thus a somnambulist can see by the nerves, without needing material light; the astral fluid containing latent light, just as science recognizes latent heat.

The empire of the Will over the Astral Light, which is the physical soul of the four elements, is symbolized in Magic by the Pentagram; by means of this we can compel spirits to appear in visions, either when awake or asleep, by bringing before our lucidity their reflection which exists in the Astral Light, if they have lived, or the reflection of their spiritual nature, if they have never lived; this explains all visions, and demonstrates, especially, why those who see the dead see them always either as they were when alive, or as they are while yet in the grave, and never as they are in that state of existence which escapes the perception of our present organization.

When the Magician has attained perfect lucidity, he can direct at will the magnetic vibrations in the whole mass of the Astral Light;

by means of these vibrations he can influence the nervous systems of persons, quicken or retard the currents of life, soothe or trouble, cure or make ill — in a word, kill or raise from the dead. The lucid will is able to act upon the mass of the Astral Light, and, in concert with other wills which it thus absorbs and utilizes, compels immense and irresistible currents. It should also be noted that the Astral Light can render itself denser or rarer, according as the currents accumulate or scatter it, at given centres; when it lacks sufficient energy to nourish life, there result diseases which terminate with fatal suddenness, and are the despair of physicians.

The Astral Light is the omnipresent tempter, symbolized by the serpent of Genesis; this subtle agent, ever active, ever abounding in power, flowing with seductive dreams and pleasing images; this force blind in itself, and swayed by the wills of others either for good or evil; this circulating medium, ever vivified with unquenchable life, that causes vertigo to the rash spectator; this material spirit, this fiery body, this impalpable and all-pervading ether, this enormous seduction of Nature — how shall we define its entirety, how qualify its actions? Indifferent, so to speak, in its nature, it lends itself alike to good or evil — it diffuses light and brings darkness; it is a serpent, but also an aureole; it is fire, but it may either be that which belongs to the torments of Hell, or that which carries up the incense offered to Heaven.

To be its master, we must, like the woman of the Bible, trample its head under our feet.

To vanquish the serpent, that is to dominate the circle of the Astral Light, we must be able to place ourselves outside of its currents; in other words, to insulate ourselves. This torrent of universal life is also pictured in religious dogmas as the expiatory fire of Hell. It is the instrument of Initiation, the monster to be

subdued, the enemy to be vanquished; it produces the larvae and phantoms that respond to the evocations and conjurations of Black Magic; in it are preserved those forms whose fortuitous and fantastic assemblage people our nightmares with such abominable monsters. To allow ourselves to be swept away by this raging flood is to fall into abysses of madness more frightful than death, to drive away the darkness of this chaos and compel it to give perfect forms to our ideas, is to create, to have triumphed over Hell. The Astral Light directs the instincts of animals, and combats the intelligences of man, which it tends to pervert by the splendour of its reflections and the falsity of its images; this fatal and unavoidable tendency guides and renders still more injurious, the Elementals and Elementaries; whose restless desires seek sympathy in our weakness, and tempt us not so much in order to cause our destruction, as for their own benefit. The Book of Conscience, which according to the Christian dogmas is to be made manifest at the Last Judgment, is nothing more or less than the Astral Light, in which are preserved the impressions of all our words, that is to say of all our deeds and of all forms.

Those who renounce the empire of reason, and allow their will to wander after the reflections of the Astral Light are subject to alternations of madness and melancholy, which lead them to imagine these wonders to be the result of possessions of a demon; and there is no doubt that by means of these reflections evil spirits are able to influence impure souls and make them their docile instruments, and cause them to torment the organisms in which they dwell. It is, therefore, extremely dangerous to trifle with the mysteries of Magic, and above all supremely rash to practice its rites from curiosity, and by such experiments to tempt the higher powers; and the inquisitive who, not being Adepts, meddle with evocations or occult magnetism, are like children playing on a barrel of gunpowder — sooner or later they will be

the victims of a terrible explosion. To insulate ourselves from the Astral Light, it does not suffice merely to envelope ourselves in a mantle of wool, as did Apollonius of Tyana; above and beyond all, the heart and spirit must be absolutely calm, freed from the dominion of the passions, and assured of perseverance in action by an inflexible will; and these acts of will must be ceaselessly repeated, for only by persistence in such acts does the will become strong. There are certain intoxicating substances which, by heightening the nervous susceptibility, augment the power of the representations of the Astral Light and consequently increase its seductions; by means of these, also, when used in a contrary direction, spirits can be terrified or subdued.

In order to command the Astral Light, it is necessary to understand its double vibration, and the balance of forces known as magic equilibrium.

This equilibrium, regarded in its primal cause, is the will of God: in man, it is liberty; in matter, it is mathematical equilibrium. Equilibrium produces stability and duration. Liberty brings forth the immortality of man, and the will of God formulates the laws of eternal right. Equilibrium in ideas is wisdom; in forces it is power; equilibrium is rigorous, if the law is kept, it exists; if it be violated, though ever so little, it does not exist. It is for this reason that nothing is useless, or wasted, every word, every motion, is for or against equilibrium, for or against Truth; for equilibrium represents Truth, which is composed of contraries which are reconciled, or at least equilibrated. Almighty power is the most absolute Liberty; but absolute Liberty cannot exist without perfect equilibrium; magic equilibrium is therefore one of the first conditions of success in the operations of science; and we must seek it even in occult chemistry by learning to combine contraries without neutralizing them. By magic equilibrium is explained the great and ancient mystery of the existence and

relative necessity of Evil; this relative necessity, in Black Magic, furnishes a measure of the power of demons, or evil spirits, to whom the virtues practised on earth impart more fury, and apparently more power.

(To be continued.)

The Path

THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE: V — *Pilgrim*

THE TWO PATHWAYS.

In man's attempt to pierce the dark mists of ignorance that surround him, in his search after the perfect life, two ideas alternately dominate his horizon — two pathways seem alternately to invite his footsteps. These may roughly be designated as the Scientific and the Religious.

When full consideration is given to the stupendousness of the undertaking, to the almost inconceivable heights at which we aim; when it is realized that we aspire to reach the ranks of the Dhyān Chohans, the rulers of our Planetary System; to become, in fact, part of that diffused Divine consciousness in which is upheld the life of the World, does it not seem reasonable to conclude that all knowledge and all power must have been realized and beneficently practised by such an one in his upward course — that the conquering of the desires of the outer senses must have been accompanied by the development of the inner senses, through whose agency the whole elemental kingdom must have been cognised and conquered, and the hearts and minds of men read as in an open book?

But when the disciple realizes that all earthly power, honor, dominion, has long been put aside by him as valueless — that the one word which has dominated his being is love, and that the failure to realize any perfect union on earth has created and intensified the desire to plunge and to be lost in the Nirvanic ocean of Divinity, will not the attainment of powers and the development of inner senses appear to him as mere circumlocution and surplusage? Why not make for his goal at once? The bondage of material life being but the impulse to act,

liberation consists in destroying this impulse, not by suppression, but by the knowledge that the ego is independent of it. This knowledge is attained through faith, but the faith that leads up to it is liable to die if not fed by obedience to the will of God — "If thou wouldst enter the life, keep the commandments" — the commandments set in the various Scriptures of Humanity — then in long-suffering patience work out the term of imprisonment in flesh.

"Ruling the flesh

"By mind, governing mind with ordered Will;

"Subduing Will by knowledge, making this

"Serve the firm Spirit, and the Spirit cling

"As Soul to the eternal changeless Soul,"

till the "dark" and "passionate" qualities of Nature have melted away, and the serenity of "Satwa" alone remains. And the soul, which has centred itself more and more on the Supreme Soul, will find its earthly ties gradually dissolve, until the last one disappears, and it naturally gravitates to its eternal home.

This is a lovely picture, and there are many to whom such a pathway — the pathway of Religion — must have inconceivable attractions; but let us pause and consider well whether it is one which we in this Kali Yuga are yet fitted to follow to the exclusion of all others,

If we were such complete masters of the physical nature as to be absolutely fearless under any conceivable circumstances, and if our hearts were filled with such an all-embracing love for Humanity that at no moment would we hesitate to lay down our lives for it, we might, perhaps, consider ourselves worthy of passing through the final gateway of contemplative devotion. Doubtless there are few men, worthy of the name, who have not risen, in moments of exaltation, to the thought that even the

physical well-being — let alone the eternal salvation! — of suffering Humanity would be cheaply purchased by his death. It needs not to turn for an example to the Cross of Calvary, though that is regarded by Christians who fail to realize the inner meaning of their own faith as something uniquely transcendental in its self-sacrifice. Heroism is not so far to seek, and History can point to many a martyr who has braved as painful and ignominious a death without the stupendous motive for the sacrifice, such as might well goad any high-souled man to make it. But it is another thing to live constantly in the devoted frame of mind referred to, from merely rising to it in moments of exaltation.

Doubtless, also, there are men who, by the judicious use of right emotion, can, at times, so nerve themselves that fear shall seem an unknown word; but who is able to live in constant disregard of consequences, even on the physical plane with which we are tolerably well acquainted? So long as the horrors of the unknown psychic plane transcend anything we can conceive of on the physical, or while the realms of darkness contain one thought of terror for our imaginations, how can we consider ourselves worthy of the final crown of being? For is it not Perfection that we aim at? And where a trace of fear is present, or where love in its plenitude is absent, how can we expect to be within measurable distance of our goal? Four lines from one of Matthew Arnold's poems, many of which seem to breathe a subtle, though possibly unintentional aroma of occult thought, may here partially help to express the idea intended:

"And he who flagged not in the earthly strife
"From strength to strength advancing — only he,
"His soul well knit, and all his battles won,
"Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life."

Though it must be remembered that fear is an attribute of the physical only, there is an interblending of the elements of our nature, and it stands to reason that the unknown sights and sounds of the plane just beyond that of which the physical is cognisant are capable of striking a far deeper terror, as well as of fascinating with a more subtle power.

And is it not logical to suppose that, as the disciple has gradually realized the unsatisfying nature of all earthly things — has learned to put aside its temptations, and to rise occasionally to a standpoint where its fears cannot assail him, so he must start on his journey of discovery in the unknown psychic world — armed always with the firm will and the lofty aspirations towards the Spirit — till he has learned also that its attractions cannot detain him, and that he has the power within him to dominate its terrors?

Until, therefore, we can stand as master in our house of life, and until the "Enthusiasm of Humanity" has possessed our Being, we must not imagine that we can discard the Scientific pathway before we have really begun to tread it. Indeed, the desire to tread the Religious path alone may, in some cases, have a partially selfish origin not altogether unallied to the slothful quality of "Tamas."

When it is realized, too, that work for Humanity "all up the line" is the prevailing rule, that the Divine and Semi-divine beings whom we know under the name of Mahatmas and Adepts are unremitting in their arduous work for the race, it will become apparent that the breaking down of the walls of our personality, and the merging of our individual being in the universal Divine Being, is a very far-off goal, which not all of them even have yet reached.

The attitude of mind of all students of Occultism towards the

great mass of Humanity, must, as stated in Zanoni, be one either of pity or of scorn — as a fact, it seems to fluctuate between these two. The feeling of scorn, indeed, easily rises in the breast when contemplating the petty aims and prejudiced views of even the noblest and worthiest specimens of the race we have known; and when to a naturally proud disposition is added the conviction that the objects of desire striven for by the mass of men are below contempt, the feeling of scorn often seems to carry all before it; and when it is felt that through pain and suffering heights of thought have been scaled, and that contemporaries, and even those who were once looked up to as teachers, have been left below, it often seems as if the only refuge from the lonesome isolation were to be found in a scornful pride. But surely, pity is the truer feeling, and it must be with relief that the disciple turns to the softer memories of past years, when the mere glance of a passer in the street carried home a tale of untold endurance and uncomplaining suffering, or when a modulation of voice opened the flood-gates of emotion, and the deep pathos of the fate of this suffering Humanity seemed to bind all together in community of being. It is in such moments as these, when it is realized that the supremest bliss would be obtained by the utter abandonment of "self" for the Great Cause, that the two pathways really merge in one, and it is felt that the "great renunciation" must be the final outcome alike of the love of God and of the service of Man.

It would seem, then, that our efforts to identify ourselves with the great whole must not be confined to yearnings after the ineffable Perfection, but must also take the form of work, on whatever plane it may be, for a more or less recognisedly concrete Humanity. It is very difficult to know what special form this work should take. While fully accepting the ideas expressed in Number II of this series, as to the futility of attempting to exert paramount influence on the thoughts of others, Ignorance must yet be

recognised as the prime curse of mankind; the attempts at diffusion of the true philosophic thought must, therefore, ever stand in the first place; and doubtless, along with the increased effort to enlighten Humanity, there will arise in the heart of the worker a greater love for and identification with Humanity which must lead to a more or less partial breaking down of the partition walls of his individuality.

If we turn from the evolution of the individual to the evolution of the race, as a whole, the analogous thoughts which occur are, that while the veil of obscurity must ever hide the future, and while it must remain impossible for us to know whether our special efforts in this or in that direction are destined to be successful, it may broadly be stated that — at least in this Western civilization of ours — individualism seems to have reached its zenith, and that the problems for the race to work out in the future will probably lie in the altruistic effort to supplant individualism by schemes which will more or less recognise the underlying Brotherhood of Humanity. The societies of to-day that call themselves Socialistic put forward plans that may be utterly inchoate and unworkable — and some of their members certainly appear to hold opinions as to the rights of revolution and violence which are alike hateful and fearsome to all true lovers of order — but those who think their work lies in this direction will doubtless feel impelled to try and discover the truth that underlies all these manifestations, with the view of guiding, if possible, the forces towards a peaceful issue.

The development of the inner senses is also one of the many pathways that must be pursued for the attainment of the real knowledge and power whereby we may potently help this suffering humanity, and give our aid to the few strong hands who hold back the powers of darkness "from obtaining complete victory." When by the unfoldment of the inner perceptions, we

have reached the platform whence earthly life is seen as from a height, the physical nature will have become a mighty tool in our hands to be used in the service of man. What vistas of work for the race will then unfold to our view! Of those who can grasp this idea by strong imaginative power, some will, no doubt, feel urged to force the development, though such forcing must doubtless be attended with danger. That it can be forced is a fact known to many students of occultism, and he who is in earnest will doubtless find a more or less competent instructor. To step consciously into situations where previous experience will be unavailing and where dangers are known to exist certainly requires courage, but how is greater strength to be gained or courage to be acquired save by undertaking the task and facing the danger? Nothing should be done rashly, and every step should be taken with due caution, but the path will have to be trod some day, and if only a little courage and a little strength are already possessed, this would seem to be a means of increasing our store of them. A sudden stoppage of the heart by an access of sheer terror, or a death in life dragged on to the grave through the delirium of madness, are awful possibilities to contemplate, but even were the investigator by some rash attempt to make utter wreck of himself in conflict with one of the elemental forces of nature, it should always be remembered that it would only be of his present earth-life that the wreck would be made, and that when his time came to appear again on the earthly scene, he would doubtless come back endowed with greater powers than if he had not made the attempt at all.

The separation throughout this paper of the two pathways, the Scientific and the Religious, has been made, it must be remembered, for purposes of contrast. Such division is purely arbitrary. Man's nature is indeed complex, but it is a unity in complexity; similarly, the path, though multiform, is one. But it is

more especially in carrying out such investigations or developments as those just dwelt on that the supreme necessity of the qualities known as the devotional or religious is apparent. Indeed, it may safely be asserted that the searcher who starts with a mere scientific interest, and in his own strength only, runs the greatest possible danger, while he is certain of success whose animating motive is the all-embracing love of Humanity, or the still intenser worship of the Supreme Perfection. If the old self regains its dominance, the disciple may well tremble, for in such moments the "Dweller of the Threshold" has a secret ally in the man's inner stronghold; but while the love and the faith continue to be his guiding impulses failure is impossible, for when "Self" is cast aside, what is there to fear for? and when God dwells in the heart, then is strength made perfect.

The Path

LETTERS ON THE TRUE: II — *Jasper Niemand*

MY COMRADES: —

The elemental nature of man has long engaged my thoughts, for so soon as I look within myself I am confronted with a mystery. Others admit the same experience. There is in me a morass, or a mountain, or a cold water dash which appalls me, it seems so icy and dead. In it none of my friends do walk; all is frozen and silent. Yet I seem to like the place, for there I can stand alone, alone, alone. When a boy I had often to cross that cold tract, and then I did not want to meet any boys. I wished to go alone, not with despair, but with a grim and terrible pleasure. I could weep and enjoy with another, and drink in their words and their souls, and the next week that cold arctic death came between us. It does so still. What think you, comrades, is that? But the stars still shine overhead, and on the margin flit the shapes of my loved, and I know that I shall either go back to them or meet them on the further side. It is not grim nor ghastly at all but is certainly unseen by the crowd. This mystery rose before me often and surprised me. It knew so much that it wanted to tell me. Soon I found that all my energies were but the play of correlated powers upon the margin of that strange spot. Where did all my life force come from, if not from that? What else had saved my ideals from the degradation of our material mechanical life? Over there in the centre, mist-enfolded, is the tented Self, the watchful god. Only a great tide of love, impersonal, unselfish, divine, can dissolve the lower self and flood us over that arctic desolation. Such love is the aloe flower, and blooms but once a century. Here, on the near side of the mystery, the side nearest the outer man, embedded in his heart, is the lurker, the elemental self.

When first we discover a trace of the soul within ourselves, there is a pause of great joy, of deep peace. This passes. The Soul, or Self, is dual, semi-material, and the material or outer covering is known as the elemental self, the Bhutatma of the Upanishads. As you know, Bhuts or Bhoots are elementals or spirits of a certain lower order. It is this lower self—"human soul"—which feels the effects of past Karma weighing it downwards to each fresh descent into matter, or reincarnation. These effects, in the shape of latent impulses, accompany the higher principles into Devachan, where the spiritual energies work themselves out in time. Those karmic tendencies then germinate in their turn, and impel the soul to their necessary sphere of action,—the earth life—to which it again descends, carrying with it as its germ, the true Self or Buddhi, which may develop so far as to unite with Atma, or Divine Spirit.

Now our bodies, and all the "false I" powers, up to the individual soul, are partial forms in common with the energetic centres in the astral light, while the individual soul is total, and according to the power and purity of the form which it inhabits, "waits upon the gods." All true things must be total, and all totalities exist at once, each in all, and hence the power of the soul to exhibit Truth; hence those sudden gleams from the half awakened soul of which the occultist becomes aware as his consciousness locates nearer and nearer the centre; he draws ever closer to the blaze of Light, until his recognition of it becomes enduring because it is now himself. In the earlier stages this perception is physical as well as mental and cannot be likened to any other sensation. There is a flash, a thrill, a surge, sometimes a *fragrant sound*, and a True thought is born into the world of the lower man.

It thus follows that only such forms as are total, reveal entire Truth, and those that partake of lower nature, or are partial, receive but a limited view of Truth. These partial forms

participate in each other, and exist partially in those that are total. Such partial forms are the energetic centres in the astral light, are elementals, such are our astral bodies, and hence the affinity subsisting between all, so that it is only when our consciousness is located in part in the astral body that we perceive things pertaining to the astral plane. The elemental self is a partial form, existing partially in the true Self, with which it can only be really incorporated when entirely purified from all material dross, when it is no more itself, but that other Self, even as the Spirit enters Nirvana. This gross, or false self, is great in its way; it must be known and conquered. Of it the Upanishad says that when “overcome by bright and dark fruits of action he enters on a good or bad birth,” he dwells in the body and “thus his immortal Self is like a drop of water on a lotus leaf, and he himself is overcome by the qualities of nature. Then because he is thus overcome, he becomes bewildered, . . . and he sees not the Creator, the holy Lord, abiding within himself. Carried along by the waves of the qualities, darkened in his imaginations, unstable, fickle, crippled, full of desires, vacillating, he enters into belief, believing ‘I am he,’ ‘this is mine,’ he binds his Self by his self as a bird by a net.” We are told that if this elemental self be attached to sound, touch, outer objects—in a word, to desire and sensation —“it will not then remember the highest place.” When the student thinks that he loves, hates, acts or rejects at will, he is only the manifester or machine, the motor is the elemental Self. It must have sensation, must enjoy through the senses or organs, or it would be extinguished in the higher principles. For this enjoyment it has sought the earth world again. So it casts up clouds and fumes of illusion whereby the man is incited to action, and when he denies it one mode of satisfaction, it inoculates him with a craving for some other. When he forsakes the temptations of the outer life, it assails him with those of the mind or heart, suggests a system to ossify him, a specialty to limit him, emotions

to absorb him, evokes a tumult to drown the “still, small voice.” Pride, dogmatism, independence, desire, hope and fear, these and many other qualities are its aids under mock titles. It disturbs the true proportions of all things. It cozens and juggles him beyond belief. Instead of relying upon the great All as himself, developing that faith and standing fixed by the Law, the man increases his confidence in his personal abilities, opens his mind to the thousand cries of self-assertion and puts his trust in this “will o’ the wisp” nature which strives to beguile him from firm ground. This self of death and ashes tells him every hour that he, the man he now knows as himself, is a being of judgment and power. The contrary is true; the first advance to the True must be humbly made, under the fixed belief which later becomes knowledge, that the man as he now appears to himself is to be wholly distrusted and self-examined step by step. As the physical atoms are all renewed in each seven years’ course, so a man has many mental deaths and births in one incarnation, and if he makes steady resistance to the undermining principle of Reversion to Type, carefully testing the essence of motives and thoughts, the very well-spring of deeds, he soon finds that one higher state of consciousness is succeeded by another and still others, in each of which transient conditions he temporarily and illusively lives, until he takes the last stronghold of the lower self and beholding its dissolution, crosses with a supreme effort to where the watchful god awaits him.

As the man has advanced on the animal, driving it from every subterfuge, lopping off its hydra heads and searing them with the fire of spiritual wisdom, and stands calm and firm in the equipoise achieved by the strength of his attraction for the True, then it is that the enemy makes a sudden halt upon the psychic plane, and summons to its service the grim battalions of the deadliest warfare ever known to the human race. The Dweller of

the Threshold stands revealed, a congeries of materialistic essences expressed from the man's entire past, a bestial apaunder of his lower self, and this lusty huntsman, whose quarry is the soul, shouts a view-halloo to all the nameless devils of its pack and gives and takes no quarter. The conquest of the body, the dispersal of worldly interests are child's play to this struggle, where the enemy itself is still a sharer in the divine, *and is not to be killed but subdued*. All the powers of Maya, all the startling vividness of universal illusion are at its disposal. It has for allies the hosts of earth and water, air and fire, terrible apparitions, horrid thoughts incarnate in malodorous flesh and reeking with desire, creatures dragged from the polluted depths of animal existence, sounds hideous and inconceivable, sensations that cast a frigid horror over the palsied mind. The man battles with misty evils that elude the very grasp of thought, he cannot even answer for his own courage, for the foe is within, it is himself, yet not himself, and its surest weapons are forged in the fires of his own heart. Thence too comes his strength, but his perception of that is obscured in this hour. The last stand of gross Matter, the last barricade before Spirit, is here, and over it the conqueror passes to the frontiers of his kingdom. Hereafter, spiritual warfare is appointed him, the ache and turmoil of the flesh are left behind. The pen refuses to deal with this first great contest, the thought falls back from it, and he who faces its issue is a madman indeed, unless he wears the magic amulet.

It should be ever borne in mind that this self of myriad deceptions is the ruler of the astral or psychic plane. Hence that plane is a play-ground of elemental forces most dangerous and entangling to man. Great intellects, pure hearts are bewitched there. Persons of natural psychic powers are easily stayed in this *cul de sac*, this "no thoroughfare," especially when those powers are inherited from past lives and have no simultaneous growth

with soul in this. They dazzle and blind their possessor. Evil has its greatest momentum on the astral plane. If a man lingers too long he becomes as much intoxicated as is the worldly man with material life, for these too are only senses of a more dazzling order, matter vitalized and more deadly. Its very language, dealing as it does with subtle gradations of color, light, odor and sound, is easily misinterpreted by those who have not obtained the total perception of the illuminated Self. Some think that they have acquired this illumination and steep themselves in psychic enjoyment and action. It is the fickle light of the astral world which floods and bewilders the elemental self. This plane is a necessary experience, a passing trial, not a goal. Only Adepts can fathom its mazes as they look down upon them from above and correctly interpret their bearings. Students must observe and try to control them without acting from them or depending upon them.

So comrades, I say again, procure the magic amulet. It is pure motive. Motive is the polarity of the soul. A polarized ray of light is one so modified by the position of its medium that it is incapable of reflecting or refracting itself in any but one direction. Its polarity depends upon the parallel direction of every molecule of ether constituting the vehicle of the ray. Divergence in one affects the whole. Are you so fixed down in those unfathomed deeps of yours? Do you know to what medium you respond and its position in the Celestial? He who claims to be sure of his motive, he, more than any other, is under the sway of the great magician. How can he be wholly sure when he does not so much as know fully the constitution of the mere outer man? Dares he aver to what the action of his immense and forgotten past has polarized his soul? Can he answer for the essential Motive at its centre when he comes face to face with the mystery at last? The highest keep constant watch over motive. The wise

student feeds and increases it. Few indeed have the warrant to “put it to the touch, to win or lose it all.” That warrant is only found at the core of the life, written in the blood of the heart. He who can give up all for All, even to his own salvation, he may confront the elemental self. There is nowhere any safety for him unless his hope is anchored in the unmanifest, his present trust in Karma. If the soul has been deflected, future unselfish motive can in time restore its integrity, whereas to loose the ungoverned soul now is to fall a victim to its lower tendency. Rely on Karma, It is divine. We cannot escape It; we may become It.

The Path

**THE POETRY OF REINCARNATION IN WESTERN LITERATURE: I —
*E. D. Walker***

The poets are the seers of the race. Their best work comes from the intuitional heights where they dwell, conveying truths beyond reason, not understood even by themselves but merely transmitted through them. They are the few tall pines towering above the common forest to that extraordinary exaltation where they catch the earliest and latest sunbeams which prolong their day far beyond the limits below, and penetrating into the rare upper currents whose whisperings seldom descend to the crowd.

However diverse the forms of their expression, the heart of it is thoroughly harmonious. They are always prophets voicing a divine message received in the mount, and in these modern days they are almost the only prophets we have. Therefore it is not a mere pleasantry to collect their testimony upon an unusual theme. When it is found that, though working independently, they are in deep accord upon Reincarnation, the inevitable conclusion is that their common inspiration means something — namely that their gospel is worth receiving.

It may be objected that these poems are merely dreamy effusions along the same line of lunacy, with no real attachment to the solid foundations upon which all wholesome poetry is based; that they are kinks in the intellects of genius displaying the weakness of men otherwise strong. But so universal a feeling cannot be disposed of in that way, especially when it is found to contribute to the solution of life's mystery. All the poets believe in immortality though unaided reason and observation cannot demonstrate it. Some inexperienced people deride the fact that nearly all poetry centres upon the theme of Love — the most

illogical and airy of sentiments. But the deepest sense of the world is nourished by the certainty of these "vague" truths. So the presence of Reincarnation in the creed of the poets may give us courage to confide in our own impressions, for "all men are poets at heart." What they have dared publish we may venture to believe and will find a source of strength.

It is well known that the idea of reincarnation abounds in Oriental poetry. But as our purpose is to demonstrate the prevalence of the same thought among our own poets, most of whom are wholly independent of Eastern influence, we shall confine our attention to the spontaneous utterances of American and European poets. We shall find that the great majority of the highest Occidental poets lean toward this thought, and many of them unhesitatingly avow it.

Our study will extend through four parts.

I. American Poets.

II. English Poets.

III. Continental Poets.

IV. Platonic Poets.

If any readers are familiar with other poetic expressions of reincarnation we would be obliged to them if they will kindly communicate the information to us.

REINCARNATION IN AMERICAN POETRY

PART I.

PRE-EXISTENCE

While sauntering through the crowded street
Some half-remembered face I meet,
Albeit upon no mortal shore
That face, methinks, hath smiled before.

Lost in a gay and festal throng
I tremble at some tender song
Set to an air whose golden bars
I must have heard in other stars.
In sacred aisles I pause to share
The blessing of a priestly prayer,
When the whole scene which greets mine eyes
In some strange mode I recognize.
As one whose every mystic part
I feel prefigured in my heart.
At sunset as I calmly stand
A stranger on an alien strand
Familiar as my childhood's home
Seems the long stretch of wave and foam.
A ship sails toward me o'er the bay
And what she comes to do and say
I can foretell. A prescient lore
Springs from some life outlived of yore.
O swift, instructive, startling gleams
Of deep soul-knowledge: not as dreams
For aye ye vaguely dawn and die,
But oft with lightning certainty
Pierce through the dark oblivious brain
To make old thoughts and memories plain:
Thoughts which perchance must travel back
Across the wild bewildering track
Of countless aeons; memories far
High reaching as yon pallid star.
Unknown, scarce seen, whose flickering grace
Faints on the outmost rings of space.

PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE.

A MYSTERY.

The river hemmed with leaving trees
 Wound through the meadows green,
A low blue line of mountain showed
 The open pines between

One sharp tall peak above them all
 Clear into sunlight sprang,
I saw the river of my dreams
 The mountain that I sang.

No clue of memory led me on
 But well the ways I knew,
A feeling of familiar things
 With every footstep grew.

Yet ne'er before that river's rim
 Was pressed by feet of mine.
Never before mine eyes had crossed
 That broken mountain line.

A presence strange at once and known
 Walked with me as my guide,
The skirts of some forgotten life
 Trailed noiseless at my side.

Was it a dim-remembered dream
 Or glimpse through aeons old?
The secret which the mountains kept
 The river never told.

J. G. WHITTIER.

FROM "THE METEMPSYCHOSIS OF THE PINE."

As when the haze of some wan moonlight makes
Familiar fields a land of mystery,

Where, chill and strange, a ghostly presence wakes
In flower or bush or tree,

Another life, the life of day o'erwhelms
The past from present consciousness takes hue
As we remember vast and cloudy realms
Our feet have wandered through:

So, oft, some moonlight of the mind makes dumb
The stir of outer thought: wide open seems
The gate where through strange sympathies have come
The secret of our dreams;

The source of fine impressions, shooting deep
Below the falling plummet of the sense
Which strike beyond all Time and backward sweep
Through all intelligence.

We touch the lower life of beast and clod
And the long process of the ages see
From blind old Chaos, ere the breath of God
Moved it to harmony.

All outward vision yields to that within
Whereof nor creed nor canon holds the key;
We only feel that we have ever been
And evermore shall be.

And thus I know by memories unfurled
In rarer moods and many a subtle sign,
That at one time and somewhere in the world
I was a towering pine.

BAYARD TAYLOR.

THE POET IN THE EAST.

The poet came to the land of the East
When spring was in the air,
The East was dressed for a wedding feast
So young she seemed and fair
And the poet knew the land of the East
His soul was native there.

All things to him were the visible forms
Of early and precious dreams
Familiar visions that mocked his quest
Beside the western streams
Or gleamed in the gold of the clouds unrolled
In the sunset's dying beams.

BAYARD TAYLOR.

THE METEMPSYCHOSIS.

I know my own creation was divine.
Strewn on the breezy continents I see
The veined shells and burnished scales which once
Enclosed my being — husks that I had.
I brood on all the shapes I must attain
Before I reach the perfect, which is God.
For I am of the mountains and the sea
The deserts and the caverns in the earth
The catacombs and fragments of old worlds.

I was a spirit on the mountain tops,
A perfume in the valleys, a nomadic wind
Roaming the universe, a tireless voice.
I was ere Romulus and Remus were;
I was ere Nineveh and Babylon.
I was and am and evermore shall be
Progressing, never reaching to the end.
A hundred years I trembled in the grass

The delicate trefoil that muffled warm
A slope on Ida; for a hundred years
Moved in the purple gyre of those dark flowers
The Grecian woman strew upon the dead.
Under the earth in fragrant glooms I dwelt,
Then in the veins and sinews of a pine
On a lone isle, where from the Cyclades
A mighty wind like a leviathan
Ploughed through the brine and from those solitudes
Sent silence frightened.

A century was as a single day.
What is a clay to an immortal soul?
A breath, no more. And yet I hold one hour
Beyond all price, — that hour when from the sky
A bird, I circled nearer to the earth
Nearer and nearer till I brushed my wings
Against the pointed chestnuts, where a stream
Leapt headlong down a precipice; and there
Gathering wild flowers in the cool ravine
Wandered a woman more divinely shaped
Than any of the creatures of the air.
I charmed her thought. I sang and gave her dreams,
Then nestled in her bosom. There I slept
From morn to noon, while in her eyes a thought
Grew sweet and sweeter, deepening like the dawn.
One autumn night I gave a quick low cry
As infants do: we weep when we are born,
Not when we die: and thus came I here
To walk the earth and wear the form of man,
To suffer bravely as becomes my state,
One step, one grade, one cycle nearer God.

ONE THOUSAND YEARS AGO.

Thou and I in spirit land
One thousand years ago,
Watched the waves beat on the strand:
Ceaseless ebb and flow,
Vowed to love and ever love,
One thousand years ago.

Thou and I in greenwood shade
Nine hundred years ago
Heard the wild dove in the glade
Murmuring soft and low,
Vowed to love for evermore
Nine hundred years ago.

Thou and I in yonder star
Eight hundred years ago
Saw strange forms of light afar
In wildest beauty glow.
All things change, but love endures
Now as long ago.

Thou and I in Norman halls
Seven hundred years ago
Heard the warden on the walls
Loud his trumpets blow,
"Ton amors sera tojors "
Seven hundred years ago.

Thou and I in Germany,
Six hundred years ago.
Then I bound the red cross on
True love I must go,
But we part to meet again

In the endless flow."

Thou and I in Syrian plains

Five hundred years ago

Felt the wild fire in our veins

To a fever glow.

All things die, but love lives on

Now as long ago.

Thou and I in shadow land

Four hundred years ago

Saw strange flowers bloom on the strand:

Heard strange breezes blow.

In the ideal love is real

This alone I know.

Thou and I in Italy

Three hundred years ago

Lived in faith and deed for God,

Felt the faggots glow,

Ever new and ever true

Three hundred years ago.

Thou and I on Southern seas

Two hundred years ago

Felt the perfumed even-breeze

Spoke in Spanish by the trees

Had no care or woe.

Life went dreamily in song

Two hundred years ago.

Thou and I mid Northern snows

One hundred years ago

Led an iron silent life

And were glad to flow

Onward into changing death,
One hundred years ago.

Thou and I but yesterday
Met in fashion's show.

Love, did you remember me,
Love of long ago?

Yes: we kept the fond oath sworn
One thousand years ago.

CHARLES G. LELAND.

THE FINAL THOUGHT.

What is the grandest thought
Toward which the soul has wrought?
Has it the spirit form,
And the power of a storm?

Comes it of prophesy
(That borrows light of uncreated fires)

Or of transmitted strains of memory
Sent down through countless sires?

Which way are my feet set?
Through infinite changes yet
Shall I go on,
Nearer and nearer drawn
To thee,
God of eternity?

How shall the Human grow,
By changes fine and slow,
To thy perfection from the life dawn sought?
What is the highest thought?

Ah! these dim memories,
Of when thy voice spake lovingly to me,

Under the Eden trees,
Saying: "Lord of all creation thou shalt be."
How they haunt me and elude —
How they hover, how they brood,
On the horizon, fading yet dying not!
What is the final thought?

What if I once did dwell
In the lowest dust germ-cell,
A faint fore-hint of life called forth of God,
Waxing and struggling on,
Through the long flickering dawn,
The awful while His feet earth's bosom trod?
What if He shaped me so,
And caused my life to blow
Into the full soul-flower in Eden-air?
Lo! now I am not good,
And I stand in solitude,
Calling to Him (and yet he answers not):
What is the final thought?

What myriads of years up from the germ!
What countless ages back from man to worm!
And yet from man to God, O! help me now!
A cold despair is beading on my brow!
I may see Him, and seeing know him not!
What is the highest thought?

So comes, at last,
The answer from the Vast. . . .
Not so, there is a rush of wings —
Earth feels the presence of invisible things.
Closer and closer drawn
In rosy mists of dawn!

One dies to conquer Death
And to burst the awful tomb —
Lo, with his dying breath,
He blows love into bloom!
Love! Faith is born of it!
Death is the scorn of it!
It fills the earth and thrills the heavens above,
And God is love,
And life is love, and, though we heed it not.
Love is the final thought.

MAURICE THOMPSON

FROM "A POEM READ AT BROWN UNIVERSITY."

But, what a mystery this erring mind?
It wakes within a frame of various powers
A stranger in a new and wondrous world.
It brings an instinct from some other sphere,
For its fine senses are familiar all
And with the unconscious habit of a dream
It calls and they obey. The priceless sight
Springs to its curious organ, and the ear
Learns strangely to detect the articulate air
In its unseen divisions, and the tongue
Gets its miraculous lesson with the rest,
And in the midst of an obedient throng
Of well trained ministers, the mind goes forth
To search the secrets of its new found home.

N. P. WILLIS

To the above may be added the following which have already been printed in THE PATH: "Rain in Summer," by H. W. Longfellow; "The Twilight," by J. R. Lowell; "Facing Westward from

California's Shore," and parts of "Leaves of Grass," by Walt Whitman.

The Path

EVIDENCE AND IMPOSSIBILITY — *E. D. Fawcett*

[THE LOGIC OF A PRIORI NEGATION AND THE RELATIONS OF THE SUBJECTIVE TO THE OBJECTIVE IN THE ESTIMATION OF EVIDENCE.]

It is a not uncommon fact of experience that evidence of apparently great intrinsic weight is rejected on the ground of the improbability or impossibility of the occurrence it attests. As this question as to the reliability of evidence has been re-opened of late years by the imposing body of testimony presented in favour of super-normal phenomena — lifted entirely above the range of ordinary scientific experience — it may not be amiss to consider in as brief a manner as possible, the logical basis of the *a priori dismissal* of such facts as "impossible," as also to shadow forth the relations of the Subjective and the Objective in the formation of our beliefs and convictions.

According to J. S. Mill, whose words I quote at some length (1), as admirably illustrative of the *true* scientific attitude towards attestations of abnormal occurrences in general — an attitude unfortunately rarely adopted by our materialistic present-day philosophers "the positive evidence produced in support of an assertion which is nevertheless rejected on the score of impossibility or improbability is never such as to amount to full proof. It is always grounded on some approximate generalization. The fact may have been asserted by a hundred witnesses; but there are many exceptions to the universality of the generalization that what a hundred witnesses affirm is true. (2)... The evidence then in the affirmative being never more than an approximate generalisation all will depend on what the evidence in the negative is. If that also rests on an approximate generalisation it is a case for the comparison of probabilities.... If,

however, an alleged fact be in contradiction, not to any number of approximate generalisations, but to a completed generalisation, grounded on a rigorous induction, it is said to be impossible and is to be disbelieved totally."

All this is eminently scientific — common sense formulated in an elaborate terminology.

Whatever is asserted counter to a complete induction is necessarily false. But clearly to be complete the induction must first embrace all the phenomena. And if facts not amenable to inclusion in it, are brought forward supported on credible testimony, are we to declare the induction incomplete and admit the facts or exclude them by asserting its present comprehensive character? Must we not reject the induction in the face of the attested facts? Have we in any way the right to call it already complete? To this Mr. Mill answers: —

"I answer we have that right whenever the scientific canons of induction give it to us; that is whenever the induction *can* be complete. We have it, for example, in a case of causation in which there has been an *experimentum crucis*. If an antecedent A, superadded to a set of antecedents in all other respects unaltered, is followed by an effect B which did not exist before. A is in that instance at least, the cause of B, or an indispensable part of its cause; and if A be tried again, with many totally different sets of antecedents and B still follows, then it is the whole cause. If these observations or experiments have been repeated so often as to exclude all supposition of error in the observer, a law of nature is established; and so long as this law is received as such, the assertion that on any particular occasion A took place and yet B did not follow, *without any counteracting cause*, must be disbelieved."

These remarks of Mill utterly overthrow the position of the

pseudo-scientific sceptics who impugn the validity of all abnormal facts on the ground of their being "opposed to the Laws of Nature."

Equally in the case of the phenomena of spiritualism as in that of miracle-evidence, the position of the ultra-'rationalistic' school is only tenable when the assertion is put forward that the laws of nature — *i.e.* the observed sequence of certain antecedents or sets of antecedents by certain consequents — were temporarily suspended for a special purpose. But every Theosophist, philosophical Spiritualist, in discussing the phenomenal aspect of his belief, admits the presence of "*some counteracting cause*" and with this admission before him it becomes not only arbitrary, but *unscientific*, for the sceptic to deny on purely *a priori* grounds phenomena attested by so many observers of repute and sagacity. This I think is apparent even from the standpoint of so rigid a thinker as Mill. Arm chair Negation is on his declaration clearly shown to be little better than an arrogation of omniscience. It is a reversion to the old scholastic fallacy — before the days of Bacon and the foundation of science on observation and generalisation upon facts — of attempting to settle all philosophical questions on the starveling regime of Deductive Logic. No justification can be offered for such an exhibition of prejudice, unless — and in this lies the real point at issue in the theoretical handling of the question — the existence of any unknown laws of nature and that of beings competent to manipulate them or living men consciously or unconsciously furnishing the conditions requisite for their manifestation is denied *in toto*. The former plea is one which not even the boldest sceptic would care to urge; the progress and future prospects of science being *based on the supposition that next to nothing has been yet ascertained of the secrets this magnificent Universe holds in store for posterity.*

The denial of the latter assertion is simply worthless for the

reason that in this case Scientists while on the one hand professing their unalterable devotion to the laws of Induction, deliberately give the lie to their protestations by refusing for the most part even to entertain such a possibility, much less to examine the evidence on the validity of which they proceed so presumptuously to dogmatize. Consult Dr. Bain's Logic Part II. This eminent psychologist while admitting in his discussion of the value of Hypotheses, "that it would seem irrational to affirm that we already know all existing causes, and *permission must be given to assume, if need be, an entirely new agent* (p. 131) and also that natural agencies can never be suspended; they may be *counteracted by opposite agencies*" (p. 81), has the temerity to remark (p. 149) that all evidence to the effect that a table rose to the ceiling of a room without physical contact is to be totally disbelieved! What! This — the commonest experience of spiritualism, a phenomenon *millions* of investigators could if necessary vouch for — is to be dismissed with a sneer by the 'scientific' reasoner! And for what reason? Because it conflicts with a complete Induction — the Law of Gravity. We will not stop to consider whether Polarity is not the true explanation of the phenomena of 'gravitation.' We have merely to remember Mr. Mill's remarks and the admissions of Dr. Bain himself. Why postulate a suspension of the law of gravity with a '*counteracting cause*' in view. The duty of the Scientists is clear, viz., to investigate and inform us of the nature of this cause, not to sit still in their arm-chairs and attack the veracity or sanity of countless painstaking observers. The foolish statement above commented upon is about as 'scientific,' as would be the assertion that when A lifts a stone from the ground, there is a suspension of law; the necessary explanation clearly being that a new cause has intervened producing a new effect. Prof. Huxley has assured us that the possibilities of Nature are infinite; brags that outside of pure mathematics it is imprudent to make use of the term

"impossible." In all such cases, as the one above, where the evidence in favor of a super-normal fact is exceedingly strong, our object should be to accept the attestations of the witnesses and *then search for the unknown "counteracting cause."* Was not the existence of the planet Neptune first ascertained in this manner? Is it not the scientific Method of Residues — one of the triumphs of Inductive Logic — which Sceptics of the stamp of Professor Bain are deliberately ignoring in the compilation of such sophistries as the specimen "on exhibit" above?

To what absurd lengths, however, some writers, claiming a community of common-sense with their fellow-men, can proceed is to be seen in the following quotation from the well-known materialist, Dr. Ludwig Buchner (3): "There can be no doubt that all pretended cases of clairvoyance rest upon fraud or illusion. Clairvoyance, that is a perception of external objects without the use of the senses is an impossibility... No one can read an opaque sealed letter, extend his vision to America, see with closed eyes what passes around him, look into the future or guess the thoughts of ethers. These truths rest upon the natural laws, which are irrefutable, and admit, like other natural laws, of no exception. All that we know, we know by the medium of our senses. There exist no super-sensual and super-natural things and capacities; and they never can exist, as the external conformity of the laws of nature would thereby be suspended. As little as a stone can ever fall in any other direction than towards the centre of the earth, so little can a man see without using his eyes. Cases so repugnant to the laws of nature have never been acknowledged by rational unprejudiced individuals. Ghosts and spirits have hitherto only been seen by children or ignorant and superstitious individuals. All that has been narrated of the visits of departed spirits is sheer nonsense."

And this is "Science!" This the boasted freedom of Inductive

research — *a priori* negation and a fatuous bigoted scepticism. The last few observations just quoted in the present intellectual and social status of the witnesses for these unpalatable psychic phenomena are simply folly, empty vapourings of a distorted mind. To-day it is Science that plays the bigot and inquisitor. Better the deposed idols of orthodoxy than the dead-sea fruits of Materialistic blindness! In the words of a celebrated physiologist "The morality which flows from scientific materialism may be comprehended within these few words, 'Let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die.' All noble thoughts are vain dreams, the effusions of automata with two arms running about on two legs, which, being finally decomposed into chemical atoms, combine themselves anew, resembling the dance of lunatics in a mad-house." (4)

The question of the relation of the subjective to the objective in our estimation of evidence is one of very great interest. We must premise our remarks by saying that there is no intention here of discussing that feeble and contemptible receptivity known as credulity, which practically converts the person exhibiting it into a species of intellectual dust-bin into which rumours of all kinds drift pell mell. "Rubbish shot here" is not the mental signboards the erection of which we advocate. But students of history and believers in the theory of cycles are compelled to admit that the progress of beliefs and opinions is one in which objective evidence as such plays a relatively unimportant part — that in short it is the menial pre-dispositions of humanity at large which determine the intrinsic force of external facts considered in their relation to contemporary thought.

This feature of intellectual development is one fully verified by all historical data and indeed a corollary of the theory of cycles. For instance the widespread diffusion of materialistic views at the present day may seem to a superficial observer to be due to the

fuller evidence as to the connection of mind and brain possessed by our modern physiologists and physicists. But we find on closer inspection that the arguments of Materialism from Democritus and Lucretius to Buchner, have practically remained the same in their *objective* entirety — it is the *subjective* disposition of men in general to assimilate such interpretations of nature, that determines their present cogency. Experience shows us that the objective in all similar cases, only acquires evidential force, when the subjective corresponding to it in the human mind is in the ascendant. Take the problem of Miracle-evidence. Here again it is exceedingly questionable whether the rationalistic contentions against the reality of the gospel phenomena have in any way increased in weight *per se* through the centuries. Even Strauss admitted that he had only re-stated the arguments which were always at the service of the pioneers of liberal thought. What then has determined the rebellion against Orthodoxy, but the growth of a *subjective* tendency to reject all such accounts on *a priori* grounds — the influence of a changed intellectual environment. Given Miracle-Evidence = X, and the original Subjective Receptivity = Y, the rejection of the former has been due not to an intrinsic diminution in the evidential force of N *per se*, but by a decline in the extent of the latter factor to perhaps $Y/2$ or $Y/4$, exemplified in the use of the term a "*grouping antecedent improbability*." Theosophists, however, who adopt the philosophical plan of admitting the 'miracle'-evidence but the same time of declining to base upon such a foundation the supernatural inferences grouped under the head of orthodox Christianity, are thus shown to be occupying a position impregnable to the assaults of Theologian and Scientist alike. Again it was nothing but the *preparedness* of public opinion which resulted in the favourable debut of the Darwinian theory of evolution. The startling assumptions, geological,

palaeontological and other difficulties, and lavish display of hypotheses, which characterized this celebrated speculation at its outset, would have assuredly involved its rejection, but for the *subjective receptivity* of the scientific world in general. The subjective pre-disposition to receive such a view being already present, the objective correspondences in nature must — despite of apparent checks and obstacles — be *made* to dove-tail with the theory. It did not rest on its *objective* evidences "not on its experimental demonstration" as Tyndall himself admits (Belfast Address) but "in its general harmony with the method of nature as hitherto known." This is therefore a distinct case in which *mental conditions* absolutely determine the cogency of *objective data*. As a convincing illustration of the correctness of this contention, we need only turn to the consideration of the relations of physical science and spiritualism. If objective evidence *per se* was competent to enforce conviction, the acceptance of psychic phenomena as established facts would have now been a thing of the past. It is beyond question that the body of witnesses in favour of these phenomena greatly exceeds in number that on which the assertions of any distinct branch of science rests. These witnesses include some of the most liberal scientists, and literary men, thinkers of the greatest perspicacity and acuteness. — inquirers rescued from the talons of Materialism, as well as former Agnostics, Positivists and Sectarians.

Where in ordinary scientific investigation we have usually only the *dictum* of the individual experimenter to accept "on faith"; in accounts of psychic occurrences we are almost invariably presented with the collective testimony of numerous observers. How comes it about that Tyndall in his Belfast Address can pay a deserved compliment to that luminary of the Evolution-School, Mr. A. R. Wallace, and in the same materialistic effusion

stigmatise spiritualism as "degrading" thus indirectly impugning the powers of observation of the scientist whom he has just eulogized? (5) Darwin quotes or repeats the same author over 50 times in his "Descent of Man:" but it is consistent for those who pin their faith to that work, to avail themselves in this way of the evidence of Mr. Wallace where it suits their purpose and to reject or ignore it wholly where it does not. Science, we have been told by one of its most eminent representatives, is bound to face every problem presented to it. Whether it does so, the treatment experienced by honest inquirers like Crookes, Zollner, Hare and others at the hands of their purblind fellow scientist may be left to show. Well; we have had the Popes of theology, we must now bear, as well as we may, the Popes and Inquisition of science.

Objective facts, therefore, present themselves differently to different minds. The Christian idea of "Faith" is not without its substratum of truth. And in questions such as those of Spiritualism and Theosophy, we maintain that wanting the *subjective receptivity of the individual mind objective evidence is valueless*. Facts by themselves however well supported by incontrovertible testimony make no appeal to the intellect, if some recess is not already prepared for their reception. And is not this Receptivity innate in many, if not in the majority of our brother-theosophists? Ought we not to regard our *capacity* to accept the teachings of the Masters as *a glorious Karmic Heritage* — the outcome of some vague spiritual aspirations in a former existence — a ray from a distant past lighting up the Cimmerian gloom of the materialistic world in which we live? Such at least would seem us be the teaching of the Secret Doctrine.

FOOTNOTES:

1. "System of Logic." People's Edition, p. 408. ([return to text](#))
2. A very questionable statement. The exceptions are extremely

rare. There undoubtedly have been cases — as in the celebrated Crystal Palace Fire incident when a vast crowd mistook a fluttering flag for a straggling chimpanzee — when multitudes have been subject to misapprehension, but in all these the error arose from an illusory interpretation only of something really objective. The evidence for the generality of psychic phenomena stands on wholly different grounds — in fact the actuality of the attested facts usually depends on one question — are all the witnesses conspiring to lie? The contrary admitted, the attested facts must also be. ([return to text](#))

3. "Force and matter." p. 152. (Engl. Edit. Trubner & Co.) — A more *dogmatic* work than which, though based professedly on inductive principles, we may search in vain among the Patristic literature to find. ([return to text](#))

4. Prof. Rudolph Wagner quoted by Buchner "Force and Matter," p. 255. ([return to text](#))

5. The subjective deficiency resulting in this extraordinary inconsistency is curiously exemplified in the following extract from a letter quoted in Crooke's "Phenomena of Spiritualism" (p. 82). It confirms our position as to the intrinsic force of evidence.

"Any *intellectual* reply to your facts I cannot see. Yet it is a curious fact that even I with all my tendency and desire to believe spiritualistically, and with all my faith in your power of observing and your thorough truthfulness, feel as if I wanted to see for myself: and it is quite painful to me to think how much more proof I want. Painful, I say, because I see that *it is not reason which convinces a man*, unless a fact is repeated so frequently that the impression becomes a habit of mind." ... In other words the writer, though a liberal critic and *even anxious* to assimilate the facts, could not because his KARMA had not endowed him with that *Subjective Receptivity* which alone *stamps* objective evidence

with a lasting cogency. ([return to text](#))

The Path

REINCARNATIONS OF MAHATMAS — S. B.

A few words about what are called the "artificial" reincarnations of Mahatmas may be of service in clearing up some quite general misapprehensions on the subject. Of course it is hardly possible for us, under our present circumstances, to gain an understanding of the conditions governing these reincarnations, but some idea of the general principle involved may be of material aid to us in our studies. Perhaps *continuous* reincarnations might be the better term, since the word "artificial" is apt to convey the impression of something unnatural, whereas they must be quite as much within the order of Nature as those of ordinary humanity. But they are distinguished from the latter by the fact that the course of physical existence is uninterrupted; that when one garment of flesh has served its purpose it is cast aside and another is straightway assumed, until the Mission of the Great Soul is accomplished; whereas with ordinary humanity there is a long subjective existence in the Devachanic state intervening between the periods of physical life.

But a consideration of the lives of the great teachers of the world will bring us to the conclusion that the reincarnated Mahatma does not at once demonstrate that he is what is called an Adept; that is, a person gifted with extraordinary attributes and with powers over the forces of nature. It is necessary that the new personality should be developed; that it should be aroused to a consciousness of the Great Soul which animates it. The personality is that collection of attributes and experiences amassed during a single life in the physical. Through the right use made of these experiences, this personality, the Inner Self, raises itself to a recognition of the Higher Self and thereby unites its

consciousness with that of the latter. This union once brought about, the higher consciousness is never lost.

This exalted state attained, the entity, — that which constitutes the feeling of individuality — never departs from it. But each time the reincarnation takes place the process has to be repeated for the outer personality. This, at first sight, will be apt to be regarded as an affliction, constituting a continuous series of struggles appalling in their long array, particularly when we are told in *The Idyll of the White Lotus* that to attain the union with the Highest Self may mean to "retain life upon this planet so long as it may last." Many might at once be inclined to doubt whether a boon were involved in such a prospect.

On reflection, however, it will be seen that the real state of the case is quite the contrary. The struggle can occur but once for each personality. The Higher Self, "the proud, indifferent god who sits in the sanctuary," remains undisturbed all the while, viewing the whole series of incarnations calmly and unmoved, and unaffected by anything that may happen. It is a process of educating a long series of various personalities into a consciousness of the Eternal, and each, on attainment, becomes one with the Higher Self, sharing with all who have gone before, the lofty standpoint from which the work is thenceforth carried on. Thus each personality of a Mahatma, until its spiritual rebirth is accomplished, may have to endure to a greater or less degree, according to circumstances, that which we call sin and suffering, and all this sin and suffering is essential to its work in the world. So it must have been with the personalities of all the great Masters who have had their work to do in the world.

The Mahatma, however, can neither sin nor suffer, whatever the personality may do, for he well knows that there is no final distinction between good and evil, between pleasure and pain,

and that each and all work alike to the same end. The nature of any particular personality of a series varies, of course, according to the work on earth for which it is the chosen instrument, and so the period of the spiritual rebirth — or the recognition of, and union with, the Higher Self — may come at various points, sooner or later, in the earthly career. There may be, and perhaps generally is, an intuitive perception of one's true Self in early childhood, as Browning has so beautifully depicted in his *Paracelsus*, in the passage beginning:

"From childhood I have been possessed
By a fire — by a true fire, or faint or fierce,
As from without some master, so it seemed,
Repressed or urged its current."

The final consummation may come to pass either in youth, in early manhood, or in full maturity. When this time comes, one then recognizes that all sin and suffering have been mere illusion; that they were but means to a given end.

This may throw some light on what are called the shortcomings of persons who may be far advanced in mystical development; shortcomings which the world cannot comprehend as consistent with their connection with grand spiritual teaching's. The fact, however, affords no pretext to any person for self-excuse of their own shortcomings; a point in which lies a great danger. By thus endeavoring to excuse themselves, and seeking a pretext for selfish indulgences, they commit the profanation of attempting to exalt the finite consciousness of their lower Self, to the place of the infinite consciousness of the Higher Self, which alone can rightly judge in such contingencies.

While the personality of the incarnated Master is a human being, with all the attributes which make any other human being, its constitution is naturally of a finer order, so as to make it an

instrument adapted to the work for which it has been brought into the world. Much may be learned in this respect from the following extract from a letter from a Master concerning the reincarnations of Buddha:

"As in the legend of the miraculous conception, which came into the Christian religion from the Eastern source, the Buddha spirit overshadows the mother, and so prepares a pure and perfect home for its incarnated self. The mother must be virgin in soul and thought."

The difference between the reincarnations of Mahatmas and those of ordinary humanity is, after all probably only one of degree. The same experiences must be passed through by each and all. The great end must finally be attained by the latter "even though it take billions of centuries," as Kernning, the German mystic, powerfully puts it. And, with the former, it must be the consummation also of billions of centuries. Time, however, is one of the illusions of the physical.

The process and course of the reincarnations of an individuality may be symbolized by a string of beads, each new personality being the formation of a new bead and adding it to the series. Each bead *seems* to have an individual consciousness which, however, in reality is the consciousness of the whole. The circumstances of the physical life are what obscure the knowledge of this fact, a knowledge which is attained by clearing away the clouds that dim the light which is always there. On reaching this state, the consciousness becomes transferred from that of the single bead to that of the whole, but its continuity is not thereby interrupted, any more than an interruption is necessitated by becoming familiar with all the rooms in a house after leaving some particular room in which one's infancy has been spent, or by passing out of the house into the open air. The

knowledge of the greater includes that of the less; the less is by no means lost, — it has been indispensable, but after its lesson has been learned its relative importance is diminished. It would be well for us to strive to bear in mind that all our past personalities really exist to-day as much as they ever did, and that they now are as much ourselves as is this particular present personality which we call ourselves.

The following passage in *Through the Gates of Gold* is a powerful and glorious picture of the state which consummates the union with the Highest Self and which transcend pleasure and pain, sin and suffering: "In that inmost sanctuary all is to be found: God and his creatures, the fiends who prey on them, those among men who have been loved, those who have been hated. Difference between them exists no longer. Then the soul of man laughs in its fearlessness, and goes forth into the world in which its actions are needed, and causes these actions to take place without apprehension, alarm, fear, regret or joy."

The Path

SOME POETRY OF THE SUFIS

DEAR PATH: I send you a little fragment from the Sufi poetry, and hope you will find it acceptable.

Rome, Italy. K. H.

A PARABLE OF JELLALEDDIN.

At the Beloved's door a timid knock was heard;
And a voice came from within, sweeter than morning bird,
Softer than silver drops that from plashing fountains fall,
 "Who is there?" — And the stillness stirred
 For a moment and that was all.

And the lover who stood without, eager and full of fear,
Answered the silver Voice, — "It is I, who am waiting here;
Open then, my Beloved, open thy door to me!"
 But he heard the response ring clear
 "This house will not hold Me and Thee!"

And the door remained fast shut, and the lover went away
Far into the desert's depths, to wait and fast and pray:
To dwell in the tents of Sorrow and drink of the cup of
Grief:
 And Solitude taught him each day,
 And Silence brought him relief.

And after a year he returned, and knocked at the close-shut
door,
And he heard the Beloved's Voice as it answered him once
more,
"Who is there?" And soft as the dew, or the velvety
roseleaf's fall,

And low as when angels adore,
He said — "Tis Thyself that doth call!"

And his heart stood still with fear, and his eager eyes were
dim; —
Then through the silent night rang the sound of a marriage
hymn;
And the bolts and bars flew back, and the door was open
wide,
 And fair on the threshold's rim
 Stood his Beloved, his Bride!

The Path

THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE: VI — *Pilgrim*

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

When sickened with the petty aims of the world around — when wearied and despairing in the quest of the ideal brotherhood, it is refreshing to recognise a kinship of spirit even across the gulf of centuries — to feel that the brotherhood of love we seek for is no vain dream, and that when we are worthy to enter its ranks, comrades such as Sydney will be there to welcome us.

On reading over the life of this paragon of the Elizabethan period, though his actual achievement seems at first sight scarcely to warrant the renown he won, the aroma of his character which so captivated his contemporaries, is still felt to be the truest criterion by which to judge the man.

But the chief lesson to be learned by students of occultism from the life of Sidney is that in proportion as passion rises to intensity is its power to act as the true alchehest in the transmutation of the baser metals of our nature into the pure gold of the heart.

For the mass of men who stagnate through life without one intense-passion to fire their nature, the formula of Eliphas Levi — modified as follows would indeed seem to be appropriate — though of course referring to the ultimate destiny, not to the result of any one earth-life. "The spiritual passion towards good and the spiritual passion towards evil are the two poles of the world of souls: between these two poles vegetate and die without remembrance the useless portion of mankind."

To see that Sidney was made in a more fiery mould, it needs but to read his "Astrophel and Stella." Though the complete purging of his nature and the conquest of self is only made apparent in the

concluding sonnets, the passionate outbursts of his love, and the fiery path he had to tread are manifest throughout the poem, and naturally form a bond of union — all the closer when the culmination of the desire has been identical — with those who have had analogous experience.

It is perhaps difficult at first to realize how the love of an actual living woman should have the same purging and purifying effect as a similar love idealised, but nature is not to be bound by rules of our making in her methods of drawing different souls towards perfection. Both may be taken as illustrations of the fact that whether emotion starts from a pleasurable or a painful source, on reaching a high enough degree of intensity, it enters the region where pleasure and pain are merged in one, and then it is that it becomes the solvent of the man's lower nature.

It must indeed have been a fiery ordeal that Sidney passed through, for the earthly love by its intensity so to burn itself clean out of the heart and leave only the lofty aspirations expressed in the following sonnet, which truly seem to formulate the very sum and substance of Theosophic thought.

"Thou blind man's mark, thou fool's self chosen snare,
Fond fancies' scum, and dregs of scattered thought;
Band of all evils; cradle of causeless care;
Thou web of will whose end is never wrought!
Desire, Desire! I have too dearly bought
With price of mangled mind thy worthless ware;
Too long, too long, asleep thou hast me brought,
Who shouldst my mind to higher things prepare.
But yet in vain thou hast my ruin sought;
In vain thou mad'st me to vain things aspire;
In vain thou kindlest all thy smoky fire:
For virtue hath this better lesson taught —

Within myself to seek my only hire,
Desiring naught but how to kill desire."

The Path

SHALL WE KNOW OUR FRIENDS IN HEAVEN? — *Charles Johnston*

When that system of philosophy which is now known as the Esoteric Doctrine was first given to the world, it was stated that, in the state of "Spiritual Bliss" or Devachan, — which was entered by the soul which had passed through the "World of Desire," or Kama Loka, after separation from the body — the soul was not alone but was surrounded by those friends who had been loved on earth, and that these friends were as peaceful and happy as the soul in whose company they were.

Some time afterwards the questions were submitted to the authorities in occult matters, the ninth of which, asking for further information as to the intercourse with beloved Souls, was especially directed to ascertain whether those friends who accompanied the enjoyer of "Spiritual Bliss" appeared as they were when he died, supposing that he died first, or as they were when they died themselves.

It is notable that, of the ten questions asked, only this ninth and another also dealing with the same condition of "Spiritual Bliss" were left unanswered, while most of the others were answered fully, not to say voluminously; so that the question we are considering received no further elucidation from the occult authorities, and consequently, still remains open.

Our best chance of arriving at approximately correct conclusions in questions of this sort is by examining them in the light of the analogy afforded by those states of consciousness which are accessible to us while experiencing incarnated existence.

If we examine the various conditions of consciousness grouped under the name of sleep, we may obtain a partial insight into the

conditions of after-death experience, and we may gain at least a clue to the solution of the question at issue.

In the ordinary course of events, before reaching the state of deep sleep we pass through an intermediate stage of dreaming, in which we review the events of the day, many of our day's wishes and desires working themselves out and obtaining their fulfilment, and very often faces, which during the day have made a vivid impression on us, reappear in our dreams, acting as we have seen them act and manifesting the various mental and moral qualities which we believe them to possess; in short, in appearance, action, speech and thought very much as we know them in waking life, sometimes as they are, sometimes as they have been formerly, and sometimes in several characters of varying age and growth in a single dream.

It would be very interesting to know what relation the image of a person appearing in a dream has to the mental state, at the time, (if the person dreamed of, if it has any such relation, and what effect various personalities have on each others' dreams while these dreams are in progress; at present, however, we will do no more than indicate such a line of inquiry, suggesting as a clue the modern discoveries in telepathy.

It is sufficient for our purpose that in the state of dreaming the images of our friends are present to us, similar in appearance and in mental qualities to what they were when the state of dreaming began.

The next condition is that of dreamless sleep, some of the higher stages of which have been indicated in a very able article published in the first number of this magazine. Only two characteristics of this state need be noticed, the second higher than the first; one is that it is a state of peaceful calm in which neither the body and physical surroundings, nor the dream-life

with its surroundings are present to the consciousness, and the other, that it is the day of the intuitional faculties, the moral and ethical nature, in which the soul becomes vividly conscious of moral law.

To what degree the moral environment of the soul, in this condition of dreamless sleep, is influenced by the moral nature of other individualities, especially those of superior development, is also a very interesting inquiry, but at present we must be content with considering dreamless sleep as a condition of peaceful rest and consciousness of moral law, in which the soul is not conscious of the class of objects manifested in waking and dream life, and in which, consequently, friends could not be present to the consciousness in any form at all similar to our waking or dream experience of them.

These two states will give us a clue to the experiences after death in the "World of Desire" or Kama Loka, and in the state of "Spiritual Bliss" or Devachan. As in dreaming our desires obtain the gratification which was denied them in waking life, so that we often hear of sufferers from thirst dreaming of cooling streams, so we are told that in Kama Loka the lower desires we have accumulated during life must work themselves off before Devachan is reached.

From this we are led to infer that in Kama Loka our friends or at least those of them who have been associated with such desires, may be present to our consciousness in form, speech, and thought as we have known them in life.

In Devachan, however, if our analogy be true, nothing resembling the ordinary appearance of such friends, indeed nothing at all belonging to the class of objects which are cognised by the senses, nothing but what is soundless and invisible can be present to the consciousness.

If, however, it be true that the moral nature of others has an influence on our intuitional consciousness in dreamless sleep, it is also probably true that the moral nature of others, especially of our friends, as being those with whom our moral nature is most in harmony, will influence our consciousness in the Devachanic condition, and will do so, of course, quite irrespective of the question whether they are alive or dead, supposing it be possible to reach the Devachanic state in so short a time as the survival of friends would imply.

But our friends, if present at all, will not be present to us in any visible form, they will make themselves felt as a moral influence, strong in proportion to their purity and affinity to us.

We will conclude with a quotation from Sankaracharya which gives a very suggestive hint as to the entities really concerned in both waking and dream life:

"In dream where there is no substantial reality, one enters a world of enjoyment by the power of *manas*. So it is in the waking life, without any difference, all this is the manifestation of *manas*."

The Path

LETTERS ON THE TRUE: III — *Jasper Niemand*

MY COMRADES: —

As we turn our thoughts in upon ourselves, we find the good on top; the bad is below. We must set the blaze of self-examination to the task and drag out the lurker within. We think we have abandoned ambition and comfort, but we have only given up those of the lower plane, the mere reflection of the great ambitions and joys of a larger life. The rays of Truth burn up the covers we had placed upon those seeds, and then the real seeds begin to sprout and cause new troubles. Do not ignore this; it has cost others many years and tears of blood to self-learn it. Men have been deceived as to their motives up to high passages of the Way.

Indolence is a great deceiver. We trust to the sufficiency of "our Divine Spirit," and so hope to reach the goal easily with the natural evolution of the race. We forget that the kingdom must be taken by violence. It is by no means sure that we shall make the connection with spirit in this life journey. Thousands may and do fail to make it. Your divine spirit is only yours in so far as it is that of all others equally: not yours but *ours*, making us one. The Bhagavad-Gita destroys the idea that if there be in us this higher self, it will, even if we are indolent, triumph over the necessity for effort, and lead us to find beatitude in common with the whole stream of man. "The man of doubtful mind enjoys neither this world nor the other (the Deva world) nor finds beatitude."

Sometime then during the period of choice for the race this self must be discovered, purified and set free. The period is long — but it ends. The unprogressed soul falls back: it may die, for only the spiritual monad is incorruptible. On the soul itself depends

this spiritual polarity; each personality heightens or lessens it by the greater or smaller impetus given by him to the life of the lower self. Its luxurious growth throttles the true self as mistletoe devitalizes the live-oak. "Bitten by the world, like one bitten by a great serpent; darkened with passion, like the night; changing its dress in a moment like an actor: fair in appearance, like a painted wall:" thus the Upanishad warns us against the elemental self.

These warnings are not meant to discourage, but to strengthen. The Way is narrow, but it is there. So narrow it is, and so often lost amid the bustling highways of life, that many who have wandered far afield still think their feet are set upon it. There is oftentimes much to discourage us in the attitude of our nearest friends. They are on far shores, and when we arrive they speak of the small potato patch they tend and see nothing in our talk of what is over the sea, and of the grander interests beyond the little place they stand on. This is a blow dealt the inner man and hurts inside. Life is all up in arms against us. A letter sent me by one of my comrades goes clearly and nobly to the root of this matter:

"Dear Jasper: I gave your letter to a distressed soul: she returned thanks saying it was a cooling draught to one athirst. The thanks of course are yours.

"Now this lady says it was refreshment to the weary, that letter True, or she would not say it. But it was not so to me nor to you. It all seems so well understood to be so. We needed it not. But she illustrates a certain state of progress. She is not yet where we are, but which is happier? She is happier, but poorer in hope. We are not all too happy, but are rich in hope, knowing the prize at the end of time, and not deterred by the clouds, the storms, the miasms and dreadful beasts of prey that line the road. Let us then at the very outset wash out of our souls all desire for reward, all hope that we may attain. For so long as we thus hope and desire

we shall be separated from the Self. If in the Self all things *are*, then we cannot wish to be something which we can only compass by excluding something else. Standing where we are, let us purify ourselves to be all things.

"So being beyond this lady so grateful, we find that everything we meet on this illusory plane of existence is a lure that in one way or another has power to draw us out of our path. That is the point we are at, and we may call it the point where lures of Maya have omnipresent power. Therefore we must beware of the illusions of matter.

"Before we got to this stage we knew the fateful lure, the dazzling mirror of the elemental self, here and there in well defined places and entrenched as it was, so to say, in strongly marked defences. Those we assaulted; and that was what it desired, for it did think that it then had no need to exercise the enchantment which is hard because so subtle, and so distributed here and there that we find no citadels to take, no battallions in array. But now our dearest friends are in league with this beautiful, deceitful Maya. (1) How strongly do I realize the dejection of Arjuna as he let his bow drop from his hand and sat down on his chariot in despair. But he had a sure spot to rest upon. He used his own. He had Krishna near, and he might fight on.

"So in passing along past those stages where the grateful lady and others are, we may perhaps have found one spot we may call our own and possess no other qualification for the task. That spot is enough. It is our belief in the Self, in Masters: it is the little flame of intuition we have allowed to burn, that we have fostered with care.

"Then come these dreadful lures. They are in fact but mere carcasses, shells of monsters from past existences, offering themselves that we may give them life to terrify us as soon as we

have entered them either by fear or love. No matter which way we enter, whether by attachment to them or by repugnant horror, it is all one: they are in one case vivified by a lover: in the other by a slave who would be free but cannot.

"Here it is the lure of enjoyment of natural pleasures, growing out of life's physical basis; there it is self-praise, anger, vanity, what not? Even these beautiful hills and river they mock one, for they live on untrammelled. Perhaps they do not speak to us because they know the superiority of silence. They laugh with each other at us in the night, amused at the wild struggles of this petty man who would pull the sky down. Ach! God of Heaven! And all the sucklings of Theosophy wish that some great, well diplomaed adept would come and open the secret box; but they do not imagine that other students have stepped on the spikes that defend the entrance to the way that leads to the gate of the Path. But we will not blame them, nor yet wish for the things — the special lots — that some of them have abstracted, because now that we know the dreadful power that despair and doubt and violated conscience have, we prefer to prepare wisely and carefully and not rush in like fools where angels do not pass uninvited.

"But, Companion, I remind you of the power of the lure. This Path passes along under a sky and in a clime where every weed grows a yard in the night. It has no discrimination. Thus even after weeks or months of devotion, or years of work, we are surprised at small seeds of vanity or any other thing which would be easily conquered in other years of inattentive life, but which seem now to arise as if helped by some damnable intelligence. This great power of self-illusion is strong enough to create a roaring torrent or a mountain of ice between us and our Masters. Z. .

...."

The Path lies not in extremes but midway, like that Sun whose centre is everywhere, like that Eternal Liberty which Boehme says is the middlemost and within all things. We must pin ourselves down to a rigid appreciation of the mathematical workings of Law and trace their connection with our own constitution. It would seem well to take all the suggestions we can get, but I have known travellers on western prairies who preferred to go a day's journey out of their road, rather than make inquiry of a passer by. If the law of Continuity remains unbroken, as it must if it exists at all, and from its very nature cannot be suspended, then there must be personalities far more progressed than ourselves, somewhere along the vast chain stretching from man to the Deity. I have heard comrades repel the idea that any "Master" could aid them. The western mind detests that word; American boys will not even say "schoolmaster." And yet it is only an equivalent for Teacher, and how glorious are the teachings.

If a man's magnetic sphere be confused, however, he cannot feel the attraction of higher spheres; he does not believe in their existence. If they do not exist to his hope or his intuition, for him they are not, nor will he feel their benefit even indirectly until he shall have evolved enough spiritual energy to enable him to assimilate the currents which unceasingly flow from them to raise the powers of the race. Let every man have his mind within his own power and resolve firmly to believe. Our own is everywhere if we will only take it! We do not justly value the gifts of Truth given us without personal attestation. We clamor for persons and authorities; we have a sense of injury which cries to the echo; "if Truth be true she will sign her name. "Not always: for how then can the perceptions of men be tested in the absence of genuine relations? How can those students be discovered who do not depend upon a revenue stamp to recognize a genuine article?

If a man receives a gem, does he growl because the jeweller's case came not with it? What lustre can a name add to Truth? We should need no guarantee beyond the spirit of the words; the words themselves are often traps. Nothing avails us at last but the touch-stone of our own souls; it is deeply concealed in the heart, far beyond the elemental nature. It is not mind, judgment, reason: it is the fire which tests and welds.

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Maya*, i.e., "illusion." ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE POETRY OF REINCARNATION IN WESTERN LITERATURE: II —

E. D. Walker

PART II.

BRITISH POETRY.

FROM "INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY."

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting
The soul that rises with us, our life's star
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar.

Not in entire forgetfulness
And not in utter nakedness

But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home.

Heaven lies about us in our infancy
Shades of the prison house begin to close
Upon the growing boy;

But he beholds the light, and whence it flows
He sees it in his joy.

The youth who daily farther from the East
Must travel, still is nature's priest
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended.

At length the man perceives it die away
And fade into the light of common day.

WM. WORDSWORTH

A REMEMBRANCE.

Methinks I can remember when, a shade
All soft and flowery was my couch, and I

A little naked child, with fair white flesh
And wings all gold bedropt, and o'er my head
Bright fruits were hanging and tall balmy shrines
Shed odorous gums around me and I lay
Sleeping and waking in that wondrous air
Which seemed infused with glory, and each breeze
Bore as it wandered by, sweet melodies;
But whence, I knew not. One delight was there
Whether of feeling or of sight or touch
I know not now — which is not in this earth,
Something all-glorious and all beautiful,
Of which our language speaketh not, and which
Flies from the eager grasping of my thought
As doth the shade of a forgotten dream.
All knowledge had I, but I cared not then
To search into my soul and draw it thence.
The blessed creatures that around me played
I knew them all, and where their resting was,
And all their hidden symmetry I knew,
And how the form is linked into the soul,
I knew it all, but thought not on it then
I was so happy.

And once upon a time
I saw an army of bright beaming shapes
Fair faced and rosy cinctured and gold winged
Approach upon the air. They came to me
And from a crystal chalice silver brimmed
Put sparkling potion to my lips and stood
All around me, in the many blooming shades,
Shedding into the centre where I lay
A mingling of soft light, and then they sang
Songs of the land they dwelt in; and the last

Lingereth even till now upon mine ear.

Holy and blest

Be the calm of thy rest

For thy chamber of sleep

Shall be dark and deep

They shall dig thee a tomb

In the dark deep womb

In the warm dark womb.

Spread ye, spread the dewy mist around him

Spread ye, spread till the thick dark night surround him.

Till the dark long night has bound him

Which bindeth all before their birth

Down upon the nether earth.

The first cloud is beaming and bright

The next cloud is mellowed in light

The third cloud is dim to sight

And it stretches away into gloomy night.

Twine ye, twine, the mystic threads around him

Twine ye, twine, till the fast firm fate surround him

Till the firm cold fate hath bound him

Which bindeth all before their birth

Down upon the nether earth.

The first thread is beaming and bright

The next thread is mellowed in light

The third thread is dim to sight,

And it stretches away into a gloomy night.

Sing ye, sing, the fairy songs around him

Sing ye, sing, till the dull warm sleep surround him

Till the warm damp sleep hath bound him

Which bindeth all before their birth

Down upon the nether earth.

The first dream is beaming and bright
The next dream is mellowed in light
The third dream is dim to sight
And it stretches away into gloomy night.

Then dimness passed upon me and that song
Was sounding o'er me when I woke
To be a pilgrim on the nether earth.

DEAN ALFORD, 1850.

FROM "CATO'S SOLILOQUY ON THE SOUL.

Eternity — thou pleasing, dreadful thought
Through what variety of untried being
Through what new scenes and dangers must we pass?
The wide, th' unbounded prospect lies before me
But shadows, clouds and darkness rest upon it.

JOSEPH ADDISON.

RETURNING DREAMS.

As in that world of Dream whose mystic shades
Are cast by still more mystic substances,
We ofttimes have an unreflecting sense
A silent consciousness, of some things past
So clear that we can wholly comprehend
Others of which they are a part, and even
Continue them in action, though no stress
Of after memory can recognize
That we have had experience of those things
Or sleeping or awake:

Thus in the dream,
Our universal Dream, of Mortal Life,
The incidents of an anterior dream,

Or it may be, Existence, noiselessly intrude
Into the daily flow of earthly things,
Instincts of good — immediate sympathies
Places come at by chance, that claim at once
An old acquaintance — single random looks
That bare a stranger's bosom to our eyes;
We *know* these things are so, we ask not why
But act and follow as the Dream goes on.

R. M. MILNES, (Lord Houghton).

FROM "THE MYSTIC."

Who dreams not life more tearful than the hours
Since first into this world he wept his way
Earthward, may be called of God, man's soul
In patriarchal periods, comet-like
Ranges, perchance, all spheres successive, and in each
With nobler powers endowed and senses new
Set season bideth.

PHILIP TAMES BAILEY.

FROM "DE PROFUNDIS."

BIRTH.

Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep.
Where all that was to be, in all that was,
Whirled for a million aeons thro' the vast
Waste dawn of multitudinous eddy light —
Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
Thro' all this changing world of changeless law.
And every phase of ever heightening life,
And nine long months of ante-natal gloom,
Thou comest.

Tennyson also writes: —

For how should I for certain hold
Because my memory is so cold.
That I *first* was in human mould?

It may be that no life is found
Which only to one engine bound
Falls off, but cycles always round.

But, if I lapsed from nobler place,
Some legend of a fallen race
Alone might hint of my disgrace.

Or, if through lower lives I came —
Tho' all experience past became
Consolidate in mind and frame —

I might forget my weaker lot;
For is not our first year forgot?
The haunts of memory echo not.

Some draughts of Lethe doth await
As old mythologies relate
The slipping through from state to state

Moreover, something is or seems,
That touches me with mystic gleams,
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams —

Of something felt, like something here;
Of something done, I know not where;
Such as no language may declare.

In Shelley's poems the ideas of pre-existence and many lives may frequently be met expressly or implied. The title over one of his

songs of unrest "The World's Wanderer" evidently alludes to himself, as do the lines in it

"Like the world's rejected guest."

The song of the spirits in "Prometheus Unbound" pictures vividly the human soul's descent into the gloom of the material world:

To the deep, to the deep!

Down, down!

Through the shade of sleep

Through the cloudy strife

Of Death and of Life

Through the veil and the bar

Of things which seem and are

Even to the steps of the remotest throne,

Down, down!

While the sound whirls around

Down, down!

As the fawn draws the hound

As the lightning the vapour

As a weak moth, the taper;

Death, despair; love, sorrow;

Time both; today, tomorrow;

As steel obeys the spirit of the stone

Down, down!

In the depth of the deep

Down, down!

Like the veiled lightning asleep

Like the spark nursed in embers,

The last look Love remembers,

Like a diamond which shines

On the dark wealth of mines

A spell is treasured but for thee alone,
Down, down!

THE RETREAT.

Happy those early days when I
Shined in my angel-infancy
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race
Or taught my soul to fancy aught
But a white celestial thought;
When yet I had not walked above
A mile or two from my first love,
And, looking back, at that short space
Could see a glimpse of his bright face
When on some gilded cloud or flower
My gazing soul would dwell an hour
And in those weaker glories spy
Some shadows of eternity;
Before I taught my tongue to wound
My conscience with a sinful sound;
Or had the black art to dispense
A several sin to every sense.
But felt through all this flashy dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness.

Oh, how I long to travel back
And tread again that ancient track!
That I might once more reach that plain
Where first I left my glorious train;
From whence the enlightened spirit sees
That shady city of palm trees.
But ah! my soul with too much stay
Is drunk and staggers in the way

Some men a forward motion love,
But I by backward steps would move
And when this dust falls to the urn,
In that state I came, return.

HENRY VAUGHAN

Edmund W. Gosse treats the idea of Wordsworth's "Intimations"
in a way directly opposite to the older poet, in these verses:

TO MY DAUGHTER.

Thou hast the colors of the Spring
The gold of king cups triumphing
 The blue of wood-bells wild,
But winter thoughts thy spirit fill
And thou art wandering from us still
 Too young to be our child.

Yet have thy fleeting smiles confessed
Thou dear and much desired guest
 That home is near at hand.
Long lost in high mysterious lands
Close by our door thy spirit stands
 In journey well nigh past.

Oh sweet bewildered soul, I watch
The fountains of thine eyes, to catch
 New fancies bubbling there,
To feel one common light, and lose
The flood of strange etherial hues
 Too dire for us to share!

Fade, cold immortal lights, and make
This creature human for my sake
 Since I am nought but clay;

An angel is too fine a thing
To sit behind my chair and sing
And cheer my passing day.

I smile, who could not smile, unless
The air of rapt unconsciousness
Past with the fading hours;
I joy in every childish sign
That proves the stranger less divine
And much more meekly ours.

FROM "A RECORD."

None sees the slow and upward sweep
By which the soul from life-depths deep
Ascends, — unless, mayhap when free
With each new death we backward see
The long perspective of our race
Our multitudinous past lives trace.

WILLIAM SHARP.

THE PATH has already shown Browning's expression of Reincarnation contained in Paracelsus. In his poem "One Word More" occur these lines also:

I shall never, in the years remaining
Paint you pictures, no, nor carve you statues
This of verse alone one life allows me
Other heights in other lives, God willing.

Similar glimpses of this thought occur in Byron, Pope, Coleridge, Swinburne and others, but it is difficult to select a continuous and complete wording of it in them.

NOTES ON THE ASTRAL LIGHT: II — *B. N. Acle*

FROM ELIPHAS LEVI'S WORKS. (*Continued.*)

That which is true in cause, is real in effect; that which is not realized does not exist. The realization of speech is the Word, properly so called: a thought is realized in becoming a word — realized by signs, by sounds, by figures. This is the first degree of realization. Then it impresses itself upon the Astral Light by these signs or words, it influences other minds by repeating itself in them, refracts itself in traversing the imaginations of others, assumes therein new forms and proportions, and finally transmutes itself into actions and modifies society and the world. This is the last degree of realization. Those who are born in a world which is modified by an idea, bear the imprint of it, and it is thus that the word is made flesh.

The Astral Light, figured in ancient symbology by the serpent biting its tail, represents in turn, folly and prudence, time and eternity, the Tempter and the Redeemer; thus this Light, being the vehicle of life, serves as an auxiliary alike to good or evil, assumes the fiery shape of Satan as well as the form of the Holy Spirit. It is the universal weapon in the wars of the Angels, feeds the fires of Hell, and furnishes the lightning of Saint Michael. It may be likened to a horse that has the attributes of the chameleon, and reflects always the armor of its rider.

The law of realization produces what may be called *magnetic respiration*; which impregnates objects and places, and communicates to them an influence corresponding to our dominant wishes. In a word, the universal agent, the latent Astral Light, tends ever to equilibrium; it fills every void, and aspires ever to repletion. For this reason vice is contagious, just as are

certain physical maladies, and so it works powerfully for the proselytism of either vice or virtue. For this reason, also, relics, be they either of saints or of great criminals, may produce marvellous effects either of sudden conversion or perversion. The soul breathes just as the body does; it draws in that which it esteems happiness, and gives out the ideas which result from its inmost sensations. So diseased souls have a bad breath, and vitiate the moral atmosphere; that is to say, they mingle impure reflections with the Astral Light which penetrates them, and thus establish deleterious currents.

We are often astonished, when in society, at being assailed by evil thoughts and suggestions that we would not have imagined possible, and we are not aware that we owe them solely to the presence of some morbid neighbor; this fact is of great importance, since it relates to the manifestation of conscience — one of the most terrible and incontestable secrets of the magic art.

This magnetic respiration throws about the soul a halo, of which it is the centre, and surrounds it with the reflection of its own actions, which make for it a heaven or a hell.

No actions are isolated, and none can be hidden; everything that we really wish, that is to say, everything that we confirm by our acts, remains in the Astral Light, in which its reflections are preserved; these reflections again influence our thoughts, by mingling with our lucidity, and thus a man becomes, and continues to be, the author of his destiny.

The Astral Light, combining with ethereal fluids, forms the astral phantom of which Paracelsus speaks in his philosophy of intuition. This astral body, being freed at death, attracts to itself, and preserves for a long time, by the sympathy of likeness, the reflections of the past life; if a powerfully sympathetic will draws it into the proper current, it manifests itself in the form of an

apparition.

The Astral Light, transmuted into human light at the moment of conception, is the primary envelope of the soul. This fluidic body, like the mass of the Astral Light, has two contrary movements, attractive on the right hand, and repulsive on the left; or reciprocal, as in the case of the two sexes; this produces in us the strife of contending emotions, and contributes to the terrors of conscience; thus are produced in us sometimes temptations, sometimes subtile or unexpected graces.

This is the explanation of the traditional dogma of the two attendant Angels who help us or oppose us: these two movements of the Astral Light may be represented by a Balance, in which are weighed our resolutions.

The Astral body is not always of the same sex as the material body: that is to say, these two forces, swaying, so to speak, from right to left, often seem to contradict the visible organization; thus are produced the striking errors of the human passions, and thus may be explained, although without in the least justifying them, the amorous peculiarities of an Anacreon or a Sappho.

There are persons who cannot be offended with impunity, and one who does them an injury may begin to die from that very moment; there are some men whose influence is felt at once, and whose mere glance may change the direction of the current of our life.

The basilisk who killed by his look, is not a fable, but a magic allegory. As a rule, it is injurious to the health to have enemies, and it is not possible, with impunity, to brave the reprobation of anyone: before opposing ourselves to a force or a current, we should be sure that the person or the current is not stronger than we are; otherwise, we shall be overwhelmed or even annihilated.

Many sudden deaths are attributable to no other cause than this. The dramatic deaths of Nadab and Abihu, of Ananias and Sapphira, were caused by the electric currents of the faith that they outraged.

The intense reprobation that was aroused by the massacre of St. Bartholemew was the sole cause of the horrible malady and death of Charles IX; and Henry IV, if he had not been sustained by the enormous popularity which he owed to his personal magnetism, or the sympathetic power of his astral life, could scarcely have survived his conversion, and would have perished beneath the contempt of the Protestants, combined with the distrust and hatred of the Catholics.

Unpopularity may be a proof of integrity and courage, but it is never a proof of political wisdom. Outrages to public opinion are fatal to statesmen; and it is possible to recall the premature and violent death of more than one illustrious man, of which it is not fitting to speak here. These verdicts of public opinion may be very unjust, but they are none the less causes of failure, or even sentences of death. On the other hand, injuries done to a single human being may, and unless reparation is made, must, cause the destruction of a community or of a whole nation. This is what is meant by "the cry of blood" — for at the bottom of every injustice, lies the germ of a homicide.

It is because of these terrible laws of solidarity, that Christianity insists so strenuously upon the forgiveness of injuries, and the necessity of reconciliation. He who dies without forgiving his enemy, hurls himself into eternity armed with a dagger, and devotes himself to the horrors of eternal murder.

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE EQUILATERAL TRIANGLE — *Lydia Bell*

The triangle holds its place as a symbol in the mathematics of ideal proportions. As a symbol in ethics it at once suggests the idea of mathematical exactness and method in connection with spiritual problems. A true spiritualism is able to demonstrate its position in the exactness of the law of pure mathematics. A spiritualism that fails in this, fails in the only method known to finite comprehension as exact, and leads to the inference, that a law can express more than the law giver. The law of mathematics holds our highest concept of absolute Truth. The law is universal, and in its unfolding gives us the highest possible relation. Music, art, poetry, all that we know of the ennobling and beautifying expressions of the soul, manifest themselves in numbers. The truth of music is in measure; the truth of art is in proportion; the truth of poetry is in ratio. Science has never revealed anything but a broader application of the law of number. Chemistry is combination or addition. Botany is analysis or subtraction. In astronomy we strike the true because the incomprehensible — we deal with the unknown quantity. The true basis of reasoning is from cause to effect. To correctly measure the force of a stream we will go to its source. When the source is unknown, it becomes the unknown quantity of our calculation, and through the application of it as an unknown quantity, we approximate to a true knowledge of it. In dealing with the greatest of all problems — that of existence — mathematical principles have been ignored. I know it is objected that mathematics are too cold for religion. "We want the warmth of sentiment and emotion in spiritual things." The warmth of sentiment and emotion, unsupported by the truth of mathematics, is the song without music, poetry without rhythm, and art without harmony. It

abides where music, poetry and art have not yet become the language of the soul. As compared to the warmth derived from a mathematical basis, it is the flash of light reflected from a mirror as distinguished from the direct glow of a sunbeam; one scorches and dazzles, the other warms; one blinds the vision, the other is a "lamp to the feet," revealing the way. A change in the multiplication table to suit the fancy of every one who had a problem to solve, would make a chaos of all calculation — without an exact basis in ethics this is our condition in spiritual things. One man's revelation is not another's; and each holds his opinion, or sentiment, as truth. One man's opinions or any set of men's opinions cannot alter the truth as discovered in mathematics. Here and here only, can we determine the problem of life in the terms of law. Here we reach a solution that brings us to the recognition of brotherhood in spiritual things, as we are a recognized brotherhood in mathematics. The axioms of truth have no more to be changed in dealing with the realities of life, than in dealing with its grosser calculations. A universal brotherhood finds its realization in the universal recognition of a Deity that appeals to all in the harmony of an everywhere manifested law.

Starting with the triangle as the unit of all subjective operations our conception of it is based upon our knowledge of the objective unit: we proceed from a knowledge of the part to a concept of the whole — or unknown unit. To do this we transmute the objective to the subjective and raise the power of the numeral to infinity. When thus raised to the power of the infinite unit the triangle is our symbol for truth. As a symbol for the whole of truth, it holds the key to all science, to all wisdom, and its study leads with certain steps to and through that door wherein the mystery of life ceases to be a problem, and becomes revelation. An understanding of the triangle depends upon the analysis of the

objective unit, the arithmetic definition of which is "a single thing." The first idea we get from this single thing is wholeness; nothing can be added to it nor subtracted from it without impairing its unity as a single thing. Second: Its unity involves the idea that it can be separated, that it consists of parts. Third: These parts hold certain unchanging relationship to each other, then as related to its wholeness it has unity, as related to its separableness it has diversity, and as related to its unchangeableness it has identity; unity, diversity and identity, are the essential qualities of every "single thing," or every unit, and the equilateral triangle is the symbol that manifests these three qualities in unity. The figure 3 does not do it as we lose in it the idea of three related parts. Three separate 1's will not do it, as the idea of unity is lost. We combine the three is to express the unity and diversity, and when combined we have the idea of identity, and the triangle is the symbol of the subjective unit, Each side of the triangle is the figure 1, and this manifests unity in its wholeness, diversity in its two ends and identity in its central; point which is changeless for every figure 1. Thus the figure 1 manifests the triangle in the symbol and the first deduction we make is: *the unit is a trinity*. The triangle is a unit, each part of the triangle is a unit, hence, it follows that *every part manifests the whole*. Seen in motion the triangle measures the arc of the pendulum, these successive arcs make the circle and the circle marks Infinity — or the pendulum swing that marks eternity in space and time, and so annihilates space and time. This idea of the unit in connection with motion and form gives the idea of motionless and formless as manifested truth. Form and motion involve change, the unit cannot change. The magnetic needle in its perfect poise illustrates what I mean, and shows: the motion of the unit in, positive or centrifugal, in negative or centripetal, and poise. *Perfect poise is changeless*. The absolute is always the center, a change in the center belongs to finite perception and not

to Infinite Truth. The unknown quantity of Infinite Poise will always be the unknown quantity, but as the part manifests the whole we shall always have a measure of understanding proportioned to our discernment. As we do not hold the center, we do not hold both the positive and negative, and so we manifest a minus quantity in all our thinking. The *symbol cannot change*. Its action in truth is *Energy in Poise*. Delsarte makes a clear exposition of this principle. Perfect expression in music is vibrating harmony, and then music is soundless. The human form is the prophecy of the principle in limbs — or positive, head — negative and torso — poise, the hand manifests it in fingers, palm and thumb, the thumb indicates the line of physical balance, and falls when the balance is lost.

Blood, bone, and breath, circulation, secretion and respiration: all functional activity shows us the symbol. We have it in the planet as water-centrifugal, earth-centripetal, and air-poise, or manifested as liquid — solid and gas. It expresses the law of chemical affinity and the organic cell. Light, electricity and magnetism are its etherialized exponents. Of the three primary colors, blue is the life or centrifugal ray, yellow is the illuminating or centripetal ray and red is the warm or poised raw. The ideal of these rays is blue for life or will, yellow (or wisdom, and red for love, which brings us to the Divine Father principle, the Divine Mother principle, and the Divine Guild as the Divine Trinity of manifested truth, or the circle of manifested Deity. The nearer man approaches a form that manifests *Energy in Poise*, the nearer he is to taking his place in the line of the triangle. In expression, voice is centrifugal or going out, gesture is poised or within, and the word is centered or coming back, and this is the order manifested in the child. We reach true expression in proportion as the energy of going out is at one with the energy of coming back: in other words when the impulse of the creature in

aspiration is one with the Creator in inspiration, man finds himself a part of the line of the triangle, a part of the word that "in the beginning was God." To express the truth of the triangle, is to manifest the supreme energy of the universe, and that means the bringing of the line of life in ourselves into the line of truth in ourselves. This is the true work of existence. Love measures the poise, *and we know when we have attained it*. There is no room for finding fault, for recrimination or judgment of our neighbor, the battle is with the self.

The Path

THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE: VII — *Pilgrim*

THE HIGHER CARELESSNESS.

When the mental vision has been searching with troubled and anxious gaze for some sure clue to the heavenward path, or when it has recoiled in horror before the picture of an effete civilization breaking up, and anarchy and violence taking the place of order, it is an intense relief to realize that there is an inner stronghold where the worn warrior may retire to, that there is a sure harbour where the storm tossed bark may find rest. And this harbour is ever at hand, this stronghold may be entered any moment. It requires but the conviction of its paramount necessity, it requires but the surrender — absolute and unconditional — of the man's lower nature to the other pole of his Being, and lo! he has attained a peace and a strength that the crumbling of the world in ruins at his feet could not shake. To be able to live in this state permanently is to have attained the condition of the Yogi or the Saint, but to have experienced it even for one moment teaches that it is the first step on the true spiritual path, which the mental vision might grope for through eternity without finding.

For one whose imagination can conjure up scenes of that human earthquake, a social revolution, where the impossibility of gauging the forces or of foreseeing the developments, adds so awfully to the horror of the situation. Surely strength and courage must be the paramount qualities required, courage to keep the heart from fainting at the dread anticipation, and strength to keep the brain from reeling in the conflict.

But if the man has so fixed his soul on the Supreme soul, has so surrendered his will to the divine Will, has so identified himself with the Deity, that he feels he is but a tool in the omnipotent

hand, the divine carelessness will have entered into him, and that will give him strength. There will be no looking forward with dread anticipation, for he cares not what happens to him — the duty that lies at his hand he will do with a clear brain and a steadfast will, caring not for the result though it may be danger and death — but what matters that? the flesh may quail at the final parting, but the man who has identified himself with the spirit within, which has inhabited many a house of flesh, has raised himself above mortal fears.

It is only in moments of supreme concentration and by intense imaginative power that we who toil on on lower levels can occasionally get a glimpse of this serene condition, which as far as words can describe it would seem to be portrayed in the second part of *Light on the Path* (Rule 8). "You can stand upright now, firm as a rock amid the turmoil, obeying the warrior who is thy self and thy king. Unconcerned in the battle save to do his bidding, having no longer any care as to the result of the battle — for one thing only is important — that the warrior shall win; and you know he is incapable of defeat, standing thus, cool and awakened, use the hearing you have acquired by pain and by the destruction of pain, &c."

Even these who are still bound by the desires of action may occasionally reach in imagination the exalted serenity of this state of being, and such contemplation must doubtless help in freeing from the bondage of desire. Philanthropic work for Humanity will no longer seem an object for action, for the devotee will have become conscious that the Supreme Power that acts by him, is also guiding by invisible hands the whole course of human affairs, and the well-meant remedial actions of purblind men will, under the new illumination of the eternal light, appear to him in their true character as the ineffectual gropings of captives in a cavern. And the very fact of his no longer desiring to garner the

fruit of his actions will cause his actions to be all the more far reaching in their results. The will becomes omnipotent when dissociated from human desire, for it is then part of the divine will.

His attitude towards Humanity will also find a parallel in his attitude towards Divinity, for the passionate adoration will have been left behind, and will have given place to the carelessness of the divine serenity.

The conquering of all earthly desires must be a work of ages, and many lessons will doubtless still remain to be learned by him who has attained to this state. It is written that the aspirant must always look forward with awe, and always be prepared for the battle, but in the vast scale of Being, great distance is lost in the infinite beyond, and from our present standpoint this higher carelessness would indeed seem to be the ultimate state realizable by man while still he bears the body, for what other is it than a foretaste while in the body of that "peace of God which passeth all understanding"?

The Path

AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER? — *American Mystic*

(Genesis 6:9)

Many students, in their search for light, find divers problems presented to them for solution; questions so puzzling from the contradictory aspects which they present, that the true course is difficult of attainment for those who seek Right Living.

One of these questions, Is it our duty to interfere if we see a wrong being done? arises.

The question of duty is one that can be decided fully only by each individual himself. No code of laws or table of rules unchanging and inflexible will be given, under which all must act, or find duty.

We are so ignorant or so newly acquainted with a portion of the Divine Will that generally we are poorly fitted to declare decisively what is wrong, or evil.

Each man is the law unto himself — the law as to right and wrong, good and evil. No other individual may violate the law of that man, any more than any other law, without producing the inevitable result, the penalty of an infracted law.

I dare not declare that any one thing or course is evil in *another*. For me it may be evil. I am not wise enough to know what it is for another. Only the Supreme knows, for He only can read the heart, the mind, the soul of each. "Thou shalt not judge," saith the sacred writing.

My duty is clear in many places, but in the performing of it I may neither act as a judge or hold animosity, anger, or disgust.

Were a man to abuse an animal, surely I must interfere to prevent suffering to the helpless, dumb and weak, for so we are enjoined. This done, my duty lies in helping my brother, for he knew not what he did.

My aim is to find Wisdom, and my duty, to do away with ignorance wherever it is encountered. His act was caused by ignorance. Were a man to abuse wife or child through unwise use of wine or drug truly it is my duty to prevent suffering or sorrow for either wife or child, and also to prevent greater misery — perhaps murder. They are human beings, my fellows. This done, my duty lies toward the man, not in condemnation, but seeking the cause that makes him unwise, strive to alleviate — if not free him from it. He also is my brother.

If men steal, lie, cheat, betray the innocent or are betrayed by the knowing, my duty lies in preventing for others, if I may, sorrow and anguish, pain and want, misery, suicide or bloodshed, which may be, for *others* the result of these acts.

My duty lies in preventing effects such as these from love for and a desire to help all men, not because men's actions seem to me wrong or their courses evil. I know not the causes of their actions, nor all the reasons why they are permitted. How then may I say this or that man is evil, this or that thing is wrong? *The effects* may to *me* seem evil, inasmuch as such appears to be the result for others. Here my duty is to prevent evil to other mortals in the way that seems most wise.

"Finally this is better that one do
His own task as he may even though he fail,
Than take tasks not his own, though they seem good."
— *Song Celestial (Bhagavad-Gita)*.

He who seeks "the small old path" has many duties to perform.

His duty to mankind, his family — nature — himself and his creator, but duty here means something very different from that which is conveyed by the time and lip-worn word, *Duty*. Our comprehension of the term is generally based upon society's or man's selfish interpretation. It is quite generally thought that duty means the performance of a series of acts which *others* think *I* ought to perform, whereas, it more truly means the performance of actions by me which *I know* are good for *others*, or the wisest at the moment.

It would be quite dangerous for me to take upon myself the duty of another, either because he told me it was good, or that it was duty. It would be dangerous for him and me if I assumed that which he felt it was good to do, for that is his duty, and cannot be mine. That which is given him to do I cannot do for him. That which is given me to do no living thing can do for me. If I attempt to do another's duty then I assume that which belongs not to me, was not given me. I am a thief, taking that which does not belong to me. My brother consenting thereto becomes an idler, fails to comprehend the lesson, shifts the responsibility, and between us we accomplish nothing.

We are instructed to do good. That is duty. In doing good all that we do is covered, that for which we are here is being accomplished and that is — duty. We are enjoined to do good *where it is safe*. Not safe for ourselves, but safe for the objects toward which our duty points. Often we behold beings suffering great wrong. Our emotions prompt us to rush forward and in some way prevent the continuance of it. Still the wise man knows it is not safe. Were he to do so his efforts would only arouse the antagonism and passions of superior numbers, whose unrestrained and ungoverned wills would culminate in the perpetration of greater wrongs upon the one who already suffers. It is safe to do good, or my duty, after I find how to do it in the

way that will not create evil, harm others or beget greater evils.

For him who seeks the upward way there is no duty — for nothing is a duty. He has learned that the word conveys an erroneous meaning when applied to the doings of the Seeker. It implies the performance of that which savors of a task, or a certain required or demanded act necessary before progress is made or other deeds be performed. Of duty, there is none such as this.

He learns to do good and that which appears the wisest at the time, forgetting self so fully that he only knows his doing good to others — forgetting self so far that he forgets to think whether he is doing his duty or not — entering Nirvana to this extent that he does not remember that he is doing his duty. That *for him* is duty.

"Resist not evil," saith one of the Wise. He who said this knew full well his duty, and desired to convey to us knowledge. That he did not mean men to sit idly by while ignorance let slip the dogs of pain, anguish, suffering, want and murder, is surely true. That he did not mean men to kneel in puerile simulation of holiness by the roadside, while their fellow men suffer torture, wrong or abuse, is still more true. That he did not intend a man to sit silently a looker-on while that which is called evil worked its will upon others when by the lifting of a finger, perhaps, its intentions might be thwarted and annulled — is truth itself. These all would be neglect of a portion of the whole duty of man. He who taught that men should "resist not evil" desired them only to forget themselves. Men think that all things which are disagreeable to them, are evil. By resistance he meant complaint, anger and objection to or against the inevitable, disagreeable or sorrowful things of life, that come to self, and he *did not* mean man to go forth in the guise of a martyr, hugging these same penalties to his bosom while he proclaims himself thereby the possessor of the

magic *pass word*; (which he will never own and which is never uttered in that way) *I have Suffered*.

If men revile, persecute or wrong one, why resist? Perhaps it is evil, but so long as it affects one's-self only, it is no great matter. If want, sorrow or pain come to one why resist or cry out? In the resistance or war against them we create greater evils. Coming to one's-self, they should have little weight, while at the same time they carry invaluable lessons in their hands. Rightly studied they cause one to forget himself in the desire to assist others when similarly placed, and the Lotus of duty — or love for man — to bloom out of the Nile mire of life. Resist not evil, for it is inseparable from life. It is our duty to live, and accept uncomplainingly, all of life. Resist not evil, but rather learn of it all the good which in reality it only veils.

Seek in it, as well as in the gleaming good, for *the Mystery*; and there will come forth from both the self-same form upon whose forehead is written "Duty," which being interpreted, meaneth efforts for the good of all *other* men, and over whose heart is written: "I am my brother's keeper."

The Path

CHRISTIANITY - THEOSOPHY — *Wm. H. Kimball*

THEOS: *Ingenerate Creative Father or Life-giving Power.*

THEOGONY: *Generative, Creative Maternity or Life-bearing Process from the Father.*

THEOSOPHY: *Generated Body in divine Human Form — Embodied Wisdom of the Father.*

All positive Science, of whatever form or degree, must both analyze and synthetize its subject or theme, before it can vindicate its power as embodied science.

We may say of science itself, accordingly, that, according to strict creative law, it is a *one*, (science) in three-fold order — as *thesis*, *analysis*, and *synthesis*. And this triunity of sciential nature is realized by the human understanding according to the various planes of man's mental constitution, which is itself a triune power apportioned to the threefold providence of Creative Wisdom. This providence gives us:

Firstly: a *Subordinate-Natural Sphere* in the Corporeal realm of creation, primarily related to sensuous experience.

Secondly: a *Superior-Natural Sphere* in the reflective or ideal realm, mediately related to moral and rational experience; and

Thirdly: *Supreme-Natural Sphere*, in the vital realities of eternal Life and Law that are intrinsically one with the human soul as the central verities of all divine intuitions, revelations, and fulfilling powers.

So, the human intellect comes to be fortified in understanding and power according to its attainments in the degrees of Sub-Natural, Super-Natural, and Supreme-Natural degrees of science.

In the first it mainly memorizes observed things and facts.

In the second it analyzes and synthetizes things, facts and ideas immediately related thereto.

In the third it comes to be opened to the contemplation of the necessary laws of Creative Being, thence systematically traces the operation of those laws in the varied processes of forming and filling the creaturely vessel as a spiritual subject fitted to creative designs; and finally comprehends the full law and testimony of that end itself, as God's true creation achieved in divine Sonship humanly realized.

Such is a briefest possible outline of the service of the Christian Revelation, as I understand it, to the human intellect. And the powers of life in man unfold and work by the same order of creative degrees; so that from right *being*, through true *knowing*, in divinest *doing*, creation becomes livingly consummated in the human form in conscious oneness with the Divine and thus endowed with all the powers of supreme mastery or lordship.

And I understand that the process to this *end* is vitally set forth in the Christian Revelation as a crucial travail in creation towards full creative glorification and ascension to the majesty there inherent. And I further understand that the reign of worldliness in the creaturely subject must give place to the rule of the spirit (aspiration for holiness or wholeness in life) ere man can escape from the practice of penance and self-abnegation, and become born into the *consummating degree* of ascension *towards* the Highest. After this birth into the spirit of righteousness (the love of right for its own sake) there is no more achievement through repentance or penitence and *forcible* putting away of besetting evils; yet there is a liability to fall and bruising until evolution in this spirit shall have wrought its perfect ends. But the old process of repentance and forgiveness cannot be available here, because

if the spirit or heart is right there can be no repentance.

If one in love with cleanliness fell into a pool of filth he would not indulge self-accusing or repentant moods. He would rather pity his misfortune and make it a stimulus for greater care as to missteps in future. And inasmuch as evolution is a law of development in every degree of human experience, this consummating degree under the sway of Holy Spirit must involve a long process of growth ere it becomes matured, just as the fruitional degree of growth in the corn is "first the blade, then the ear, then the corn fully ripe in the ear."

This ripening degree in the human form is not effected by the economy of the previous degree — the experience of repentance and forgiveness as conscious motors of life — but by the scourgings of afflictions and pains and purgatorial fires, designed to "destroy the adversary." Remedial agencies are ample providences to creative designs in all the various conditions of human growth and final gathering in divine fulness by the great Husbandman of Creation, just as an earthly husbandman first prepares the soil and plants the seed, then laboriously cultivates, and at last reaps and gathers the ripened fruits into useful stores — all different processes to one end.

So, while I see in the revelation of Jesus Christ the full light of the *End*, I also see the glory of the Father as requisite primary Life, and thence the clear methods of the creative operations in his natural humanity, before creaturely fruition and "rest" in His Divine Natural Humanity can be realized.

Seeing all this, I want to emphasize the manifest truth that Christianity, seen by the light of creative law that it surely displays, and not by the fallacious and unstable flashes of its professed votaries throughout Christendom during the many toilsome centuries of development of the rank stock, is not a

limitary or exclusive system, but is as broad and catholic as is any possible conception of Human brotherhood.

Its seizure and exposition of special instrumentalities and truths, is only in order that the sublime truth of the *inherent unity* of mankind in creative source, and the *seeming* adherent diversity and contrariety of man in process of creative development, may be surely authenticated as *being* and *seeming* made one in full creative composure at last; and this not for Judaistic stock and its special fruit alone, but for all humankind. For "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ all and in all."

Now, although I have never seen my way to a connection of myself with any of the *various* churches in Christendom — which appear to me to be only crude fragments or broken parts of the great Unitary Humanity, and hence not truly representing that Humanity — I have yet remained a firm votary of the truth actually revealed by the Christian Gospel — the truth of "God in the Christ reconciling the whole world unto himself." So, from the true Christian attitude one may be grounded in all the breadth of universal human brotherhood; and not only that, may come to comprehend the exact law of Creator, Creating and Created. One may come here, not only to a scientific perception of the truths of creative order, but to a practical knowledge of the methods of organizing those truths in human affair? — to qualify human character, order human thought and activities — and thus intelligently cooperating with creative purpose, gradually abolishing unbelief and evil and settling into the harmony of final order and good will towards all men.

One can have no true, satisfactory knowledge of a man from seeing him in his common nature as a human person: for here is where men meet in communal or chaotic indifference. A man

must be known in his special nature — in his manifest power of *doing* — in his productive activity organically embodied — to be vitally known and rated in value. Art-genius in man is of no account *to human fellowship* until that genius becomes sampled in an embodying form that duly reveals it. Then the artist will be known and greeted according to the character of his achievement, at least by such as are duly cultured in his sphere of genius. So, the Creative Genius cannot be known by the dim vision of Theistic faith — by any conception of God's mere *being* as Creator. And as our common humanity stands to Him as embodying instrumentality stands to the artist, that humanity must be divinely fashioned to sample the infinite love, wisdom and power, ere Creation's Artist can be known and truly worshipped, God's creative power being amply sampled in His Divine Natural Humanity personally embodied — this being the Light and Life of the Christian Revelation — He should be known and worshipped by this revealed Light. He cannot be known, *as Creator*, by physical and spiritual conditions short of this revealed *Life in human form*. All degrees of our human development in historic experience, are only so many steps in the forming and qualifying processes of Creative Wisdom, towards His sublime purpose in creation. Hence to rate Christianity by the human conditions or states manifested by professed votaries during the era o! Christian, development, is equivalent to rating the growing ear of grain by its enveloping husk, rather than by the matured "first-fruit" given in the planting.

The grand oratorical chord of UNIVERSAL HUMAN BROTHERHOOD, struck with such force and held with such tenacity by *Theosophy*, is simply the resonant thrill of Creative Wisdom as it livingly plays to fulfil its purpose in the *actual* unity of Humanity — the associate order of Man in organic brotherhood on the earth. And only this aim is the worthy endeavor of man under whatever

banner he marches. In Christian Science the End is clear from the Beginning, and *vice-versa*.

Let us not indulge strife and contention over formal differences, but unite all our forces, under whatever name, in the furtherance of God's ultimate purpose in the Divine Natural Humanity.

If we are Theosophists, intelligently surveying the whole field by Theistic Wisdom, we shall see that God's life as *Creative Theos* must eternally *Be*: thence it must operate through *Theogonal or generative processes*, involving creaturely spirit in natural man as the requisite instrumentality. Thence we must see that true *Theosophic* embodiment — the organic form and activity of *Theos-Wisdom* in the Natural Humanity — must become the fulfilling reality. So, under other terms, as (1) Creative Theos, (2) Creative Theogony, (3) Creative Theosophy in organic form Theistically qualified, is seen just what the truly informed Christian beholds in the Christian Revelation as a science, (1) of Creative Being, (2) of Creative operations in natural man, (3) of Creative End in Divine Natural man, with harmony and order organically realized in all human affairs. Thus it is seen that from the attitude *of true* Christian Science the ampler aspects of Theosophy will be relished with most vital zest. And going on to work "in the unity of the spirit and diversity of operations," *formal* unity will ultimately be realized through the perfect, scientific adjustment of all institutions in constant human service.

The Path

LETTERS ON THE TRUE: IV — *Jasper Niemand*

MY COMRADES:—

That the way to the Immortal lies through the heart of man, is evident to him who observes that in it arise all those feelings which drive him into thought and action and constitute the sum of his life. A primary study of the office and nature of the heart then suggests itself to the wise student, for it is far easier to sink back into the eternal than to dive. The diver must needs have power to retain breath against the rush caused by diving, while to sink back gives time to get and keep breath.

As to the office of the heart of man — by heart I mean that physiological organ which is also the psychological seat of the various emotions and desires whose total we call "mind." "I have changed my mind," is really to say I have changed my desire. The Hindu philosopher calls it "Manas; the heart; the internal organ of perception which receives the external impression of the senses and transmits them through the consciousness (Ahankara) and the intellect (Buddhi) to the soul, and is the seat of the passions."

(1) The seat of the astral soul being in the heart, that spark causes the systole and diastole of the heart by its own vibration in unison with the whole body of Astral Light. We can thus conceive of the heart as "pumping up" such light along the nervous system (just as it does the blood through the circulatory system) whence it is transmitted in rhythmic shocks to the brain, and reflected by the gray matter there to its mysterious inhabitant, Consciousness. If the heart's action be disturbed by passion or emotion, the rhythm of such shocks is altered. These passions and emotions have a two-fold source. They may take their rise in outside astral currents proceeding from other lives: they stream into the heart,

which — if it accepts the insidious suggestions — passes them along as we have seen, and the man carries them out to pleasure himself unless he controls them by his will. Or such thoughts may proceed from the Universal Mind in original purity, and be misconceived by the elemental self of man. The heart may be either (or both) an organ of action or an organ of perception. As the former, it hurries man along the bustling highways of action and fatally commits him to a return to life. As the latter, it perceives the influx of emotions and classes each as a petition of the body which the calm judge within refuses to entertain. Hence we have the saying, "Keep a steady heart," and hence the repeated injunctions of Vedic literature. It is the object of this letter to examine into the methods of such control, but a word as to the nature of soul is first in order.

Brief statements are necessarily incomplete, but it suffices our present purpose to say that the soul has also two offices. Its higher part communicates with the Divine Spirit: the lower elemental part collects the essential experiences of earth life and transfers them to that higher self. Here is a most important link, because these selections determined the tenor of experience, its spirituality or materiality. These selections again, are governed by the heart, or feeder of the elemental self, and it has in turn the option of choice between the pure or the impure, being, however, like all other parts of man, controllable by his supreme will. As we have seen, the heart must take note of all transmissions from without, but if it remains equilibrated, neither recoiling in horror nor eagerly attracting the material, and "free from the pairs of opposites," (2) they are not recorded upon the brain with sufficient vividness to become deeds. In other words, the consciousness does not refer them to self and the man is not moved to action. The intellect has another choice: it may discover the *true nature* within all thoughts, and return them, thus raised

to their highest power, to strengthen the heart. It thus becomes apparent that we must secure the entire co-operation of the heart in order to train the lower nature to submit to the diviner will of man. We must control and regenerate the mind.

The universal mind is the first production of nature, by which, I mean the eternal nature, the material (so to say and in a sublimated sense) essence of Deity. Evidently the first issuing outward or manifestation of the Unknown, was a Thought. Mind is the link between soul and body; it is a subtle form of matter, and is the vehicle of the soul, whether in an individual or a universal sense. Even a mode of motion, such as mind, is "matter" as compared with spirit. Mind serving to transmit the outward to the inward, may also convey the internal to the external. It may look forward or back. Be it remembered that spirituality is not what we understand by the words "virtue" or "goodness." It is the power of perceiving formless, spiritual essences. It may be used for good or evil purposes. The heart may be preoccupied with the eternal or the transitory in either (or both) outward and inward, for selfish or unselfish ends. Hence the initial importance of purifying the natural. Within the beast is that luminelle of the World-Soul, the Archaeus (3) which is the medium between God and man, and it may be alchemized (4) to be the Christ or Christos which is the mediator "for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." (5) Thus along the whole line, at every station and in every part, we have the power of choice, we may depart or return. While man is unconscious of his possible destiny, Karma governs automatically. When he becomes integrally conscious of it and the "moment of choice" is reached, he may turn the faculties of every organ either way. The responsibility of that Knowledge is then upon him and all his actions have a centupled power. (6) We must not forget that no part of his body or constitution stand by itself alone, but reacting

and interacting forms a compact whole.

When the student examines his heart, he first discovers that he does not at all know it; he is not what he appears to himself to be. Perhaps he recovers from some grief which he thought would end his life or his interest in life; or he has longed apparently to end physical suffering by death and finds he has lived on because the real inner man had still the will to live, and finds the intermissions of pain as sweet as by-gone joys. Some withered part of his nature puts forth new buds, or the deadened senses resume the simplicity of youth and with the dying Falstaff he "babbles o' green fields."

"Festus, strange secrets are let out by Death,
Who blabs so oft the follies of this world:
And I am Death's familiar, as you know.
I helped a man to die, some few weeks since,
Warped even from his go-cart to one end –
The living on Prince's smiles, reflected from
A mighty herd of favorites. No mean trick
He left untried; and truly well nigh wormed
All traces of God's finger out of him.
Then died, grown old; and just an hour before
Having lain long with blank and soulless eyes —
He sate up suddenly, and with natural voice
Said, that in spite of thick air and closed doors
God told him it was June; and he knew well
Without such telling, harebells grew in June;
And all that kings could ever give or take
Would not be precious as those blooms to him." (7)

Perhaps sudden revulsions from the path of evil or pleasure have surprised him; or at the wizard touch of realization, the lover, the miser, the votary, the worshipper in him kneel no more but

pursue the nimble chameleon desire to some remoter shrine. Behold the profound wisdom of Truth, which places the ultimate forever beyond his reach!

Seeing then that he can predicate nothing of himself, the student confines himself to an observation of the feelings welling up from those unfathomed deeps. It is here that I am fain to meet him with a few suggestions, for as I watch that tidal ebb and flow within my breast I see that I tasted so much of the gross sweetness of life in other lives that I know most of it now by reason of its being in me.

It appears insufficient to restrain passion or to check action so that they are pent up within us and wait over for their chance in another life. Under the law of attraction those accumulated forces will draw themselves forcibly together within the dreaming soul and driving outward, propel it back to earth and form. So Behmen tells us that the magnet or essential desire of nature compresses itself into a substance to become a plant and in this compression of the desire becomes a feeling or working, whence comes the growing and smell of the plant, and he goes on to remind us that if it were not for such an outgoing and working of the trinity in the eternal unity, the unity were but a stillness, and there would be no nature, no color, shape or figure, nor any world at all. This is the pattern by which all things proceed.

Neither is it wise to rush on in deliberate expenditure. While the burnt out nature may leave us in sight of the spiritual, we may stand there too exhausted to put forward the immense effort required to pass through. (8) It is not needful to plunge again into the mud of sensation to know it. Nor yet should we ignore those parts of us which produce such experience, but admit them and test them. We should not willingly rush back into desires of the past, but accept all situations and study them, the heart fixed on

the True. Then they do not sweep us off into delirious action, but we convert them into true action. Every man may misinterpret or pervert a true ray; he may reflect or deflect. The particular disposition of each man determines the direction, the mode of expression which he may give to any impulse instilled into his mind; this disposition is regulated by the preponderance and proportions of the "three qualities" in his nature. I shall hope to show that all impulse is based upon the True. We must then carefully watch those indices of old fires which are now only banked, and try to turn their powers, by inwardly knowing them, into our service. The discovery and right use of the true essence of Being — this is the whole secret.

The case standing thus, we ask ourselves what is the strongest motor of man. Is it not Desire? When I look out over life I see this strange potency dissimulating yet forcing its underground current along in defiance of laws and civilizations, asserting itself now and then in colossal upheaval, sacrificing health, wealth, fame, honor, love, and life for the intoxicating passion of the hour. I see also, in the arc of life, how the first fierce color of Desire, burning higher, blends here and there to purer hues in the solvent of the one light, and nerves men to sublime self sacrifice. Then I understand that the cohesion of life is in the True, and that this force, properly understood, must be the clue to man's whole nature. Back of its multiform expressions I find one meaning — desire to be. In lovers, in the poet, in the hero's leap to the deed, in the sensualist's longing to be born anew to joy, even in dumb brutes this vigorous stir of force means to expand one's finest essences for a new result on some one of many planes, and the truth of the eternal creative impulse, shines through the low act, as the fire soul through the opal's cloudy heart. Even in passion, tho' I find six drops of poison to the seventh, in that last drop hides the sublime counterpart. It is fed by some experience. Do

not the intense sympathies for others feed and express it? I find that the desire of things is the love of them; this is the "desire which produces will, and it is will which develops force, (9) and the latter generates matter, (10) or an object having form. (11) As the Deity first feels desire "to beget His heart or son," so man follows the divine example, and by transubstantiation, begets a new heart or nature, and a new inner form.

Taking up the fact that man may misunderstand his own heart, I remind you that there are in nature, three great forces.

1st. — The creative. It corresponds to "Love in man." It is "Brahma, the universal expansive force in nature;" the Creator.

2d. — The preservative. It is Maya, the formative power of illusion or ideation; this stands for Vishnu, the preserver, and takes the form of Vanity in man.

3d. — The destructive force. Siva the destroyer; in nature the great separator which annihilating forms or illusions, brings us back to the recombinations of love and closes the circle. This force is Anger in man, and these three, Love, Vanity, Anger, are the three great gates of life and death.

As the author of "Primary Concepts" has most admirably shown us, all things are dual or polar. The other pole of love is lust; of illusion, falsehood; of anger, justice. Duality is the condition of manifestation: without it the deity must remain forever unseen. There is nothing finally and eternally "good" save the mysterious unit. Neither good nor evil is inherent in manifestations, forms or powers, but depend upon the uses to which these emanations are put. The moment departure from Deity takes place the free-will of Being becomes apparent; two paths present themselves for choice — duality and division. Duality is the harmonious inter-action of

two opposites in force. Duality in action is a trinity in unity, composed of two forces and the resultant; this is the condition of life. Division is the discordant, or disconnected working of two forces, whereby one overpowers the other, acts for a time in sterile isolation and then ceases to exist in that shape or form. This is the condition of change or death. Without intercorrelation, without attraction and repulsion, we are without the attributes of life. As the life of the material universe can thus be traced to magnetism or desire, so all our personal desires have a common aim: sensation, or the realization of life. This is also the law of the Deity!

Tracing special desires back to their causes, I find each to be rooted in the True. Ambition is a perverted love of excellence. Falsehood is a misshapen desire to create. Fame is a restricted thirst for the immortal, and so on with all the originally pure thoughts of the universal mind, which have been appropriated and misconstrued by the elementary nature of man. Division has occurred through man's forcible adaptation of a true principle to personal and selfish ends. He ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge on that day when he first conceived good and evil to be single separate modes of progression, instead of counterbalancing powers working together for the same end and confined to the expression of harmony. He will regain his lost Eden on that day when he can look at every desire in the broad, quiet light of this question: How can I give desire such vent as shall conduce to the benefit of other men? The great watchword of the True is this; in last analysis all things are Divine!

To instance such a mode of dealing with any master passion, we will take up love, itself the basis of all desire. Continuity is said to be the law of laws in the world of effect. Love — the ethical expression of continuity — holds an identical position in the world of cause. Gravitation, polarity, attraction, cyclic necessity:

hope, faith, aspiration; the sum of each and all of these is love. By this force, raised to its highest power, Masters become. Their great attainment consists in this — that they embody the law of love.

It would seem then that we should recognize the existence of this huge force of passion within us, so that we may drag it out on our mental and spiritual planes and clutch it so tight that we are master. This is not done by pretending to ourselves that such and such a propensity does not exist. All things must exist in each one of us, and we must understand them all as a figure of the real. For example — the contest of the sexes. Why do women lure men? Why do men rush after them? And do not women act with those who seek them just as nature does with us? She shows a part, and then retreats behind the bars. Then again she comes out and sometimes throws herself into our arms: this latter not so often. Although men and women differ much, either is to the other the mysterious undiscovered, to be conquered and known. Especially does this attraction come out when we have started upon the path, unless where a person is wholly devoid of it by nature, having burnt it out in other lives. What then are we to do? To yield is a mistake; it is the high spring of the impulse that we must understand, and then stand master of the lower form. This is the method spoken of in the Gita as burning it out in the fire of spiritual wisdom, for being bent upon finding the True, we naturally discard these false disguises. This same fight and self examination is to be carried on with the other traits, such as anger, vanity and so on, not referring it to self, but as sharing in the processes of nature, and for the sake of all those who are deluded by their own perversions of the True.

The heart sends out its impulses in circular and magnetic waves of feeling which surge through the man until they reach the coarse outer shell which renders them into the gross terms of

matter. That does not suffice the inner man, much less the soul, for what they clamor for so loudly in that throb of fire and blood is the large sensation of those rich fields beyond the Gates of Gold. If we could catch that vibration before it reached the outer body, we should find that the inner man gave it a finer meaning, and if we will drop back within ourselves, we may by introspection come to understand somewhat of this higher language. We can arrest the ripples of feeling further and further within ourselves if we will to do it, and work off their impulse by the expenditure of higher energies which reacting, feed the soul itself. When we are attacked by an adversary, the universal mind says "separation"; the individual heart translates "anger." When a current of invincible attraction reaches us, the body shouts "passion," but the pure heart whispers "divine love," and gives a thought or act of brotherhood to all. Ah, my comrades, have not we and desire come together to learn this deathless lesson — that joy enduring is not in matter and that even its most tender love can not long contain the strange, the universal heart of man? We must then re-adjust our comprehension to its real meanings. This great victory can be won by supreme effort, and we are preparing ourselves for it by the daily efforts we do make. We may look to the natural laws of energy and growth for further help, and these will form the subject of another letter.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Sankhya, Karika, Thomson's trans. ([return to text](#))
2. Bhagavad-Gita: Ch. 2. ([return to text](#))
3. *Isis*. Vol. 2, page 35. ([return to text](#))
4. *Isis*. Vol. 2, page 12. Note. — "Ether is both pure and impure fire. * * The difference is purely alchemical." ([return to text](#))
5. Christian Bible. ([return to text](#))

6. *Light on the Path*. Page 32. ([return to text](#))
 7. "Paracelsus," by R. Browning. ([return to text](#))
 8. See "Gates of Gold." ([return to text](#))
 9. The magnetic force; the soul force. ([return to text](#))
 10. Which is that force condensed. ([return to text](#))
 11. *Isis*, Vol. 2, page 320. ([return to text](#))
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The Path

THE POETRY OF REINCARNATION IN WESTERN LITERATURE: III

— *E. D. Walker*

CONTINENTAL POETRY

Ever since the time of Virgil, whose sixth Eneid contains a sublime version of Reincarnation, and of Ovid, whose metamorphoses beautifully present the old philosophies of metempsychosis, this theme has attracted many European poets beside those of England. While the Latin poets obtained their inspiration from the East, through Pythagoras and Plato, the Northern singers seem to express it spontaneously, unless it came to them with the Teutonic migration from the Aryan cradle of the race, and shifted its form with all their people's wanderings so that it has lost all traces of connection with its Indian source. The old Norse legends teem with many guises of soul-journeying. In sublime and lovely stories, ballads and epics, these heroic vikings and their kindred perpetuated their belief that the human individuality travels through a great series of embodiments which physically reveal the spiritual character. The Icelandic Sagas also delight in these fables of transmigration and still fire the heart of Scandinavia and Denmark. It permeated the Welsh triads, oldest of all European poetry, and among the early Saxons this thought animated their Druid ceremonies and their noblest literature. The scriptures of those magnificent races whom Tacitus found in the German forests, whose intrepid manliness conquered the mistress of the world, and from whom are descended the modern ruling race, were inspired with this same doctrine. The treasures of these ancient writings are buried away from our sight, but a suggestion of their grandeur is found in the heroic qualities of the nations who were bred upon it. The following selections are representative of the chief branches of

Continental European. Boyesen, although an American citizen, is really a modernized Norwegian. Goethe stands for the Teutonic race, and Schiller keeps him good company though it is difficult to quote distinct evidence from the latter. Victor Hugo and Beranger speak for France, and Campanella represents Italy.

TRANSMIGRATION.

My spirit wrestles in anguish
With fancies that will not depart
A wraith who borrowed my sunbeam
Has hidden himself in my heart.

The press of this ancient being
Compels me forever to do
The phantom deeds of a phantom
Who lived long ages ago.

The thoughts that I feel seem hoary
With weight of centuries bent,
My prestine creative gladness
In happier climes was spent.

My happiest words sound wierdly
With laughter bathed in dread,
A hollow ghost of laughter
That is loathe to rise from the dead.

My tear has its fount in dead ages
And choked with their rust is my sigh,
The haunting voice of a spectre
Will ne'er from my bosom die.

Perchance in the distant cycles
My soul from Nirvana's frost
Will gather its scattered life beams

Rekindling the soul that I lost.

And then I may rise from my graveyard,
And freed at last, may try
The life of a nobler being
In the soul that shall then be I.

— H. H. BOYSEN

THE SONG OF THE EARTH SPIRITS.

IN GOETHE'S "FAUST."

The soul of man
Is like the water
From heaven it cometh
To heaven it mounteth
And thence at once
It must back to earth
Forever changing.

From Victor Hugo's poem:

"TO THE INVISIBLE ONE."

(A CELLE QUI EST VOILEE.)

I am the drift of a thousand tides
The captive of destiny.
The weight of all darkness upon me abides
But cannot bury me.

My spirit endures like a rocky isle
Amid the ocean of fate,
The thunderstorm is my domicile,
The hurricane is my mate.

I am the fugitive who far
From home has taken flight;

Along with the owl and evening star
I moan the song of night.

Art thou not too, like unto me
A torch to light earth's gloom,
A soul, therefore a mystery,
A wanderer bound to roam.

Seek for me in the sea bird's home,
Descend to my release,
Thy depths of cavernous shadows dumb
Illume, thou angel of peace!

As night brings forth the rosy morn
Perhaps 'tis heaven's law
That from thy mystic smile is born
A glory I ne'er saw.

In this dark world where now I stay
I scarce can see myself;
Thy radiant soul shine on my way;
Duty's my guiding elf.

With loving tones and beckoning hand
Thou say'st "Beyond the night
I catch a glimpse upon the strand
Of thy mansion gleaming bright."

Before I came upon this earth
I know I lived in gladness
For ages as an angel. Birth
Has caused my present sadness.

My soul was once a heavenly dove
Thou who all power retains,
Let fall a pinion from above

Upon this bird's remains!

Yes, 'tis my dire misfortune now
To hang between two ties
To hold within my furrowed brow
The earth's clay, and the skies.

Alas the pain of being man
Of dreaming o'er my fall
Of finding heaven within my span,
Yet being but a pall;

Of toiling like a galley slave,
Of carrying the load
Of human burdens, while I rave
To fly unto my God;

Of trailing garments black with rust
I, son of heaven above!
Of being only graveyard dust
E'en though my name is — Love.

THE TRANSMIGRATION OF SOULS.

(LA METEMPSYCOSE.)

In philosophic mood, last night, as I was idly lying,
That souls may transmigrate, methought there could be no
denying;

So, just to know to what I owe propensities so strong,
I drew my soul into a chat — the gossip lasted long.

"A votive offering," she observed, "well might I claim for
thee,

For thou in being had'st remained a cypher but for me.

Yet not a virgin soul was I when first in thee enshrined."

Ah, I suspected, little soul, thus much that I should find.

"Yes," she continued, "yes, of old — I recollect it now —
In humble Ivy was I wreathed round many a joyous brow.
More subtle next the essence was that I essayed to warm —
A bird's, that could salute the skies, a little bird's my form;
Where thickets made a pleasant shade, where
Shepherdesses strolled
I fluttered round, hopped on the ground, my simple lay I
trolled,
My pinious grew, while still I flew, in freedom on the
wind."

Ah, I suspected, little soul, thus much that I should find.

"Medor my name, I next became a dog of wondrous tact,
The guardian of a poor blind man, his sole support in fact.
A trick of holding in my mouth a wooden bowl I knew,
I led my master through the streets, and begged his living
too.

Devoted to the poor, to please the wealthy was my care,
Gleaning as sustenance for one what others well could
spare.

Thus good I did, since to kind deeds so many I inclined."

Ah, I suspected, little soul, thus much that I should find.

"Next, to breathe life into her charms, in a young girl I
dwelt;

There in soft prison softly housed, what happiness I felt!
Till to my hiding place a swarm of cupids entrance gained,
And after pillaging it well, in garrison remained.

Like old campaigners there the rogues all sorts of mischief
did,

And, night and day, while still I lay in a little corner hid,
How oft I saw the house on fire I scarce can call to mind."

Ah, I suspected, little soul, thus much that I should find.

"Some light on thy propensities may now upon thee break,
But prithee, hark! one more remark, I still," says she,
"would make.

'Tis this — that having dared one day with heaven to make
too free,

God, for my punishment resolved to shut me up in thee;
And, what with sitting up at night, with work and woman's
art,

Tears and despair — for I forbear, some secrets to impart,
A poet is a very hell for souls thereto consigned."

Ah, I suspected, little soul, thus much that I should find.

— BERANGER

A SONNET ON CAUCASUS.

I fear that by my death the human race

Would gain no vantage. Thus I do not die.

So wide is this vast cage of misery

That flight and change lead to no happier place.

Shifting our pains, we risk a sorrier case:

All worlds, like ours, are sunk in agony:

Go where we will, we feel; and this my cry

I may forget like many an old disgrace.

Who knows what doom is mine? The Omnipotent

Keeps silence; nay, I know not whether strife

Or peace was with me in some earlier life.

Philip in a worse prison we hath pent

These three days past — but not without God's will,

Stay we as God decrees: God doth no ill.

— T. CAMPANELLA

GOSPELS AND UPANISHADS — *Charles Johnston*

"The principle which gives life, undying and eternally beneficent, is perceived by him who desires perception."

As the clouds are dispelled by the rising sun, so do many things become clear before the growing light of spiritual knowledge. A great initial difficulty is to discern between the lawful and the unlawful, to find the precise boundary between the selfish and the unselfish. Many things which are amongst the lawful, nevertheless seem to be also amongst the selfish; even the first move, the initial devotion to spiritual studies has been stigmatised as selfish, and therefore tainting all that follows. Doubtless it is a difficult task to choose between the sweet and bitter fruit on the tree of knowledge, but still some light may be thrown on the choice.

Let us go back to what is logically, though not perhaps chronologically, the first step in religious consciousness. Religion began, says one of the most discerning students of Christianity, when the first man obeyed the deeper law in his heart, which prompted him to restrain his tendency to selfishness and sensuality, to subordinate them to his higher nature, to sacrifice the ephemeral to the durable. The recognition of the earliest whisper of religious consciousness, he considers the characteristic of Israel; and Israel's mission and place in world history is, in his view, the assertion of this intuition. Israel, he says, felt the moral law more vividly, and obeyed it more faithfully than other nations, and Israel's testimony on the subject is among the most precious of the world's possessions. These views are clear and intelligible, and if we examine the record of Israel's religious consciousness, they will appear of great weight.

(1)

The essence of Religion is antithesis — opposition between two great forces, powers, or qualities; the quality of the terms of the antithesis gives us a clue to the phase of religious consciousness.

Israel's antithesis was between the "law of the eternal" and the "way of sinners." Further examination shows that the second term meant for Israel the various phases of selfishness and sensuality, of the instincts of self-preservation and reproduction. Opposed to these Israel felt another force, the "law of the Eternal." If an adherence to this Law, and a consequent change of the tendency of life, followed its recognition, Israel experienced as the result a feeling of completeness, strength and happiness. He found that after introducing this new factor into his consciousness he was able to "rejoice and shout for joy." But the recognition of the "Eternal which makes for Righteousness," whose earliest manifestation is the voice of conscience, is not merely the introduction of a new factor, it is a complete alteration of the event of life, of the purpose of existence. Formerly the life was lived for pleasure, for the gratification of egotism, for the satisfaction of desire. Now it is lived for the "Lord," for Holiness, for the Eternal that makes for Righteousness.

This is the teaching of the first Covenant to Israel; the second adds to it, and makes it clearer. Its beginning is of course the same, an intuition of the Law of the Eternal, a sense of Righteousness.

The result of developing and using this sense, of rendering perfect obedience to the "Law of the Eternal," is a feeling of happiness, of invigoration, of renewed life. A complete and persistent adherence to this law discloses several facts of great importance. The first is, that at any moment there are two different lives possible for any person — the life in the "world" and the life in the "kingdom of heaven." The first is the life which is based on the

satisfaction of the lower worldly and sensual desires; the second is lived through the development of the higher nature — that part of us which is in touch with the "Eternal." It is a notable fact, or rather an essential characteristic, in the first of these two lives, that the term "satisfaction of desire" is really incorrect, for the essence of "desire" is the impossibility of satisfying it, the fact that just as the object desired, and eagerly pursued, appears within reach, just as the hand is stretched out to seize it, it suddenly starts away again to an infinite distance. Examples of this truth might be multiplied indefinitely; for example, who has ever known of a rich man come to the conclusion that he had gathered enough wealth, and that it was undesirable to add to it? This fact has been poetically expressed in several forms; its brighter aspect has been symbolised as a child gathering flowers, who always sees farther on a bloom more beautiful than those within his reach; its dark side is the story of the Dead Sea fruit, outwardly beautiful and tempting, with glossy skin, golden and red, but when tasted turning to ashes in the mouth. The recognition of the insatiate nature of desire leads to a complete abandonment of the life in the "world," and an entire devotion to the life in the "Eternal," this change of poles being described as a "death unto sin, and a new birth unto Righteousness." The two chief elements of the life in the "world" which must be annihilated before the life in the "Kingdom" can take its place, are enjoyment of the body, and the existence of the egotism, — the centre of the forces which make up the lower nature.

When this is done and perfect adherence to the law of the "Eternal" is substituted, another fact is discovered. This is the possibility of gradual assimilation to this law, until absolute identification with it takes place. When this identification is complete, the conditions of the "Eternal's" own existence are shared with the added life; a feeling of power, of freedom from

death and dissolution, of permanence and eternalness is experienced. This is "inheriting the Kingdom," and "drinking the Water of Life." The new Life is found to be independent of the condition of time, of past, present and future; no temporal considerations apply to it, no such thing as death is possible: this is the true doctrine of the "immortality of the soul" or rather of "the reality of Eternal life." A modern philosopher perceived this clearly when he wrote — "To truth, justice, love, the attribute of the Soul, the idea of immutability is essentially associated." Jesus living in these moral sentiments, heedless of sensual fortunes, heeding only the manifestation of these, never made the separation of the idea of duration from the essence of these attributes, nor uttered a syllable concerning the duration of the soul. In the flowing of love, in the adoration of humility, there is no question of continuance. The soul is true to itself, and the man in whom it is shed abroad cannot wander from the present, which is infinite, to a future which would be finite. "These facts of religion, the sense of Righteousness, and the life in the Eternal, are as verifiable as that fire burns and that water is wet." It should not be supposed that this is intended to convey the idea that they are easy and simple matters; far from it, they are the most difficult things possible. The world's materialism, the prevailing religious ideas, the neglect of your intuition, the dominance of desires, all these complicate the nevertheless absolutely verifiable problem, just as a polar ice-field, far from all fuel, complicates the problem of demonstrating that fire is hot, or the sandy Arabian desert, makes it no easier to prove that water is wet. Difficulties which are certain to occur have been stated many times, and need not be repeated. The answer, therefore, to the problem of the precise extent of selfishness is that everything which belongs to the temporary, illusory life — the life in the "world" is selfishness, while everything which belongs to my true life, the life in the Eternal, is unselfish, is my eternal birthright,

and imperative to be done.

The case may be also stated thus, all things tend to fulfil the law of their nature. The plant tends to produce leaves, branches and fruit; if prevented it droops, withers and dies. The soul seeks stability, strength, peace; not finding these it fails to fulfil its law, suffering and sorrow are the inevitable result. All actions that do not help me to fulfil the law of my nature are wrong; such are all things selfish and sensual; from them never arise peace and happiness, nor ever can. But everything which tends to the fulfilment of the perfect law is my unalienable right and necessity; as light and water are the indispensables of the plant. Such is the answer that the religion of the gospels gives to our problem, if we interpret it on the lines of one of its most enlightened advocates. Yet in spite of this intuitional grasp of Christianity — the outcome of the religious Semitic mind — or perhaps on account of this very sympathy with it, this same critic shows an almost entire inability to master the expression of Aryan religious feeling. Alluding to the theory of the author of "La science des religions" that Christianity is only cloudy Aryan metaphysics, he says "such speculations take away the breath of the mere man of letters." Burnouf conceives the object of Aryan faith to be that idea of the Absolute which the Semitic mind could never grasp; a conception, or rather a non-conception resembling the "Unknowable" of Herbert Spencer. But what appears to me the true Aryan faith teaches something quite different from Herbert Spencer's "Unknowable Absolute". It was hardly the doctrine of the Absolute Schopenhauer spoke of, when he said, "it has been my solace in life, it will be my solace in death." It is hardly devotion to the Unknowable that makes the Hindu eat religiously, live religiously and die religiously. Such emotion for the Abstract Vast is hardly within the power of the mere mortal. It seems to me that the true Aryan faith is the doctrine of the Atma

or Highest Self. The Self stands apart, silent, unmoving, eternally at rest. It is reflected in the phenomenal world, as the sun is reflected in a stream. When the Highest Self is reflected in that bundle of objectivities called a body the illusion of the egotism or delusive self is created, which causes the expressions "I" and "mine" to be attributed to the body. The various changes and disturbances in the bundle of objectivities cause perturbation of the illusory self as the wind blowing on the stream causes disturbance of the image of the sun. The true Self, like the sun, remains unmoved and changeless.

The idea of self-hood is applied to the egotism by Illusion. I have seen an illusionary identification of interest in an external object cause as lively emotion as physical pain: for example, I have seen a person suffer as keenly when a china vase fell and was broken, as if the accident had happened to a part of the body. The Illusion produces a pseudo-sensation of the injury to the vase, just as if it were penetrated by real sensory nerves. Exactly similar is the illusion by which interest is involved in the body or the egotism. They have not the property of self-hood, any more than the vase. Whenever sleep overtakes us, both body and personality cease to exist as far as our consciousness is concerned. Shall we then make a god of this twelve hours' potentate? who only requires the approach of night to banish him from existence. The essential quality of self-hood which our consciousness demands is absolute and inviolable permanence. Whatever once really exists can never cease to exist. Our Highest Self, our Atma, we perceive within us, or rather, perception takes place, what is called perception being the first undefined motions of essential Being struggling to assert itself. The gradual perception of the fact that the illusory personality is not the true Self, the slow realisation of the true Self, the consequent detachment of interest from the personality, the transfer of interest to the Highest Self. These form

some of the first steps of the Aryan doctrine. But before perception can take place, before the true Self can dawn on the mind, all evil desires must cease. "He who has not first turned away from his wickedness, who is not tranquil with passions subdued, he can never obtain the Self." (2) Thus we found that the faith of the gospels teaches that the evil passions must be overcome before the life in the eternal can be reached. For the Self in the Eternal, and the life of the Highest Self in Eternal life. Another truth in the Aryan doctrine, involved in the very term Highest Self, is thus expressed: "There is one eternal thinker, thinking non-eternal thoughts, who though one fulfils the desires of many, the wise who perceive him in their self, to them belongs peace and not to others." This recognition of the Ancient in the Self is thus expressed by Jesus — "I and the Father are one." The gradual recognition that the Highest Self is really your self, the realiest part of you, is the Aryan way of expressing the Semitic idea of *becoming* the Eternal. It is really becoming gradually aware of the fact that you have been the Eternal all the while and had forgotten it. The "one who fulfils the desires of many", is the self, and this statement of the fact that this self is my self, your self and every one else's self, is semitically expressed thus, "love your neighbors as yourself." This unity of self in many apparently different selfs is the metaphysical basis of the doctrine of universal Brotherhood. Progress begins with an intuitive perception, in the gospel of the inferiority of the law of the "world" and of the majesty of the law of the Eternal, in the Upanishads of the non-essential nature of the egotism, and of the divine pre-eminence of the Highest Self. Without this initial intuition it is difficult to understand how progress could take place. To minds of one type it will take the Semitic, to minds of another it will take the Aryan form. Recent teaching has declared "within you is the light of the world — the only light that can be shed upon the path. Seek out the way by making the profound

obeisance of the soul to the dim star that burns within. Steadily as you watch and worship, its light will grow stronger, then you may know that you have found the beginning of the way, and when you have found the end its light will suddenly become the infinite light." This initial perception leads to a resolute destruction of the lower nature; when this is completed the Highest Self will be clearly perceived. It was the instinctive struggle of the nature to establish the true relation between the Highest Self and the egotism which led to the primary intuition. Let those who desire to possess this intuition, but do not yet possess it, take courage, for the aspiration is the sure precursor of perception, as the dawn is of the day. First comes this desire, or rather, aspiration towards spiritual life, then comes intuitional perception of the Highest Self. The Eternal which is struggling, as it were, to free itself from the bonds of matter, gradually frees itself till at last it is entirely liberated and starts away an infinite distance from matter, across an impassable gulf, and then comes perception of the fact that it was not really the Highest Self at all which was enthralled. A few of the teachings of the Ayran doctrine concerning the Highest Self may help us here. "The self, the Ancient is unborn eternal, everlasting; he is not killed though the body is killed. If the killer thinks he kills, if the killed thinks he is killed, they do not understand. The knower, the self, is not born; it dies not. When all desires that dwell in the heart cease, then the mortal becomes immortal and obtains the Highest. The wise man who by means of meditation or his self, recognises the Ancient — (who is difficult to be seen, who has entered into the dark, who dwells in the abyss) — as God he indeed leaves pleasure and pain far behind; he rejoices because he has obtained a cause for rejoicing. The sun does not shine there, nor the moon, nor the stars; when He shines, everything shines after Him. "Having conquered the desires of the egotism, having overcome the illusion of the body," stand aside in the battle and look for the warrior. Obey him as

though he were thy self, and his spoken words were the utterance of thy secret desires. He is thy self, yet thy art but finite, and liable to error. He is eternal and sure. He is eternal truth. When once he has entered thee and become thy warrior, he will never utterly desert thee, and at the day of the great peace he will become one with thee."

"Ye are not bound! the soul of things is sweet,
The Heart of Being is celestial rest;
Stronger than woe is will: that which was good
Doth pass to better — Best."

FOOTNOTES:

1. For all that, in the opinion of the students of the True Law, it was not from a vivid feeling and strict obeying of the moral law that Israel holds such a place in Western religious thought, but because the progenitors of the Jews were Adepts possessing high powers, who by prostituting those to selfish ends, fell from their high estate, while at the same time they retained many high traditions regarding both the moral law and occult wisdom. David and Solomon are examples of some of the greatest of those Adepts falling like stars from heaven. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

2. Upanishads. ([return to text](#))

PAPYRUS — *Rameses*

The Tale-teller, shading his gentle eyes from the evening sun, paused a moment while he listened to the soft strains of the music as it floated out from the open Temple. The joyous crowd swept by unheeding, except for one or two who dropped out of the current and were left stranded among those who had gathered at his feet. Presently he came back from the realm of harmony whither he had drifted, and as the world-light once more stole over his face he told the tale of:

"THREE WHO SOUGHT OUT THE WAY."

Word had gone forth over all lands "that all who sought earnestly and in the true manner should find the way to the mysterious Temple of the Veiled Goddess."

Three kings of the land, moved by the power of the words, determined that they also would become students and reach the goal.

Intu, the Illustrious, making ready for the search, deemed nothing else could be more potent in his quest than the seal of his kingdom. Thereupon he bound on his forehead the Great Seal, a hawk.

Kour, the Magnificent, making ready for the way thought nothing could be more powerful in his searching than the seal of his kingdom. Making ready he bound upon his breast the Great Seal, a golden heart.

Kadmon, the Sorrowful — a king only by sufferance, for his kingdom consisted only of that which the others did not value — Kadmon deemed it wise also, inasmuch as they would all journey

together, to take his seal; which was the two others in union; but furthermore, he blindfolded his eyes.

The Three passing onward encountered many strange and unfamiliar things, for the road was new, and no wayfarer could know more than one step onward, which was the one he was then taking. Upon each side, and frequently in front, barring the way, were curious objects, sometimes pleasant and agreeable, but more often quite the reverse. The foliage of the trees was new and strange, while the fruits were perplexing in their incongruity. At times the same fruits grew on different sorts of trees, while at others the same sort of trees bore entirely dissimilar fruits. The path which they were pursuing was quite the opposite of an ordinary one, for before them it was visible but one step, while it stretched far into the distance behind them. Intu, however, had already made all plain to himself by a process of reasoning entirely his own. It was, that these things being the direct opposite of all in his own country which he ruled, therefore they could only be caused by some one different from himself — a superior being, that being must be the Goddess — therefore they were upon the right path, at least he was.

Kour thought these things delightful, they were so strange, so new. In fact they were phenomenal and he loved phenomena. They gave him such queer sensations, and anything which did that or made him feel other than when in his own land — must be caused by the Goddess — oh yes, they were on the right path, at least he was. As for Kadmon he seeing none of these things, could only judge by that which he remembered of his own country. Each of the others told him of their existence in their own way. This was confusing. He determined, therefore, to walk onward as if he were in his own land, but to press steadily on. They were thus, in reality treading three separate paths, and in their several ways they passed many persons who had stopped to rest — to eat

or sleep — or because the way was dark and difficult; some because they were too poor, others because they were ill, footsore or blind. Intu lost some time, for he stopped to argue with many on the peculiarities of the way and the logical reasonableness of it, but he had no time to pause for aught else.

Kour felt for the wayfarers, he was sorry for and loved them. If they would only feel as he did they could go on easily, but he had no time to stop to make them feel that way.

Both Intu and he had all such people in their own lands. There was no time to waste on natural things. It was the supernatural in a metaphysical or soul-stirring way they sought.

And Kadmon, the Sorrowful, paused. In his land these were to be found also. He too realized the reasonableness of the way. He too loved it and was exalted by it. He too felt for and loved the other wayfarers. He did more — he sorrowed for them. What mattered it if he did not find the temple immediately, he was young, the others growing old and blind, they were sorrowful and weary. So he stopped and gave his thoughts and help to the ill, cheering the weary, helping the poor, and blindfolded as he was, led the blind over the step he had just passed. So interested did he become in these labors he forgot he was himself seeking the Goddess.

It was but a little distance farther on that they caught up with Intu, which was not surprising as he had reached the end of his path. It had ended at a stone wall. As he could not scale the wall, he sat down to reason "why an ordinary stone wall should obstruct such an extraordinary path?" Being a very perplexing intellectual problem — there he remained. A little farther and Kour was passed. He had encountered a radiant maiden, partially veiled, who told him wondrous tales of strange happenings. Her manner was very mysterious, and he felt she was the Goddess. Taking her hand in his and leaning his head upon her bosom, he

was so happy that he knew she was the Goddess and there he remained to dream.

And Kadmon, tarrying with the sorrowful and weary, felt the bandage slip from his eyes, as the light from the rising sun streaming in red and gold over the path fell upon and glorified the ragged wayfarers. In the brilliance over their heads he read the words: "This way lies the path to the Temple" while a soft voice breathed into his soul: "By the way of Intu alone, the path is not found. By that of Kour alone, it is not gained. Both wisely used in unison are guides while on the road. By something, which is greater than either, only, is the Temple reached. Work on!"

And the sorrowful, taking in his own, the hands of the weary and weak, passed on.

The Path

NOTES ON THE ASTRAL LIGHT: III — *B. N. Acle*

FROM ELIPHAS LEVI'S WORKS

(*Continued.*)

To be able to command this agent, is to be the depository of the power of God Himself: all effective Magic, all real power, is there: and all books of true science have no other aim than to demonstrate this. In order to command this great magical agent two things are necessary — to *concentrate*, and to *project*. On one of the arms of the Androgyne of Henri Khunrath, is inscribed "COAGULA:" on the other, "SOLVE," — to concentrate, and to expand, are the two master words of Nature: but how can we "concentrate," or "expand," the Astral Light, the soul of the world? Concentration may be effected by isolation, and expansion by the magic chain. But he who has prejudices or fears, who is passionate, or a slave of his passions, can never concentrate nor coagulate the Astral Light. All true Adepts have been self centred, sober, and chaste even unto death: and the reason of this is, that in order to be master of a force, it must not be permitted to have dominion over us.

To form "the magic chain," is to establish a magnetic current, which becomes powerful in proportion to its length. Enthusiasm is contagious, because it is only produced by settled faith: and faith begets faith; to believe, is to will with reason; to will with reason is to will with a power. I do not say infinite, but indefinite.

All enthusiasm propagated in a society by means of regular practices and communications, creates a magnetic current, and conserves and augments itself by means of this current. The tendency of this current is to carry away and exalt, often beyond

measure, persons of a weak or impressionable nature, those of nervous organisms, and temperaments predisposed to hysteria or hallucination: such persons become powerful media of communication of the magic force, and facilitate the transmission of the Astral currents: To oppose the manifestations of such currents, therefore, is, as it were, to fight against fate. When the young Pharisee, Saul, threw himself with all the fanaticism of a head-strong sectary, against the overwhelming spread of Christianity, he placed himself, without knowing it, at the mercy of that power he thought to combat: accordingly, he was thunder-struck by a terrible magnetic flash, which was rendered more instantaneously effective, no doubt, by the combined action of a cerebral congestion and a burning sun.

There are some sects of enthusiasts at whom we may laugh — while at a distance — but in whose ranks we enlist, in spite of ourselves, as soon as we come within the sphere of their influence. These magnetic circles and magnetic chains sometimes establish themselves automatically, and influence, in accordance with fatal laws, those who expose themselves to their action: every one of us is perforce drawn into such a circle of relations, which constitutes his world, and to whose influence he must submit.

Great cycles make great men, and vice versa: there are no "misunderstood geniuses:" there are "*eccentric*" men, and the word is so admirably descriptive, that it seems that it might have been invented by an Adept. The eccentric man of genius is he who seeks to establish a circle for himself by combating the forces of central attraction and the established currents: his fate is either to be crushed in the struggle, or to succeed.

The man of genius is he who discovers a real law, and consequently possesses an invincible power of action and

direction: he may possibly die in the accomplishment of his work, but what he wills comes to pass in spite of his death, and often even because of it, for death is a veritable assumption: "If I be lifted up" said the greatest of Initiates, "I will draw all men unto me."

The law of magnetic currents is the law of the movement of the Astral Light: this movement is always double and propagates itself in contrary directions. A great action always opens the way for a great reaction, and the secret of consummate success lies solely in the ability to foresee reactions. To oppose one's self to a current that is beginning to run its circle, is to court destruction: to oppose a current that has run through its circle, is to take lead of the reflex currents: the great man is he who appears at the right moment, and can decipher the meaning of the new movement.

The various phenomena which have lately excited so much interest in Europe and America, the rapping tables, and fluidic manifestations, are merely magnetic currents which are beginning to form spontaneously; and are, in fact, the solicitations of Nature, inviting us, for the good of Humanity, to form again the great sympathetic and religious chain: for the stagnation of the Astral Light means the annihilation of the human race: and even the stagnation of this agent is from time to time manifested, by terrifying symptoms of decomposition and death: Cholera Morbus, for example, and the diseases of the grape, and the potato, have no other cause than this. All the mysterious movements of tables are attributable to this universal magic agent; which seeks a chain of enthusiasms, in order to form new currents: it is a force blind in itself, but which may be directed by the will of man: and it is influenced by prevailing opinions: this universal fluid, if we may so call it, being the common medium of all nervous organisms, and the vehicle of all

sensitive vibrations, establishes between persons of an impressionable nature, an actual physical solidarity, and transmits, from one to another, the impressions of imagination and thought.

The movement of an inert body, determined by the undulations of the universal agent, obeys the dominant impression, and reproduces in its revelations sometimes the lucidity of the most marvellous visions, sometimes the oddity and deception of the most incoherent dreams.

Thus, the extravagances of the ecstasies of St. Medard, the phenomena of raps in furniture, of musical instruments playing apparently of their own accord, are all illusions produced by the same cause.

The exaggerations which are induced by that fascination which is a peculiar intoxication, caused by the congestion of the Astral Light, the oscillation impressed on inert matter by the subtle and universal agent of movement and of life is all that there is at the bottom of much that is so apparently marvellous, as one can easily convince himself, by producing them, at will, by following the directions laid down in the "*Dogma and Ritual*"

The Path

"THE WORD" — F. Hartmann

I have read with great interest the excellent article entitled "Heralds from the Unseen" in the April number of *THE PATH*, and which expresses my own views perhaps more completely than I expressed them in an article to the *Theosophist*, to which reference is made, and which seems to have given rise to some misconception. It is, however, stated in my paper on "Occultism in Germany," that a beginner may obtain a certain *Word* by a "Master" to practice, which would just suit his condition, and Mr. Niemand asks: "Why should an Adept be needed when Ishwar resideth in the breast of every mortal being." It is perfectly true that Ishwar resides in every human heart; but not everyone is able to hear distinctly what he says, or to recognize his presence there. In my opinion the practical "Word" serves the especial purpose to bind and control one's thoughts and to raise the vibrations within, so as to bring them into harmony with that Light which one desires to enter so that we may recognize the Ishwar within ourselves. Mr. Niemand says: "Whatever tends to raise the vibration is of value. Your intuitions must direct you to a wise adminture." Supposing, however, that your own intuitions are not sufficiently strong to be unmistakably understood by you, or — in other words — that you are not yet enough spiritually advanced to understand the voice of the Ishwar within; would it not be useful to obtain instructions, such as exactly suit your condition from some Adept, or through the instrumentality of some one through whom the Ishwar can speak comprehensibly to your lower self? Surely an Adept cannot do the thinking or growing for another person; but he may guide a person either by the silent influence of his thoughts or by giving him verbal or written instructions. He may thus aid the disciple, so that the

latter may find his own *Master* within himself, which is the only Master that anyone is entitled to worship, because it is each one's own Higher Self.

In that article "Occultism in Germany" it is stated that the exercise of charity, or the promulgation of doctrines, etc., are not sufficient for practical progress, and Mr. Niemand thinks that by making this statement virtue has been somewhat belittled. If so, the *Bhagavad-Gita* might be construed as belittling it likewise; for it belittles those works which — although being considered good — are the outcome of Rajo-Guna. (1) There are millions of people who perform acts of charity from some motive or other, or who attempt to teach others things of which they know little themselves, and who nevertheless — or perhaps on account of their motives — make very little progress in the knowledge of self. One of the main points besides the practice of universal charity without any selfish interest, seems to be not only the control of the passions, but also to obtain perfect mastery over one's own *thoughts*. The practice of the "Word" seems to be the most efficient method to learn how to control one's thoughts, as it forces the latter to remain concentrated upon that word. The reason why many "Yogees" practice the pronunciation of OM often for years without any apparent progress, may be due to the cause that they pronounce it with their lips and not with their hearts. In such a case this practice will be as useless as the repetition of a litany, while the mind is wandering without restraint wherever it pleases. It can furthermore not be immaterial what Word or object a person selects to rest his thoughts upon, as every word corresponds to a certain idea, and the mind should rest upon the highest conception which it is able to grasp; nor can we grasp anything which is not within ourselves, and before we can grasp it fully and comprehend it intellectually, we must first be able to feel it within ourselves. The great mistake

which our "psychical researchers" make, is that they attempt to hunt in externals for things which they can only find within themselves, and that they seek to understand intellectually things which they do not feel, or which — if they feel them — they reject and call "hallucinations."

It seems, moreover, that besides the above mentioned use of the "Word" if practiced properly, there is an occult power connected with this practice by which some spiritual forces may be set in motion, which will tend to awaken the spiritual consciousness. This power has already been referred to in Mr. Niemand's article.

Spiritual life surely consists in giving up the idea of self; and even for that purpose the practice of the Word seems to me highly useful, because he who practices it properly, does not think of himself, but of a condition which is superior to self. What else can the practice of the Word be, but a fervent prayer, spoken by the soul, with a full concentration of mind; a prayer which is at the same time a command, by which the king within assumes mastery over the animal forces? What else can it be but a simultaneous exercise of thought and Will, such as is said to take place in the bosom of Brahm at the beginning of each Manvantara? (2) If God in his own essence said at the beginning: "Let there be Light;" and it was Light, why could not the God in Man repeat the process, and say within his own heart, firmly and full of devotion. "Let there be Light," and is it not possible that it might then become light within; provided the words are properly pronounced, not with the lips, but with the thought and the Will.

It may be that a person can get along well enough without receiving any instruction or help from Adepts, provided he is without such aid able to find the "Lord of all worlds," and there are also others who, when they heard of the Adepts, have begun to seek only for them, instead of seeking for the Master within,

but there are also those who desire the truth for its own sake and do not possess sufficient wisdom to find it unaided; and to those the Adepts may give their aid, perhaps invisibly and unconsciously to the former, provided they deserve it by seriously desiring to give up their own selves. Such at least seems to have been the prevalent belief even in the most ancient times, and all the forms of initiation as well as modern church-institutions and educational arrangements are based upon the supposition that those who know a great deal can inform those who know less, and benefit them thereby. This truth is too self-evident to need any explication.

I am glad that Mr. Niemand has called attention to this question, as it shows that in speaking about occult matters it is necessary to be very explicit to avoid being misunderstood.

FOOTNOTES:

1. There is no real difference between the author and Jasper Niemand. Bhagavad-Gita allows that "works" must be performed, but always insists on Charity and Devotion. This Devotion is to be directed toward the One Life, and until all acts are performed with that in the mind, there will be constant rebirths. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

2. Manifestation of a world or system. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

THE POETRY OF REINCARNATION IN WESTERN LITERATURE: IV
— *E. D. Walker*

The largest inspiration of all Western thought is nourished by the Academe. Not only idealism but the provinces of philosophy and literature hostile to Plato are really indebted to him. The noble loftiness, the ethereal subtlety, the poetic beauty of that teaching has captivated most of the fine intellects of mediaeval and modern times and it is impossible to trace the invisible course of exalted thought which has radiated from this greatest Greek, the king of a nation of philosophers.

Adopting Emerson's words "Out of Plato come all things that are still written and debated among men of thought. Great havoc makes he among our originalities. We have reached the mountain from which all these drift boulders were detached. The Bible of the learned for twenty-two centuries, every brisk young man who says fine things to each reluctant generation is some reader of Plato translating into the vernacular- his good things * * How many great men nature is incessantly sending up out of the night to be *his men* — Platonists! the Alexandrians, a constellation of genius; the Elizabethans, not less; Sir Thomas More, Henry More, John Hales, John Smith, Lord Bacon, Jeremy, Taylor, Ralph Cudworth, Sydenham, Thomas Taylor. Calvinism is in his *Phaedro*. Christianity is in it. Mahometanism draws all its philosophy, in its hand book of morals, the *Akhlak-y-Jalaly*, from him. Mysticism finds in Plato all its texts. "We know not how much of the world's later poetry is due to the suggestion and nurture of the poet-philosopher. But in closing our studies of the poetry of Reincarnation it may be of interest to group together the avowed Platonic poets.

Most illustrious of all the English disciples of this master, in the brilliant coterie of "Cambridge Platonists," was Dr. Henry More whom Dr. Johnson esteemed "one of our greatest divines and philosophers and no mean poet." Hobbes said of him that if his "own philosophy was not true he knew none that he should sooner adopt than Henry More's of Cambridge;" and Hoadley styles him "one of the first men of this or any other country." Coleridge wrote that his philosophical works "contained more enlarged and elevated views of the Christian dispensation than I have met with in any other single volume; for More had both the philosophical and poetic genius supported by immense erudition." He was a devout student of Plato. In the heat of rebellion he was spared by the fanatics. They pardoned his refusal to take their covenant and left him to continue the philosophic occupations which had rendered him famous as a loveable and absorbed scholar. He wove together in many poems a quaint texture of Gothic fancy and Greek thought. His "Psychozoia" or "Life of the Soul," from which the following verses are taken is a long Platonic poem tracing the course of the soul through ancient existences down into the earthly realm. Campbell said of this work that it "is like a curious grotto whose labyrinths we might explore for its strange and mystic associations." Dr. More was an intimate friend of Addison and long a correspondent of Descartes.

PLATONIC POETS ON REINCARNATION.

From Henry More's "Philosophical Poems" (Psychozoia).

I would sing the pre-existency
Of human souls and live once o'er again
By recollection and quick memory
All that is passed since first we all began.
But all too shallow be my wits to scan

So deep a point and mind too dull to climb
So dark a matter. But thou more than man
Aread, thou sacred soul of Plotin dear
Tell me what mortals are. Tell what of old they were.

A spark or ray of divinity
Clouded with earthly fogs, and clad in clay
A precious drop sunk from eternity
Spilt on the ground, or rather slunk away.
For then we fell when we 'gan first t'essay
By stealth of our own selves something to been
Uncentering ourselves from our one great stay
Which rupture we new liberty did ween
And from that prank right jolly wits ourselves did deem.

Show fitly how the pre-existing soul
Enacts and enters bodies here below
And then entire unhurt can leave this moul
In which by sense and motion they may know
Better than we what things transacted be
Upon the earth, and when they best may show
Themselves to friend or foe, their phantasmay
Moulding their airy arc to gross consistency.

Milton imbibed from his college friend Henry More an early fondness for the study of Plato, whose philosophy nourished most of the fine spirits of that day and he expresses the Greek sage's opinion of the soul in his Comus:

The soul grows clotted by oblivion
Imbodies and embrutes till she quite lose
The divine property of her first being;
Such as those thick and gloomy shadows damp
Oft seen in charnel vaults and sepulchres
Lingering and setting by a new made grave

As loth to leave the body that it loved.

Milton's Platonic proclivities are also shown in his poem "On the Death of a Fair Infant:"

Wert thou that just maid, who once before
Forsook the hated earth, O tell me sooth,
And came'st again to visit us once more?
Or were thou that sweet smiling youth?

Or any other of that heavenly brood
Let down in cloudy throne to do the world some good?
Or wert thou of the golden-winged host,
Who having clad thyself in human weed,
To earth from thy prefixed seat did'st post,
And after short abode fly back with speed
As if to show what creatures heaven doth breed.

Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire
To scorn the sordid world and unto heaven aspire.

In the old library of poetry known as Dodsley's Collection, is a Miltonic poem by an anonymous Platonist which is very interesting and as it is difficult of access we quote the best part of it:

PRE-EXISTENCE.

IN IMITATION OF MILTON.

Now had th' archangel trumpet, raised sublime
Above the walls of heaven, begun to sound;
All aether took the blast and fell beneath
Shook with celestial noise; th' almighty host
Hot with pursuit, and reeking with the blood
Of guilty cherubs smeared in sulphurous dust,
Pause at the known command of sounding gold.
At first they close the wide Tartarian gates,

Th' impenetrable folds on brazen hinge
Roll creaking horrible; the din beneath
O'ercomes the war of flames, and deafens hell.
Then through the solid gloom with nimble wing
They cut their shining traces up to light;
Returned upon the edge of heavenly day
Where thinnest beams play round the vast obscure
And with eternal gleam drives back the night.
They find the troops less stubborn, less involved
In crime and ruin, barr'd the realms of peace,
Yet uncondemned to baleful beats of woe,
Doubtful and suppliant; all the plumes of light
Moult from their shuddering wings, and sickly fear
Shades every face with horror; conscious guilt
Rolls in the livid eye-ball, and each breast
Shakes with the dread of future doom unknown.

'Tis here the wide circumference of heaven
Opens in two vast gates, that inward turn
Volumnious, on jasper columns hung
By geometry divine; they ever glow
With living sculptures, they arise by turns
To imboss the shining leaves, by turns they set
To give succeeding argument their place;
In holy hieroglyphics on they move.
The gaze of journeying angels, as they pass
Oft looking back, and held in deep surprise.
Here stood the troops distinct; the cherub guard
Unbarred the splendid gates, and in they roll
Harmonious; for a vocal spirit sits
Within each hinge, and as they onward drive,
In just divisions breaks the numerous jars
With symphony melodious, such as spheres
Involved in tenfold wreaths are said to sound.

Out flows a blaze of glory: for on high
Towering advanced the moving throne of God.
Above the throne, th' ideas heavenly bright
Of past, of present, and of coming time,
Fixed their immoved abode, and there present
An endless landscape of created things
To sight celestial, where angelic eyes
Are lost in prospect; for the shiny range
Boundless and various in its bosom bears
Millions of full proportioned worlds, beheld
With steadfast eyes, till more arise to view,
And further inward scenes start up unknown.
A vocal thunder rolled the voice of God
Servants of God! and virtues great in arms
We approve your faithful works, and you return
Blessed from the dire pursuits of rebel foes;
Resolved, obdurate, they have tried the force
Of this right hand, and known almighty power;
Transfixed with lightning down they sunk and fell
Into the fiery gulf and deep they plunge
Below the burning waves, to hide their heads.
For you, ye guilty throng that lately joined
In this sedition, since seduced from good,
And caught in trains of guile, by sprites malign
Superior in their order; you accept,
Trembling, my heavenly clemency and grace.
When the long era once has filled its orb,
You shall emerge to light and humbly here
Again shall bow before his favoring throne,
If your own virtue second my decree:
But all must have their races first below.
See, where below in chaos wondrous deep
A speck of light dawns forth, and thence throughout

The shades, in many a wreath, my forming power
There swiftly turns the burning eddy round,
Absorbing all crude matter near its brink;
Which next, with subtle motions, takes the form
I please to stamp, the seed of embryo worlds
All now in embryo, but ere long shall rise
Variously scattered in this vast expanse,
Involved in winding orbs, until the brims
Of outward circles brush the heavenly gates.
The middle point a globe of curling fire
Shall hold, which round it sheds its genial heat;
Where'er I kindle life the motion grows.
In all the endless orbs, from this machine;
And infinite vicissitudes that roll
About the restless center; for I rear
In those meanders turned, a dusty ball,
Deformed all o'er with woods, whose shaggy tops
Inclose eternal mists, and deadly damps
Hover within their boughs, to cloak the light;
Impervious scenes of horror, till reformed
To fields and grassy dells and flowery meads
By your continual pains. Here Silence sits
In folds of wreathy mantling sunk obscure,
And in dark fumes bending his drowsy head;
An urn he holds, from whence a lake proceeds
Wide, flowing gently, smooth and Lethe named;
Hither compelled, each soul must drink long draughts
Of those forgetful streams, till forms within
And all the great ideas fade and die:
For if vast thought should play about a mind
Inclosed in flesh, and dragging cumbrous life,
Fluttering and beating in the mournful cage,
It soon would break its gates and wing away:

'Tis therefore my decree, the soul return
Naked from off this beach, and perfect blank
To visit the new world; and wait to feel
Itself in crude consistence closely shut,
The dreadful monument of just revenge;
Immured by heaven's own hand, and placed erect
On fleeting matter all imprisoned round
With walls of clay; the ethereal mould shall bear
The chain of members, deafened with an ear,
Blinded by eyes, and trammelled by hands,
Here anger, vast ambition and disdain,
And all the haughty movements rise and fall,
As storms of neighboring atoms tear the soul,
And hope and love and all the calmer turns
Of easy hours, in their gay gilded shapes,
With sudden run, skim e'er deluded minds,
As matter leads the dance; but one desire
Unsatisfied, shall mar ten thousand joys.

The rank of beings, that shall first advance
Drink deep of human life; and long shall stay
On this great scene of cares.
From all the rest That longer for the destined body wait,
Less penance I expect, and short abode
In those pale dreamy kingdoms will content;
Each has his lamentable lot and all
On different rocks abide the pains of life.

The pensive spirit takes the lonely grove;
Nightly he visits all the sylvan scenes,
Where far remote, a melancholy moon
Raising her head, serene and shorn of beams,
Throws here and there her glimmerings through the trees.
The sage shall haunt this solitary ground
And view the dismal landscape limned within

In horrid shades, mixed with imperfect light.
Here Judgment, blinded by delusive sense,
Contracted through the cranny of an eye,
Shoots up faint languid beams to that dark seat,
Wherein the soul, bereaved of native fire,
Sets intricate, in misty clouds obscured.

Hence far removed, a different being race
In cities full and frequent take their seat,
Where honour's crushed, and gratitude oppressed
With swelling hopes of gain, that raise within
A tempest, and driven onward by success,
Can find no bounds. For creatures of a day
Stretch their wide cares to ages; full increase
Starves their penurious soul, while empty sound
Fills the ambitious; *that* shall ever shrink,
Pining with endless cares, while *this* shall swell
To tympany enormous. Bright in arms
Here shines the hero, out he fiercely leads
A martial throng his instruments of rage;
To fill the world with death, and thin mankind.
There savage nature in one common lies
And feels its share of hunger, care and pain,
Cheated by flying prey; and now they tear
Their panting flesh; and deeply, darkly quaff
Of human woe, even when they rudely sip
The flowing stream, or draw the savory pulp
Of nature's freshest viands; fragrant fruits
Enjoyed with trembling, and in danger sought.

But where the appointed limits of a law
Fences the general safety of the world,
No greater quiet reigns; the blended loads
Of punishment and crime deform the world,
And give no rest to man; with pangs and throes

He enters on the stage; prophetic tears
And infant cries prelude his future woes;
And all is one continual scene of gulf
Till the sad sable curtain falls in death.

Then the gay glories of the living world
Shall cast their empty varnish and retire
Out of his feeble views; the shapeless root
Of wild imagination dance and play
Before his eyes obscure; till all in death
Shall vanish, and the prisoner enlarged,
Regains the flaming borders of the sky.

He ended. Peals of thunder rend the heavens,
And chaos, from the bottom turned, resounds.
The mighty clangor; all the heavenly host
Approve the high decree, and loud they sing
Eternal justice; while the guilty troops,
Sad with their doom, but sad without despair,
Fall fluttering down to Lethe's lake and there
For penance, and the destined body wait.

Shelley's Platonic leanings are well known. The favorite Greek conceit of pre-existence in many earlier lives may frequently be found in other poems besides the "Prometheus Unbound" quoted in part II of our series.

The last stanza of ""The Cloud," is Shelly's Platonic symbol of human life:

I am the daughter of earth and water
And the nursling of the sky
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores
I change, but I cannot die.
For after the rain when with never a stain
The pavilion of heaven is bare

And the winds and sunbeams with their convex gleams
Build up the blue dome of air
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph
And out of the caverns of rain
Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb,
I arise and unbuild it again.

Another poem entitled "A Fragment," certainly refers to pre-existence:

Ye gentle visitants of calm thought
Moods like the memories of happier earth
Which come arrayed in thoughts of little worth
Like stars in clouds by weak winds enwrought.

Coleridge has embodied his Platonic view of pre-existence in this sonnet, "Composed on a homeward journey; the author having received intelligence of the birth of a son":

Oft o'er my brain does that strange fancy roll
Which makes the present (while the flash doth last)
Seem a mere semblance of some unknown past,
Mixed with such feelings as perplex the soul
Self questioned in her sleep; and some have said
We lived, ere yet this robe of flesh we wore.
O my sweet baby! when I reach my door
If heavy looks should tell me thou art dead
(As sometimes through excess of hope, I fear)
I think that I should struggle to believe
Thou wert a spirit, to this nether sphere
Sentenced for some more venial crime to grieve;
Did'st scream, then spring to meet Heaven's quick reprieve,
While we wept idly o'er the little bier.

In Emerson, the Plato of the nineteenth century, the whole feeling

of the Greek seems reflected in its most glorious development. Many of his poems clearly suggest the influence of his Greek teacher, as his "Threnody" upon the death of his young son, and "The Sphinx" in which these two stanzas appear:

To vision profounder
Man's spirit must dive;
His aye-rolling orb
At no goal wilt arrive;
The heavens that now draw him
With sweetness untold
Once found for new heavens
He spurneth the old.
Eterne alteration
Now follows, now flies
And under pain, pleasure, —
Under pleasure, pain lies.
Love works at the centre,
Heart-heaving alway;
Forth speed the strong pulses
To the borders of day.

Many of the church hymns glow with the enthusiasm of Platonic pre-existence, and are fondly sung by Christians without any thought that, while their idea is of Biblical origin, it has been nourished and perpetuated by the Greek sage, and directly implies reincarnation. For instance:

"I'm but a stranger here, heaven is my home."

"Heaven is my fatherland, heaven is my home."

Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe, the friend of Bishop Ken and of Dr. Isaac Watts, has left this allusion to pre-existence in

A HYMN ON HEAVEN.

Ye starry mansions, hail! my native skies
Here in my happy, pre-existent state
(A spotless mind) I led the life of Gods,
But passing, I salute you, and advance
To yonder brighter realms, allowed access,
Hail, splendid city of the almighty king
Celestial salem, situate above, &c.

The Path

NATURE'S SCHOLAR — *J. Campbell Ver Planck*

There was once an old Scholar who counted his friends by scores in his youth, and had now mislaid or lost them. Early in life he had wandered away from men and things to seek the Truth, and journeyed very far in his search, coming at last to an inheritance of little land and much learning, left him by an antiquarian ancestor. Deep down in quiet country dales he lived upon dreams and moldy books, well loved by all about him, for he never knew the current rates of wage or purchase, nor yet when maids hung gossiping over hedges, and dinner burned in the oven. The simple folk of the country side had their own way with him whom they called "the poor dear soul" and cherished as their own backbone, never letting any man out of their own township serve or despoil him, so much they felt they owed him. Some went so far in gratitude as to say he was not near so old as he looked, for if his hair *was* grey, there were firm, bright eyes and sturdy calves to give age the lie and maintain it. Moreover, the time a band passed through the village, he had been espied by Molly through the door chink, striding up and down, whistling as loud as any boy and cutting the air with his cane in a style far beyond the drum-major. It was the kitchen verdict that he must have been "shocking bad" in his youth; his dinner was done to a turn that night and the maids had new ribbands in their caps and arch provocation on their faces.

Be his age what it might, day after day the Scholar read and wrote, or slowly paced his rustic walks, now amid rose blooms, now upon the sere rustle of leaves or crunch of snow, but always with a faithful old hound to heel on his right, whose head hung low like the master's. Nothing breathed on that homestead that did not seem to have greater right there than the Scholar: the

very toads and lizards sat and swelled for pride of ownership in mossy nooks on his walk, and busy winter birds stood still at his approach, and pecked briskly at the brown boughs won by sun from ice, knowing well that not even creeping things had ever seen cause to turn aside for him. One hoary spider had indeed been seen to think the Scholar would learn more if he took some notice of creatures, but everyone knows that since Bruce introduced a spider to history, the tribe has been hypercritical of the insufficient methods of man. It is certain that the Scholar considered himself a mere sojourner there where he was master, and meant to return to anxious friends when he could carry the Truth to them. But the great tomes of his legacy were many and wise; still he lingered, still he sought, while Time went tiptoe past him.

One morning, as he wrote, a caprice of the Spring wind burst open the study casement. A gush of wild-wood fragrance and the shrill lilt of a girl's voice in song flooded into the room together. Some subtle quality of the voice made him throw down his pen and glance at a picture on his table. From beneath its coating of dust a merry brown eye laughed out at him and a round shoulder gleamed whitely. Taking up this picture, he polished it remorsefully with his worn coat cuff, muttering like one asleep: "Poor Kate! I have kept her waiting long. I cannot give myself to happiness or woman, until I find the Truth."

Straightway upon this came a miracle! His door swung open. There upon his threshold, young and rosy, lap and hair full of blossoms, face full of dimples, stood Kate herself. As the man's eye went from the picture to the woman, the man's heart leaped up hot and strong. He dropped the painted thing and caught the living beauty in his arms. "My Kate! you have waited for me!" Small chance has Truth with her own at times, when velvety cheek is so near and the springtide is yet young!

What said the beauty? She laughed again, and kissed him with the careless, cruel, kindness of youth to age. "Yes, we waited and rang till we were tired, so I came on to explore. Awfully nice of you to know me!"

"But Kate" — he stammered.

"Harriet. I'm not named for Mamma," she rattled on. "Mamma's out there with Papa and the children."

"Children?" gasped the Scholar.

"Yes. Ten, besides me. Don't you hear them?"

Surely he heard them. Ten! they sounded like legions. The mere pursuit of truth is at once a recompense and a protection! Yet even a votary is vulnerable when a young girl goes on to say: "Let me call them, you'll sprain yourself, rushing about so. I shook your nerves; see how your hand trembles."

No wonder, poor Scholar. In that moment he looked double his age, for he — long unacquainted with mirrors — saw for the first time his stooping shoulders, his crows-feet and wrinkles, reflected in her blithe indifference, her attention wandering from him to his surroundings. His dead youth rose up with power, and stared him in the face; then fell away from his heart in ashes.

That heart was staunch though, as are the hearts of those who seek the Truth, so by the time his guests stepped beneath his roof, he stood ready to welcome them with gentle courtesy — his Kate, grown portly, but fresh and good-humored still, and secretly flattered to see, (as she did with the tail of her eye) her portrait so cleanly kept when all else was so dusty, and hoping her husband would not remark it. Her husband, (who would not have cared if he had, she having tapped his single vein of sentiment and run it dry,) a grave, cautious Scientist: a friend of his, a Speculator,

attracted by unlikeness, whose sharp glance bestowed a hypothetical value wherever it fell: these and other friends had hunted the Scholar up to renew old ties in his country home, seeing which, the very cockles of his heart warmed to them. Soon milk was foaming into pails; sounds of beating and churning and frothing arose. Maids scurried in all directions. Slugs disturbed on young green things, and cackling hens in angry session on the barn floor, alike averred that never had such an evil day befallen poultry yard and kitchen garden. "Humph" snarled old Peter: "me airly salad he should not have, an' me meanin' to sell it in market the Saturday, but for his bein' the boss, dang him!" To which Cook replied with much feeling that "Lord knows, I ain't never before seen the poor, dear gentleman ask for his own." Peter glared at her. "Woman! That's just what I am objectin' to. It's the first time makes the *precydent*. He's got the *precydent* on us now," with which mysterious omen hanging over her, Cook retired to her pans and sauces.

The day passed all too quickly, and when the hour for departure came round, the Scholar was so reluctant to part with his friends that he bethought him of making a gift to every one, that some portion of himself might go with them. Gathering them about him, he begged that each would tell him what they had liked best in his home, adding — the wily old Scholar! — that then these things might serve to remind him of friends, and perhaps smile at him in their absence. They were very worldly wise people, however, coming from the city beyond the hills, that city whose knowing lights out-winked the stars, whose mists denied a right of way to the sun himself. So perhaps they saw through his cunning, for all hung back until he said to the Artist: "Come Sir; you have praised my homestead much. What will you crown with your final approbation 'e're you leave me?"

The Artist could but smile back into the genial face bending

towards him. "Why, Sir, the fairest thing you own is one that in itself contains the true rules of all Art. It is as blue as the heavens, and like them, a living lesson in gradation of color, and its form displays the perfect 'line of beauty.'"

The Scholar's gaze sought the dark cabinets on his walls, each rich with its own freight, but the Scientist spoke up with decision. "On the contrary, the finest thing our friend possesses is colorless, formless; its beauty is its utility: its protean energy is a fountain of Power."

"Learning and Art are all very good," chirruped the speculator, flecking off his eyeglass. "But if ever you chance to be hard up, let me choose what possession of yours shall be put upon the market, and you shall pocket its attractions — less commission — in more cash than anything else I see is likely to bring you."

A swift cloud of deprecation passed over the company, as when a breeze ruffles a grain field and there is a stir, a rustle and a withdrawal from the rude intruder. The Scholar's cheek even reddened slightly, seeing which, the Poet hastened to staunch the wound, as is the royal prerogative of poets. "Sir," said he, "you have here an instrument of wonderful sweetness. It tunes ear and brain alike to the sweetest harmonies, and though I must leave it, I take its music with me, captured in my latest song, and all the world shall sing it."

He was a famous Poet, so the rest hastened to agree with him. "As for me," said a youth, gazing ardently at Harriet; "what I admired most was an image of the loveliest woman God ever made; what I envy most seemed to hold her in its arms, and these were one thing."

"And I," said a reproachful youth whom she had jilted, "I liked the one thing that cannot be trampled upon, nor does it change and

grow out of knowledge, like the fickle world around us."

"Fancy! Now for my part the jolliest thing here is always changing, never the same. It's a racer! No women for me!" So spoke the Dandy whom Harriet secretly loved. Stung, she turned away to hide her palpitating bosom, but flung a dart behind her, as girls will. "Diamonds." cried she, "give me our host's ancestral diamonds. Larger ones I never saw. Brilliants! Glorious! such quantities. My heart is set on having just such stones."

Her lovers stroked their callow chins and thought of their salaries, but before the puzzled Scholar could ask for an explanation, her mother took his hand, saying plaintively, "My good friend, next to yourself, what I value most is none of these things they name, but just something in your dairy which makes yours the sweetest cream and butter I ever tasted. How my poor children ever grow up on city fare, a merciful heaven only knows."

Everyone laughed at this touching idea, for just then the "poor children" rushed up with a loud rumble, as of thunder, and precipitated themselves upon the Scholar. The one at the rear, who still had some breath remaining, shouted out; "We never saw such a splendid stream. Don't we wish we had it at home." Their host was about to confess that he had never noticed it, when his voice was drowned in a general exclamation from all the grown people in one breath: "That was what I meant too; it is the stream yonder!"

The astonished Scholar turned to look at his choicest possession, now rosy under the setting sun. Its cascade swept down in a serpentine curve, while part of the water writhed backward from the lip of the fall, making a spiral within a spiral in strange double movement; an ebb and a flow. Below the outpour of life-giving water, six eddies swirled away, each in its own circle, but

interlinked by a current that emptied itself in a larger whirlpool further down. The little wind that rises out of the east at nightfall in the spring, struck coldly across this boiling vortex, condensing its foam into a silvery mist that gathered, rose, took on a graceful wraithlike shape, and floated away, a freed thing to the free ether. The Scholar drew himself up in sudden excitement and wonder, then these words burst from him in a torrent strangely unlike the calm evenness of his accustomed speech. "At last! At last I have found the secret. See" — and he pointed to the cascade — "there is the movement that creates life; it circles through the eddies and out of the whirlpool evolves the new-born life itself, the immortal that seeks the skies. Rejoice with me!"

The tears ran down his cheek, but his voice rang like a bugle and his form had a majesty they could not understand. They fell back a few paces. Their mirth was extinguished, their manners constrained. Like guilty hearts they made hasty farewells, avoiding his eye: their thanks fell crisp and cool on the air, like frost. While still their footsteps pressed his land, drowsy birds in the hedges saw them put heads close together in the shadows and whisper furtively, "Mad! He is mad. What will people say? We will never come again." The branches, closing behind them with a shudder, shed a soft rain of blossoms to obliterate their presence; then twining closer, shut the Scholar forever away from the world and its friends.

Lost in an ecstasy, he stood by the hurrying waters. A Voice called to him from somewhere; a Voice of airy mystery; a soundless but almighty Voice, so that he trembled as he answered, "Lord, here am I."

"Seest thou not, oh, Seeker," said the Voice, "that though Truth wears different garb to different men, it is but the livery of their own minds; beneath it is the One Truth that mirrors forth all the

rest, changeless and resplendent under as many names as there are men? It is to be found in all things in Nature, even as the water is in all things: men pursue its splendor blindfold through the worlds, to find it shining beside their own door."

"And thou, who art thou?" asked the Scholar.

"I am that Spirit which moves above the face of the waters. With Truth I dwell in her supreme abode. Seek me there."

An awful thrill, half fear, half joy ran through the hearer's breast, for these last words resounded from the deeps of his heart. Then he knew the supreme abode of Truth and worshipping in it, he became Nature's Scholar, and she made him young again with that youth which men call Immortality

The Path

THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE: VIII — *Pilgrim*

What is known in the present day under the name of Theosophy, as has repeatedly been stated, is the primary truth which all the religions of the world alike have enshrined — it may be regarded as the kernel of which the religions have been the husks, and it would seem that in the development of this idea, and in the comparison of the objects aimed at by the various religions and by Theosophy, that we shall best realize the stupendous scope and importance of this divine hidden wisdom.

While some of the religions may have been more transparent husks than others through which the kernel of the wisdom of the ages might be dimly visioned, in other words, while some may contain vague hints of the wider horizon and the more transcendent heights of being, it may generally be stated without making invidious distinctions that the religions of the world as a rule have concerned themselves almost exclusively with the present earth life and the life lying immediately beyond. It is with the rewards and punishments of this state in the immediate future, and with the moral or virtuous thoughts and actions of the present life, which are supposed to be the means of meriting the former and of avoiding the latter, that the priesthoods and the teachers of religion have principally dealt. Indeed, so engrossed in the pursuit of worldly objects have the priesthoods of some religions become that the wider horizon has been completely lost by them.

While the quality of spirituality is but feebly developed in mankind, while the occupations and aims of this present earth life continue to absorb so very much the greater part of the energy of men, and while the intellectual development of those

who have some dim perception of a higher state has still to achieve its period of blossom, the different religions adopted by the various races of men will continue to supply the required needs. But there are a few in each country who have risen above the prevailing level — the forerunners we take it of the mighty coming race, and their numbers are being daily added to — men of thought and feeling who through pain and inward struggle have emancipated themselves from the deadly bonds of superstition, and who have at the same time been too great hearted to fall into the still deadlier grip of the opposing faction that usurps the name of science, and that parades its little aims under the denial of all that is most sacred in humanity — men who by intense imaginative power have grasped and realized all that this life has to give, and have been forced to put it by as failing to satisfy their highest aspirations. For such men the Theosophic advent has been a true Eirenicon. No longer bounded by the dimly imaged heaven which superstitious ignorance stretched into eternity, all life now lies before the impartial student of nature in logical order. The law of absolute justice under the name of Karma, which follows with impartial reward or retribution every act, every word and every thought, is now recognized alike as satisfying the moral conscience of the religious man, and as extending over the whole horizon of man's nature the inevitable sequence of cause and effect which the scientists have shown to exist in the material world; while in marked contrast alike to the agnostic acceptance of annihilation, and to the diabolic theory of the arbitrary awardment of eternal bliss or eternal misery to the poor struggling mortals, who after a short life time of 70 or 80 years are surely unlikely to be deserving of either, the picture is completed by the steady progress and evolution of the soul through the continually repeated vicissitudes of earthly life — alternated and relieved by the blissful dreams of heaven where the infinite variety of human

character will through aeons of time reap in subtle distinction that which is the due of each.

The objects of the Theosophical Society may be stated as twofold. Firstly to act as a counter movement alike to the decaying but still lingering superstitions, and still more to the rampant and growing materialism of the present day, and the best way to attain this first object is surely to give to the world such a system of thought as may help to explain the mysteries of life. Such a system as will at once satisfy man's logical requirements, his moral feeling of fitness, and his highest spiritual aspirations. And where will such a system be found as in the doctrines Theosophy teaches? The second and main object to which the first leads up, is to act as a guide to the pathway of deliverance by which man may escape from the alternating miseries of birth and death, and attain the one permanent state of Being. This is the great — the divine — secret — to be bound no longer in conditioned existence — to merge the manhood in the Godhead! To catch a glimpse of one of the thousand states of ecstatic being that lie in infinite gradation between us and that stupendous goal would blind us with excess of light. Surely then the only figure before the mind when whispering in worshipping awe of that ineffable state of being should be the kneeling angel with head bent low, and wings crossed before the face.

While a large and increasing number are likely to be influenced by the teachings of Theosophy towards more tolerant and wider views of life, the number of those who will feel impelled to attempt the great undertaking will not probably in this age of darkness be relatively large. But indeed it is not a matter of choice, the destiny of each guides unerringly in the path he is bound to tread, the good within drives and will drive in ways that we know not of. The deep depression or the cutting sorrow of former years may pass away, the torture may take a more subtle

form, but while the wings are yet too weak to soar for long in the heavenly air, the detachment from earthly things is bound to bear its first fruits of pain, and the heart will still remain steadily crushed between the upper and the nether millstones. When the aimlessness of this life has made itself felt, to the exclusion of all other thought, to escape from its desolating curse must seem the one object worthy of accomplishment. The converging lines of Karma must doubtless have led those who feel impelled to scale the transcendent heights, compared with which the most soaring ambition of earthly life sinks into nothingness, but in weak-kneed moments to be thrust on such a path of greatness is felt to be a pathetic destiny, a forlorn hope, truly forlorn if the present life alone is regarded, but it is a forlorn hope that *has* to be led.

To realize with vivid distinctness the inanity of all earthly bliss, and yet to catch no refreshing glimpse of the beatific vision; to taste no strengthening sip of the heavenly Amrit, this is indeed a desolateness without any parallel in worldly life, it is the "indescribable vacuum" of the heart, so well pictured in an article in the June *Theosophist* entitled "Divine Heartache." But as the writer there goes on to describe in words which recall St. John of the Cross's "Obscure Night of the Soul" the apparent contraction of the heart is caused by the divine fire which is driving out its rheum and filthy moisture, and is but a prelude to the ultimate expansion. St. Thomas a Kempis, also dwells on the trouble of mind the disciple must learn to bear, and points out that "to be in a state of great devotion and sweetness" is not advantageous "for it is not by these things that a true lover of virtue is known, nor doth the spiritual progress and perfection of a man consist in these things."

It is written, "He that hath put aside woman hath put aside the world" and this would seem to be the best illustration of that final detachment which is the prelude to the first step on the path to

higher things. The different earthly desires from that of mere animal comfort up to the most ideal love, have all got characteristics that blend into each other, but earthly desire at every turn has to be fought and conquered, or put in other words it is a continual raising of the object of desire, either through the failure of realization or through the satiety that comes of realization. It may have required the experience of many incarnations to weed out of the heart the desire for wealth, for title, for power, for consideration among men, at each death of the body a step may have been gained, and the object of desire raised a degree in nobility, until its culmination is reached in the desire for the ideal union, the true marriage of the soul, to which the bodily union is but a subsidiary supplement. The intensity of a fruitless passion if kept undegraded by any acceptance of a lower love, if steadily nursed through a whole life-time as the one thing worthy of achievement, may have alchemical force enough to transmute this love into what it already resembles, the still loftier and purer love of the Universal Soul. "Woman" may have been "put aside" and the ideal union as a tangible reality in this life despaired of — in moments of enthusiasm the earthly love may appear totally eclipsed by the heavenly — but while lungs fit to breathe the heavenly ether are still undeveloped, descents have to be made to the lower air, the old hopes of love rise again in the breast though more faintly, and the old torture is gone through again.

But if the ultimate goal is steadily kept before the mind's eye, each pang that has been endured should have given added strength. The goad that drives each man to higher things is deep seated in his being, and must remain so through life until it ceases to be a goad at all by the conquest of the special desire against which it was directed, and if only we bear in mind that it is a matter of small moment whether or not we attain our earthly desires, and

that the one thing important is to follow loyally what at the time seems to us highest and worthiest — though that highest and worthiest ideal is ever moving upwards — periods of peace and satisfaction are bound to come at last, and we may repeat with Sidney

"Leave me, O Love, that readiest but to dust;

"And thou my mind aspire to higher things;

"Grow rich in that which never taketh rust;

"Whatever fades but fading pleasure brings.

* * * * *

"Then farewell World! thy uttermost I see

"Eternal Love, maintain thy life in me!"

The Path

THE BHAGAVAD-GITA: II — *William Brehon*

(Continued from April number.)

In the few introductory lines with which I took up this subject, it was stated that not being a Sanskrit scholar I did not intend to go into the commentaries upon the poem in that language. The great mass of those commentaries have looked at the dialogue from various standpoints. Many later Hindu students have not gone beyond the explanations made by Sankaracharya, and nearly all refuse to do more than transliterate the names of the different personages referred to in the first chapter.

But there is the highest authority for reading this poem between the lines. The Vedas themselves say, that what we see of them, is only "the disclosed Veda," and that one should strive to get above this *disclosed* word. It is here clearly implied that the undisclosed Vedas must be hidden or contained in that which is apparent to the outer senses. Did we not have this privilege, then surely will we be reduced to obtaining true knowledge solely from the facts of experience as suffered by the mortal frame, and fall into the gross error of the materialists, who claim that mind is only an effect produced by the physical brain-molecules coming into motion. We would also have to follow the canonical rule, that conscience is a safe guide only when it is regulated by an external law such as the law of the church, or of the Brahmanical caste. But we very well know that within the material, apparent — or disclosed — man, exists the *real* one who is undisclosed. This valuable privilege of looking for the inner sense, while not straining after impossible meanings in the text, is permitted to all sincere students of any holy scriptures, Christian or Pagan. And in the poem itself, Krishna declares that He will feed the lamp of

spiritual wisdom so that the real meaning of his words may be known; so too the Upanishads uphold the existence of a faculty together with the right to use it, whereby one can plainly discern the real, or undisclosed, meaning of holy books. Indeed, there is a school of occultists who hold, as we think with reason, that this power may be so developed by devoted persons, that even upon hearing the words of a holy book read in a totally unfamiliar language, the true meaning and drift of the strange sentences become instantly known. (1) The Christian commentators all allow that in studying their Bible, the spirit must be attended to and not the letter. This *spirit* is that *undisclosed* Veda which must be looked for between the lines.

Nor should the Western student of the poem be deterred from any attempt to get at the real meaning, by the attitude of the Brahmins, who hold that only Brahmins can be told this real meaning, and, because Krishna did not make it plain, it may not be made plain now to Sudras, or low caste people. Were this view to prevail, then the whole Western body of theosophists would be excluded from using this important book, inasmuch as all persons not Hindus are necessarily of Sudra caste. Krishna did not make such an exclusion, which is only priestcraft. He was himself of shepherd caste and not a Brahmin; and he says that any one who listens to his words will receive great benefit. The sole limitation made by him is that one in which he declares that these things must not be taught to those who do not want to listen, which is just the same direction as that given by Jesus of Nazareth when he said, "cast not your pearls before swine."

But as our minds work very much upon suggestion or clues, and might in the absence of any hints as to where those clues are placed, be liable to altogether overlook the point, we must bear in mind the existence among the Aryans of a psychological system that gives substance and impulse to utterances declared by many

Orientalists to be folly unworthy of attention from a man of the nineteenth century civilization. Nor need we be repulsed from our task because of a small acquaintance with that Aryan psychology. The moment we are aware of its existence in the poem, our inner self is ready to help the outer man to grasp after it, and in the noble pursuit of these great philosophical and moral truths, which is only our eternal endeavor to realize them as a part of our being, we can patiently wait for a perfect knowledge of the anatomy and functions of the inner man.

Western Sanskritists have translated many important words into the very lowest of their real meanings, being drawn away from the true by the incomplete Western psychological and spiritual knowledge, or have mixed them up hopelessly. Such words as *Karma* and *Dharma* are not understood. *Dharma* means *Law*, and is generally turned into *duty*, or said to refer merely to some rule depending upon human convention, whereas it means an inherent property of the faculties or of the whole man, or even of anything in the cosmos. Thus it is said that it is the duty, or *Dharma*, of fire to burn. It always will burn and thus do its whole duty, having no consciousness, while man alone has the power to retard his "journey to the heart of the Sun," by refusing to perform his properly appointed and plainly evident *Dharma*. So again, when we read in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, that those who depart this life, "in the bright half of the moon, in the six months of the sun's Northern course" will go to eternal salvation, while others "who depart in the gloomy night of the moon's dark season while the sun is in the Southern half of his path," ascend for a time to the moon's region, to be reborn on this earth, our Orientalists tell us this is sheer folly, and we are unable to contradict them. But if we know that the Aryans with a comprehensive knowledge of the vast and never inharmonious correspondence reigning throughout the macrocosm, in speaking thus meant to admit that

the human being may be or not in a state of development in strict conformity to the bright or dark moon, the verse becomes clear. The materialistic critic will take the verse in the fourth chapter which says that, "he who eats of the ambrosia left from a sacrifice passes into the supreme spirit," and ask us how the eating of the remnants of a burnt offering can confer salvation. When, however, we know that Man is the altar and the sacrifice, and that this *ambrosia* is the *perfection of spiritual cultivation* which he eats or incorporates into his being, the Aryan is vindicated and we are saved from despair.

A strange similarity on one point may be noticed between our poem and the old Hebrew record. The Jews were prepared by certain experiences to enter into the promised land, but were unable to do so until they had engaged in mighty conflicts with Hivites, Jebuzites, Perizites, and Amalakites. Here we find that the very opening verse signalizes a war. The old, blind king Dhritarashtra asks his prime minister to tell him what these opposing forces of Pandoos and Kooroos have been doing assembled as they are resolved upon war. So too the Jews assembled upon the borders of the promised land, resolved on conflict, and sustained in their resolve by the declarations of their God who had brought them out of the darkness of Egypt, carried on the fight. Egypt was the place where they had, in mystic language, obtained corporification, and stands for ante-natal states, for unformed chaotic periods in the beginning of evolution, for the gestation in the womb. We are on the eve of a gigantic combat, we are to rush into the midst of "a conflict of savages." If this opening verse is understood as it was meant, we are given the key to a magnificent system, and shall not fall into the error of asserting that the unity of the poem is destroyed.

Dhritarashtra is blind, because the body, as such, is blind in every way.

Some one has said — Goethe I think — that the old pagan religions taught men to look up, to aspire continually toward the greatness which was really his to achieve, and thus led him to regard himself as but little less, potentially, than a God; while the attitude of man under the Christian system is one of humility, of bowed head and lowered eyes, in the presence of his God. In approaching the "jealous God" of the Mosaic dispensation, it is not permissible to assume an erect position. This change of attitude becomes necessary as soon as we postulate a Deity who is outside and beyond us. And yet it is not due to the Christian scriptures in themselves, but solely to the wrong interpretation given them by priests and churches, and easily believed by a weak humanity that needs a support beyond itself on which to lean.

The Aryans, holding that man in his essence *is God*, naturally looked up to Him and referred everything to Him. They therefore attributed to the material of the body no power of sight or feeling. And so Dhritarashtra, who is *material existence*, in which thirst for its renewal inheres, is blind.

The eye cannot see nor the ear hear, of themselves. In the Upanishads the pupil is asked: "What is the sight of the eye, and the hearing of the ear?" replying, that these powers reside solely with inner organs of the soul, using the material body as the means for experiencing the phenomena of material life. Without the presence of this indwelling, informing, hearing and seeing power — or being — this collection of particles now deified as *body* is dead or blind.

These philosophers were not behind our nineteenth century. Boscovitch, the Italian, Faraday, Fiske and other moderns, have concluded that we cannot even see or know the *matter* of which these bodies and the different substances about us are mule up, and that the ultimate resolution is not into atoms finely divided,

but into "points of dynamic force"; and therefore, we cannot know a piece of iron, we only know the *phenomena* it produce? This position is an ancient Aryan one, with another added — that the real perceiver of those phenomena is the *Self*.

It is only by an acceptance of this philosophy, that we will ever comprehend the facts of nature which our science is so laboriously noting and classifying. But that science ignores a large mass of phenomena well known to spiritualists here and to ascetics in Asia, because the actual existence of the Self as the final support of every phase of consciousness is denied. "The disappearance of the ascetic is a possibility." But the West denies it, while it is doubtful if even spiritists will admit that any living man can cause that phenomena known as "form" to disappear. They are, however, willing to grant that a "materialized spirit form" may disappear, or that some mediums are living who have disappeared while sitting in a chair, either as an actual dissipation of molecules or by being covered as with a veil. (2)

In those instances the thing happened without knowledge or effort on the part of the medium, who was a passive agent. But the Eastern ascetic possessing the power of disappearing, is a person who has meditated upon the real basis of what we know as "form," with the doctrine ever in view, as stated by Boscovitch and Faraday, that these phenomena are not realities, *per se*, and adding that all must be referred to the Self. And so we find Patanjali in his compilation of Yoga aphorisms stating the matter. In his twenty-first aphorism Book III, he says that the ascetic being aware that form, as such, is nothing, can cause himself to disappear. (3) It is not difficult to explain this as a species of hypnotism or psychologizing performed by the ascetic. But such sort of explaining is only the modern method of getting out of a difficulty by stating it over again in new terms. Not until it is admitted that the Self eternally persists and is always unmodified,

will any real knowledge be acquired by us respecting these matters. In this Patanjali is very clear in his seventeenth Aphorism, Book IV., where he says: "The modifications of the mental state are always known, because the presiding spirit is not modified."

We must admit the blindness of Dhritarashtra, as body, and that our consciousness and ability to know anything whatever of the modifications going on in the organism, are due to the "presiding spirit."

So this old, blind rajah is that part of man, which, containing the principle of thirst for existence, holds material life. The Ganges bounding his plain on one side typifies the sacred stream of spiritual life incarnated here.

At first it flows down unperceived by us, through the spiritual spheres, coming at last into what we call matter, where it manifests itself — but yet remains unseen, until at last it flows into the sea — or death — to be drawn up again by the sun — or the Karma of reincarnation. The plain is sacred because it is the "temple of the Holy Ghost." Kuru-Kshetra should then read: "The body which is acquired by Karma." So the King does not ask what this body itself has been doing, but what have the followers of material existence, that is the entire host of lower elements in man by which he is attached to physical life, and the followers of Pandu, that is the entire set of spiritual faculties, been doing on this sacred plain.

It follows then that the enumeration of generals and commanders gone into by the prime minister in reply to the king, must be a catalogue of all the lower and higher faculties in man, containing also, in the names adopted, clues to powers of our being only at present dimly guessed at in the West or included in such vague terms as Brain and Mind. We find these generals given their

appropriate places upon either side, and see also that they have assigned to them various distinctive weapons, which in many cases are flourished or exhibited in the preliminary movements, so that our attention may be drawn to them.

(To be continued.)

FOOTNOTES:

1. We have in mind an incident where a person of some slight development in this direction, heard read several verses from the Vedas in Sanskrit — with which he had no acquaintance — and instantly told what the verses were about — B. ([return to text](#))

2. For an instance see Olcott's "*People from the other world*," respecting a female medium. — W. B. ([return to text](#))

3. The Aphorism reads: "By performing Sanyama — restraint (or meditation) — about form, its power of being apprehended (by the seer's eye) being checked, and luminousness, the property of the organ of sight, having no connection with its object (that is the form), the result is the disappearance of the ascetic." — W. B. ([return to text](#))

The Path

MEDIUMSHIP — *Albertus*

There is no more misunderstood or misapplied word than "Medium." Having been appropriated by the Spiritist, it is as a natural result, today supposed to mean just what he makes it mean.

Men take a word, saddle it with a meaning, ride it rough shod on a full gallop over and into every thing until other men shrink in terror from it; or else he stands and curses it for a vile and useless thing. Those who have given the word its present meaning, ascribing all things to the work of disembodied spirits, have made the Medium what he is, and taking to their bosoms the Frankenstein whom they have raised — hug him close, whether he be angel or devil. So long as the Medium gives forth the utterances of "*Spirits*" it matters not at all whether they are the words of divine truth, pure lies, or the thoughts of the Medium; without the slightest true effort to discover the source, all is accepted and claimed for Spirits. This and some other modes of proceeding have discouraged many intelligent students from researches touching Mediumship, and caused all men, outside of a limited number, to distrust or fear the name.

Nevertheless Mediumship does exist, no matter how much it may be reviled or we be prejudiced against it. But Mediumship does not consist wholly in reality of so called communications from dead men, or the alleged materialization of Spirit forms through whose veins the red blood of Nature courses, and whose breaths frequently bear a suspicious odor of onions. While there is not one of the phases of Spiritism which is not founded upon a truth, yet these demonstrations almost generally are the results of unscrupulous persons seeking gain or self. A Medium gaining a

little knowledge of some unfamiliar occult law, takes it for granted that all is learned, calls it a spirit, and immediately applies it to his own purposes. Finding he can go only a certain length with it, instead of seeking further knowledge, he strains and improvises upon it, to gain his ends or the gold he covets. We do not say they are not Mediums for they are. All the charlatans and pretenders who cling to the skirts of Spiritism also. They are Mediums for the lower passions and elementals. The error of Spiritists lies in the fact that they ascribe *all* things to Spirits. Clairaudience, Clairvoyance, Psychometry, Hypnotism, etc., are all claimed as the work of a Spirit or Control.

All men are Mediums or Sensitives, and to what extent they little know. We do not claim that all men are Mediums for Spirits of dead men, or that they are all instruments for the most exalted Intelligences, but they are Mediums for Elementals — the embodied, the disembodied, for those who never have or may never be embodied — for all that the Astral holds, and sometimes for that which is beyond the Astral. They are Mediums for their own Inner and Higher selves or those of other men, and frequently failing to recognize them, they call them "Spirits."

The Psychometrist is a Medium or Sensitive, but he is such for the manifestation of the souls of things. The Hypnotic also, but he is for the manifestation of his own and the latent powers of other mortals. The Clairvoyant sees that which is recorded on the Astral.

The Clairaudient may hear the voices of Spirits, he may quite as easily hear the thought, but unspoken words, of other living men, the voices of forces or that of his own unrecognized Inner or Higher Self.

Upon the Astral Light all things are recorded; the knowledge of ages, the acts of all time, the forms of all who have died and all

who live, the thoughts of all who have ever existed or do exist are photographed upon it. It has been and is being daily admitted more freely by wise men, that there are other forces and powers in Nature of which we, largely, have little knowledge. The souls of animate and inanimate things, the lights, colors and auras of non-luminous bodies, the powers of and forces exerted by immovable or quiescent things, and the effects of all these upon the human organism, are realized only to a slight extent by the enlightened and unprejudiced scientist, and fully known only to the *true* occult student.

Thought passes to and fro from man to man. At a higher level it does the same from higher intelligences to man, and all in a sphere beyond the material. Men, from different causes, rising to different levels above their ordinary outer selves, come into the Astral where all is spread out before them. They see and read only that for which they are fitted, and comprehend only that for which they are prepared. Through conscious or unconscious exaltation they rise into or come in contact with some current of thought or unspoken word which enters their brains by divers roads. Comprehended partly perhaps, but being entirely foreign to their normal personal manner of thinking — knowing they have heard a voice — it is ascribed to a Spirit, although in fact it may be the thought of a living man they hear, feel, see or are repeating. All men who by effort, training, or super-sensitive personality, lift themselves consciously or are lifted unconsciously above the material, and secure the wisdom knowledge and inspiration of other planes, are mediumistic.

Every student who has sought the Occult and attained his object has been a Medium, from Buddha, Pythagoras, Zoroaster, Apollonius, Plato, Jesus, Boehme, down to those of later times or of today.

The Adept as well as the Chela, the Initiate as well as the Neophyte, the Master as well as the Student. The Chela is but the Medium for his own latent possibilities — his Master and Nature's laws. The Neophyte likewise, for all by a striving for a high ideal, seek to place themselves upon a plane where Occult laws may make themselves visible or intelligible through their agency, and the silent voices of the Great Unseen become audible, be they individualized or diffused through all space as forces are. All things speak and convey a meaning, nothing is silent — all things speak from the monad, through all nature, forces, spheres, and space to the Omniscient silence — the ever living Word, the voice of the All Wise, and all men hear or feel some of these in some way and are Mediums for them.

Forces there are which wait but the will or desire of souls to spring into a certain degree of human intelligence, and make themselves heard to and through the one who has brought them into Material life.

Man's body is but a Medium. If it be not for his own Inner and Higher Self; then it is for those of other men; for we express the thoughts and acts of others quite as often as our own.

There has never been a wise or good word spoken, a note of true music sounded, a line of true poetry penned, a harmonious blending of color painted that was not the result of Mediumship. There never was an occult law explained, a divine mystery revealed through man, chela, student, Adept or Master, that was not the result of Mediumship.

The Master is higher than the chela who is his Medium. There is something higher than the Master, and he is Its Medium; looked at in its true light Mediumship is one of the wonders of the Creator. He who possesses most of this gift, realizing what it is and knowing how to wisely use it may feel himself supremely

blest. The Mystic and true Theosophist realizing what a Medium really is, may well hesitate before he joins with those who cast aside divine wisdom because it has come through an instrument declared in horror by some to be Mediumistic.

The Path

**THE THEOSOPHICAL MEANING OF GOETHE'S FAUST: I — F. S.
Collins**

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.

If the question were asked, what one literary work best represents the spiritual and intellectual problems of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the majority of educated and thoughtful men would, I think, answer, Goethe's Faust. As the *Divina Commedia* represents the whole intellectual, social and moral movement of Dante's time, so Goethe's poem may be said to include the whole spirit of modern life, in all its phases.

And just as in the *Divine Comedy* we can read in the literal sense an account of the author's travels through the various circles of material regions of punishment, purification, and reward; while there can be read also a consistent political meaning, the symbols considered as referring to the contests then raging in Italy, where Pope, Emperor, and civic republics, contended for their various interests; while deeper and truer than either, lies the spiritual sense, most precious of all, and as living as ever, when the literal and the political interpretations have become a matter of the past; so in Faust, every one who reads it may draw from it the meaning that it has for his special need, the answer for his special question; and the deepest thinker, the most spiritual interpreter of it will be the least likely to claim that he has fully comprehended its possibilities, or penetrated to its innermost sense.

And the inner meaning of both these is the same; it is the same question which underlies all the great Bibles of Humanity; how

shall man, the imperfect, become perfect? Each age has to meet this problem, each states the solution in its own form; many are the answers, but very few, only one in an age, comes to be accepted as the voice of that age; and the inner sense of these is very nearly the same, though the external forms may be far different.

In what I may have to say as to the answer which "Faust" gives to the universal problem, I am much indebted to the very thoughtful and instructive work of Mr. D. J. Snider, "Goethe's Faust, a Commentary." To the theosophist, especially, this book is a perfect treasury of interpretations of inner meanings in Goethe's poem.

The action of "Faust" was tersely characterized by Goethe himself, in conversation with Eckerman, as "From heaven through earth to hell, and back to heaven." Faust himself, the hero, is the representative man, the type of humanity in its contest with the obstacles and temptations within and without, which beset his path. In the development of the Faust legend, what may be fairly so called, though the name of Faust is not always found in it, can be seen in three forms; the medieval, the protestant, and the modern.

In the medieval, which we first find about the fifth or sixth century of our era, the hero is known by the name of Theophilus; he renounces the faith, denies its power, uses magic arts, sells himself to Satan, but is at last, by special interposition of the Virgin, turned from his fate, and dies penitent and devout. This is the medieval form of the legend; a contest between the church and the devil, in which the church wins; the eternal womanly is the saving element here, but in the form of the Virgin Mary; any lower feminine element, if present at all, is only as an ally of the satanic power.

The Protestant Faust, the Faust of German legends, is in a certain

sense a popular hero; he defies everything in his ambition for knowledge and power; he does not generally use his compact with Satan for malicious purpose. He must fall, the ideas of divine government demand it; but he commands our admiration as he goes down; he falls under the divine stroke, but "impavidum ferient ruinae."

The problem of our day demands that Faust should question everything, defy precedents and tradition, try every power of the human soul for pain and joy; and yet not perish like the Protestant Faust, not surrender in blind faith to the church, like the medieval. This is the problem that the poem we are considering is to solve.

The poem is emphatically the work of Goethe's whole life; begun very early, finished in his very last years, it illustrates every period of his literary style, and yet it is an organic whole, every part in living relation to the rest. A short dedication, written twenty-four years after the poet began the work, and in which he recalls the memories of the earlier days, is followed by the Prologue on the Stage, in which the manager, the actor, and the poet set forth their various ideals of a play. Gain is the object of the manager, applause that of the actor, while the poet speaks from that higher standpoint above personal motive. One word of his I think we will find gives a clue to the right interpretation of individual references in Goethe's works. The object of the poet is "to call the individual to the universal consecration." A scene, a character, may have been drawn from some event in Goethe's experience, from some person of his acquaintance; but in the work it stands not merely for the individual; we must understand it as having the universal consecration.

Then comes the Prologue in Heaven; one of the grandest scenes in literature; the song of the archangels defies translation; a hint of

its grandeur may be obtained in our language, but hardly more.

RAPHAEL.

The sun-orb sings, in emulation,
 'Mid brother-spheres, his ancient round;
His path predestined through Creation
 He ends with step of thunder sound.
The angels from his visage splendid
 Draw power, whose measure none can say;
The lofty works, uncomprehended,
 Are bright as on the earliest day.

GABRIEL.

And swift, and swift beyond conceiving.
 The splendor of the world goes round,
Day's Eden-brightness still relieving
 The awful Night's intense profound:
The ocean-tides in foam are breaking,
 Against the rocks' deep bases hurled,
And both, the spheric race partaking,
 Eternal, swift, are onward whirled!

MICHAEL.

And rival storms abroad are surging
 From sea to land, from land to sea;
A chain of deepest action forging
 Round all, in wrathful energy.
There flames a desolation, blazing
 Before the Thunder's crashing way;
Yet, Lord, Thy messengers are praising
 The gentle movement of Thy Day.

THE THREE.

Though still by them uncomprehended,
From these the angels draw their power,
And all Thy works, sublime and splendid,
Are bright as in Creation's hour. (1)

This scene is in form much like the first chapter of the book of Job; the celestial hierarchy is assembled, the angels chant their grand calm hymn; they seem wholly absorbed in the contemplative state, perceiving nothing of the discussion which occupies the rest of the scene. Their state seems to be one of Devachanic bliss, a strong contrast to man's earthly career of struggle, summed up by the words with which the Lord characterizes it

"Es irrt der Mensch, so lang 'er strebt"
"Man must err, as long as he strives."

Mephistopheles, who later in the poem describes himself as "the spirit that always denies," presents himself among the sons of God; every word speaks a satirical, mocking dissatisfaction and disgust with all the wonders of the universe; especially strong is his contempt for man, the wretched insect, who strives to be a god, and with such absurd results.

Heaven being represented somewhat in the guise of a medieval court, Mephistopheles takes his proper place in it as the jester, the court fool; considering him as such, the good-natured tolerance which the Lord shows for his half subservient, half insolent familiarity, becomes comprehensible to us. In the clear vision of infinite wisdom, what can the spirit of denial be but a mocking buffoon. As the Lord says to him:

"Ich habe deines Gleichen nie gehasst.
Von allen Geistern, die verneinen,
Ist mir der Schalk am wenigsten zur Last."

"The like of thee have never moved my hate.
Of all the denying spirits,
The waggish knave is the least burdensome."

And after Mephistopheles has wagered that Faust's strivings will end in his falling completely from the right way, the Lord tells him:

"A good man through obscurest aspiration,
Has still an instinct of the on true way."

The heavens close, and Mephistopheles is left alone, a characteristic sneer from him ending the scene.

"I like to see the Old Man, now and then,
And take care not to break with him entirely;
It's really very kind in such a noble lord,
To talk so sociably with a poor devil."

Now we can see that though the framework of the prologue much resembles that of Job, there is this difference; in the older poem Job is the true worshiper of Jehovah, and Satan's wager is that he serves only for reward; take away his prosperity, and he will cease to worship God. Mephistopheles on the other hand mocks at the blind struggles of Faust to reach truth, and wagers that they will end in disappointment and disgust, and finally lead him to the spirit of pure denial. The form of the problem has somewhat changed in 3,000 years, and the form of its solution must be somewhat different.

The scene is now transferred to earth, and Faust is introduced, and in the very first lines we see the conflict going on in him between the aspiration, the inner conviction that there is a higher, truer knowledge, a genuine wisdom; and the spirit of negation which finds only disappointment in every effort to attain this lofty truth.

Through the first act this conflict continues in Faust's soul; the contest is as yet internal, and we hear it in the form of his soliloquy. He has studied the four faculties, and now finds that the truth is no more within his grasp than before; he has much learning, but it does not give him the truth. Now he turns to magic; what the ordinary learning of the schools cannot give him, he will seek from the great spirits of nature; and by the sheer force of his aspiration he brings before him the two spirits, the nature spirit and the earth spirit, but he cannot hold them, and when for the moment he speaks to the earth spirit as to an equal, he is crushed by the contemptuous reply.

"Thou'rt like the Spirit which thou comprehendest, not me!"

The spirit disappears, and Faust, overwhelmed, exclaims:

"Not thee!

Whom then?

I, image of the Godhead!

Not even like thee!"

A knock at his door from his Famulus, answers his question.

This stinging repulse brings Faust down lower than before. In the moment that he thinks himself the equal of the mighty spirit, he is told he can comprehend nothing higher than the dull routine of a scholastic pedant. Intellectual denial has again conquered aspiration. The world can give him nothing, but at this moment his eye falls upon a vial on the shelf; another possibility opens to him: what he despairs of life giving him, death may give, and he raises the poison to his lips. At this moment, from without, the Easter songs reach his ear: he hesitates, and as the angelic song rises higher and higher, the glass falls from his hand: he will live.

Faust has been defeated in his three attempts to reach the truth;

through study, through magic, and through death. But if the mind cannot reach truth, it can be used for sensuous gratification, and in the next scene we see Faust in the company outside the city gate. The Easter festival, which in its spiritual sense held Faust back from suicide, now appears in the bright spring-time, bringing out from the winter seclusion every form of life. The procession from the city, apprentices, servants, students, maidens, citizens, soldiers, all brought out by the warm sun to enjoy the pleasure of awakening spring and sense, is true to the life, even of to-day. The ease with which the spiritual aspiration passes into the lower emotion is shown by this Easter festival culminating in the Song under the Linden, whose sensuous excess is prophetic of the results of Faust's new tendency.

Faust himself almost involuntarily invokes the elementary spirits, to bring him, if they can do so, to a new and brighter life: and almost immediately the black poodle is seen running about near them. The negative evil half of Faust's nature has taken objective form; no longer is the conflict to be internal only; and as the desire for animal happiness has created the external form, the animal shape is the most fitting for it to assume. Faust intuitively perceives something unusual in the dog, but Wagner, like so many of the commentators of Faust, sees a "poodle and nothing more;" he is a type of those who positively refuse to see anything but the external husk, and have no patience with those who desire to discern an inner meaning. In the next scene, Faust has gone home, taking with him the poodle, who lies quietly down beside the stove.

Aspiration is again in the ascendant in Faust, and he now meditates and comments on the first words of the gospel of John; but as the sentence "In the beginning was the Word" inspires him to lofty thoughts, the dog becomes restless and uneasy, and disturbs Faust by barking and howling. This reminds us of what

the occultists teach is a general law; that whenever the higher part of our nature aspires and strives to the divine, the lower part of one's self stirs to fiercer opposition.

Apprehending at last that something more than a mere animal is concerned, Faust evokes by spells of increasing power, the inner form from out the beast. First the Seal of Solomon, the interlaced triangles, as a spell for elemental spirits; and we may note his incidental remark that these forms are only powerful when used by one who knows the true nature of the elements. Stronger spells are needed, and at last are efficacious, and Mephistopheles appears as a travelling scholastic; a solution, as Faust says, that makes him laugh.

After a little conversation, in which Mephistopheles states clearly enough his character, and is treated rather contemptuously by Faust, he asks for leave to depart, and explains that he must go out by the same way he came in, but is barred by the pentagram, the five pointed star, traced on the threshold, which, imperfect in one point, let him come in, but will not let him go out. The law of Karma is recalled to us by this necessity of evil going out as it came in; for we know that every wrong action must pay its penalty in its own kind, before we can get clear of it.

In the next scene, Faust again is visited by Mephistopheles, now in his characteristic costume, which he will wear through most of the drama; the feather, sword, and dress of the man of the world. His bargain is soon made: when he can satisfy Faust through the senses, then he wins him forever: he is at Faust's bidding day and night till then, but when once Faust says to the moment, "delay, thou art so fair," then the wager is won. A profitable bargain for the devil, it would seem, and it is reckless enough in Faust to make such a bargain; but after all, would it not be the same, bargain or no? When aspiration is satisfied with sense, what is

there more? it is all over with the man, and he is lost at any rate. We need not fear for Faust, for even as he makes the agreement, his contempt is great for all that Mephistopheles can offer:

"Was willst du, armer Teufel, geben?"

"You poor devil, what can you give?"

A short scene follows in which Mephistopheles, disguised in Faust's professorial robes, has an interview with a boy just come to college, and asking advice and instruction. In the advice and instruction that Mephistopheles gives him is concentrated about as much of bad advice and sensual suggestion as could be condensed in few lines; and yet we must note that here, as indeed throughout the whole of the drama, Mephistopheles uses hardly a single direct falsehood. The incarnation of evil and denial, he shows a vast knowledge, an equanimity that rarely is disturbed, and a directness of assertion that does not need to use any literal misstatement. In a later scene, when Faust fiercely denounces him and accuses him of bringing evil on Margaret, Mephistopheles is able calmly to point out that he has only clearly stated the thoughts and fulfilled the wishes which Faust himself had, but was ashamed to acknowledge.

But now Mephistopheles is to show Faust the world, and this world is naturally a world suited to Mephistopheles' purpose, a world with its institutions and society, but all perverted. Self is the object in all; the sensual gratification of self. But Faust must pass through all this: as we are told in *Light on the Path*,

"All steps are necessary to make up the ladder. The vices of men become steps in the ladder, one by one as they are surmounted."

Now we are to see man guided by the spirit of denial, in his relations to the world. The first scene, Auerbach's cellar, shows us the repulsive result when the ordinary needs of life, eating and

drinking, become the object of life. We may consider it as representing the state of those in whom the three lower principles of the occult classification have the highest place in the consciousness. This scene causes only disgust to Faust, and we next have "The Witches' Kitchen," a strange scene, a riddle to commentators, which is perhaps rightly interpreted by Mr. Snider as representing the perverted relation of the sexes; a view which we may broaden a little and consider as representing the supremacy of the fourth (Kama Rupa) principle. Here Mephistopheles seeks to captivate Faust by passion, but he only partially succeeds; instead of mere lust, Faust finds a higher ideal, his admiration for the beauty of form redeems his passion from the animal character it would otherwise have, and it leaves him still unsatisfied, aspiring for something higher.

So far, he has dealt with a perverted Mephistophelean world; but now he is himself, under the guidance of Mephistopheles, to pervert the hitherto calm and quiet world of Margaret. The story of Margaret, though naturally an episode in Faust's progress, is yet in one sense a complete story in itself, and appeals strongly to our emotions. To many it is *the* Faust story, being so much simpler and easier of comprehension than the "world bible" of the whole great drama that it has readily adapted itself to scenic and musical representation. And Gretchen's story is in many respects the same as Faust's, but simpler and less complicated intellectually. There is not in her case the intellectual denial of truth; her mind is naturally more intuitional, and her fall is through her affection for Faust; but misguided by this, the consequences are indeed terrible for her; she sins against the two great institutions which are her safeguard, the family and the church; and her fall will bring about the destruction of her mother, her brother and her child; when she turns in terror at the approaching shame and pain, and prays to the Virgin in an

appeal of wonderful force and pathos, there is no answer. Then the terrible scene in the church, when she kneels among the multitude, and the Dies Irae of the choir alternates with the accusing voice of the "Evil Spirit" her conscience, whispering in her ear; neither of them sparing her or offering her any forgiveness. It is the inexorable law of Karma! she has sinned, she must suffer the penalty. The church cannot remove an ounce weight from her suffering in this life; afterwards, it promises nothing, but reserves judgment.

Faust has now left her, and we see him in another of the relations to the perverted world, in which Mephistopheles has placed him; the Brocken scene, which under the form of a midnight gathering of witches to do honor to their master, represents a type of society in which selfishness is supreme. Multitudes flock to the gathering, with similar aim, but there is no sympathy; the selfish object may be wealth, sensuality, fame, or anything else; and there is no crime that they are not ready to commit, if necessary for their object; no one will lend a helping hand to another. In many cases, the love of evil has become a passion for evil for its own sake, and we may see here an image of the man in whom the higher principles are drawn down to the service of the lower self; whose fate will be far worse than that of those who live in the lower nature without development of the higher.

Mephistopheles is perfectly at home here, but not Faust; he but half enters into it, and at the point when the wild carnival is at its highest, there rises before him a vision of Margaret, sad, pale, and with a slender blood-red mark about her neck. Instantly he realizes what has been the result to her, in his absence, of their love. It is the turning point in his career; hitherto he has followed Mephistopheles' lead, and even urged him faster on; and now that that lead has brought Margaret into misery, crime, and under

sentence of death, Mephistopheles only says "she is not the first." If Faust were to follow the devilish advice and leave her to her fate, it is hard to see how he can ever escape from the downward path he has so far followed. But he does not leave her to her fate; his love for her now shows itself no longer the passion that demands its gratification; it becomes the unselfish desire to save her from the results of his acts. Mephistopheles, hitherto his willing guide, now is his unwilling assistant, and he turns back to save Margaret.

But her redemption must be different from his, as the motives of her fall were different; not undermined by doubt, but falling through her affection, punishment and salvation must correspond. In prison, she acknowledges the justice of her fate; crazed with suffering, she does not at first recognize Faust, who comes to release her; then when she does know him, and he urges her to escape with him, she refuses. Half confusedly she goes over all the story of the first meeting and all that followed; she cannot go with him, and as she sees Mephistopheles at the door, urging haste before the daylight comes, she shudders; Faust in desperation attempts to carry her away by force, but though the vision of her coming execution rises before her, she turns from him, saying, "Judgment of God, I have given myself over to Thee." Her only possible salvation is here; acceptance of the result of her actions, refusal to escape even with the one she loves; yet her last words before she falls, lifeless, are apprehensive for his fate; and as her spirit passes away, we hear from above, fainter and fainter, her voice lovingly calling his name.

Mephistopheles coldly exclaims "She is judged;" but a voice from above replies "She is saved!" and we all feel that her total sinking of all personal hope or fear in the unselfish love for another, has redeemed her. Faust's nature, however, needs a much longer experience and trial; the evil spirit must go out of him by the way

it came in. The episode of Gretchen is ended, as far as Faust's earthly career is concerned: but we may note the half reminiscence, half prophecy of her words in the last scene: "We shall meet again, but not at the dance," which recall to us the Linden song at the beginning of the drama, and point to the final scene of the second part, which is yet far before us.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Taylor's Translation. ([return to text](#))

The Path

CAIN AND ABEL — *Charles Johnston*

"The first step is Sacrifice; the next, Renunciation."

"*Es leuchtet mir ein*, I see a glimpse of it!' cries he, elsewhere: 'there is in man a HIGHER than Love of Happiness: he can do without happiness, and instead thereof find Blessedness! was it not to preach forth this same HIGHER that sages and martyrs, the Poet and the Priest, in all times, have spoken and suffered, bearing testimony, through life and through death, of the Godlike that is in man, and how in the Godlike only has he Strength and Freedom? which God-inspired doctrine art thou also honoured to be taught; O Heavens! and broken with manifold merciful afflictions even till thou become contrite and learn it! O, thank thy Destiny for these; thankfully bear what yet remain; thou hadst need of them; *the Self in thee needed to be annihilated.*" (1)

The Bibles, poetry, tradition, concur in this verdict. When life has been exalted above mere animalism, a time comes when the Self in thee needs to be annihilated.

Other sacrifices may be difficult; this renunciation is supremely difficult. To destroy what surrounds us is comparatively easy; to rise in the air and destroy the ground we stood on, not so easy, and yet this is what must be done.

Vices may be abandoned — virtues even may be acquired — for selfish reasons; but to banish once and forever, all selfish motives, all personal objects, to work resolutely for universal ends — this can never be done selfishly.

Can we give a reason for following the good, the beautiful, the true? None, but that we find them good, beautiful, true.

To work in this pure disinterestedness and unselfishness is what is necessary.

The Self in thee needs to be annihilated.

Up to this point of progress, the individual has worked.

After this sacrifice, there is no longer an individual; there is only God, working through what were the powers of the individual.

The cup that separated the water from the ocean has been annihilated. Now, there is only the ocean.

After the sacrifice, it is perceived that only an unreality, a bond, was offered up; but till the sacrifice is consummated, what is to be sacrificed is seen as Self.

This sacrifice of Self is made after the illusory nature of the life of the senses is perceived; after it is seen that within the sensuous world there is a spiritual world, of which the sensuous world is a husk.

This perception, the Orientals call — "overcoming the illusions of the Ten." (2)

When the inner world is perceived, these physical senses and organs are superseded by five inner senses, and five inner organs of sense.

This truth is told again and again in the Hebrew Bible. Moses, (the Soul) led the Twelve Tribes (senses, organs, desire, egotism) from bondage in Egypt (sense-life). During the probation in the desert, these Twelve were superseded by Twelve Tribes who had never known bondage, (astral senses, etc.).

But the individual having gone so far, was to cease from individual life.

Moses saw the Land of Promise from afar, but himself entered not in. He died, and another entered in.

The Self was annihilated; there was no longer Man, but God only. Those who have read the *Idyll of the Lotus* have learned the same lesson.

Sensa — the soul — triumphs over Agmand and the Ten. But Sensa himself perished by the hands of Agmand and the Ten.

It is the darkest fact in human life, but an inexorable fact, that there is no redemption without sacrifice; the Self needs to be annihilated; and the Christians have rightly made the sacrifice on Calvary the central picture of their religion; Christ had to sacrifice himself before he could ascend to his Father.

This is the meaning of Cain and Abel.

To the Soul (Adam) resting in calm unity, was added Personal desire (Eve). Eve is the type of personal life in its essential character, as recipient of alternate emotions of pleasure and pain, sweet and bitter, good and evil. For Eve tastes the fruit of knowledge of good and evil.

Now, two paths lie open — continued personality through many lives, or redemption through self-sacrifice: Cain is the first; Abel the second.

Cain offers no real sacrifice, and ever after, having chosen egotism and isolated life, he bears the brand of fear, for fear ever follows strife. The brand remains till Cain learns the "perfect love that casts out fear."

Abel offers the true sacrifice — the whole animal nature. But soul has served Self too long. Before the soul has regained its divinity, the bonds of individuality must be broken by sacrifice. At last the sacrifice is consummated. Abel lies bleeding on the ground, but

the liberated soul re-enters Eden, passing the flaming swords of the Cherubim, and advances triumphant to the Tree of Life. There is no longer man, but God only. For this is offered the prayer of the Eastern Saint —

"The dew is on the Lotus; — Rise, Great Sun!
And lift my leaf, and mix me with the wave!
Om mani padme hum, the Sunrise comes!
The dew-drop slips into the shining sea!"

FOOTNOTES:

1. Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, Book II, Chap. IX. ([return to text](#))
 2. Eye, ear, nose, etc., and tongue, hands, feet, etc. ([return to text](#))
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The Path

PERSONALITIES — *Harij*

Step aside, O toiling brother, into a convenient by-way, and for a moment let the surging crowd pass by. Do not tremble like a child for fear that you may be hopelessly left behind, for you will be forced back all too soon, though if you really pause, and truly ponder, you will never again be so completely identified with the pursuits of the crowd, though you will still be a part of it. Ask of your soul: "What are these personalities that make up the mighty human tide so widely rushing past—this rushing tide replenished at every instant by birth, depleted at every instant by death, yet flowing on forever?" How read you this journey from the cradle to the grave?

Think of the countless myriads whose weary, toiling, bleeding feet have worn deep the channels of this river of time. Listen to the complaints of the weary, the cries of the wounded, the groans of the despairing. Watch with pity the ashen faces as they hear the sound of the cataract ahead, over which they know they must plunge alone into unknown depths. Many are resigned in the presence of fate, for there is true courage at the heart of humanity, but how few are joyous except through ignorance and forgetfulness, and these are the frightened ones in the presence of the inevitable.

Listen to the loud acclaims, when in the rushing stream one is for a moment borne aloft on the crest of a wave, and watch the envy, and even malice of those who are inevitably drawn into the hollow of the wave, as they also struggle to reach the crest. Alas! the waves of Wealth, and Fame, and Power; Alas! the bubbling foam of Love. The night cometh, and the stream is still; yet even in the arms of the Brother of Death the echoes of these mighty

waves chant their requiem.

Listen a little deeper, O brother of my soul, and hear the sound of many voices: "What shall I eat? What shall I drink? and wherewithal shall I be clothed?" and then Alas! "O whither do I tend?"

And still the surging tide rolls on. A friend is passing yonder; hail him, and beckon him to thy side. He answers: "I cannot wait; I have not time." Alas! what hath he else but Time, and the foam of the maddening billows?

Turn now to thy companion, he who bade thee turn aside. Canst thou stop to consider, "Is he short, or tall, or fat, or lean, or black, or white, or man, or woman?" "Are his garments soiled, or clean?" "Comes he from the East, or from the West?" "Hath he letters of introduction?" "On whose authority did he bid thee halt?" "Did he speak in conventional language, and with the proper accent?" "Has his raiment the odor of the sea, or the breath of the mountain, or the fragrance of the flowery vale?"

Be sure it is not thy awakened soul that thus inquires, tis only the voices of the stream yonder, and when thou turnest to look for thy companion, lo! he is gone, and thou art alone, alone with thy soul, and with the echoes of the stream. Fear chills thy blood, and every separate hair stands on end, and as thou rushest back into the surging stream, even thy boon companions are terrified at thy staring eyes, and thy death-like face.

Hast thou seen a ghost? yea verily, the ghost of ghosts, the *Dweller of the Threshold*, and yet thou mightest have found a friend, a teacher, a brother. Rush back into the stream. O! terrified, thou that fleest from thy shadow, and plunge beneath its festering waves, yet even as its murky waters overwhelm thee, thy muscles creep and fear tugs at thy heartstrings.

Drain deep the cup, mount high the wave,
Tramp down the weak, envy the brave!
Bear high the bowl with dance and song,
Laugh at thy fears, shout loud and long.

"O wine of Life! O vintage rare!
Pressed by sore feet in deep despair."

Slowly the pendulum of time
Swings to and fro, with measured chime,
The Dweller e'er on Bacchus waits,
And jealous guards the golden gates.

O! wine of wisdom! soul distilled,
Won from the silence, Life fulfilled.

Vain are the things of time and sense,
Who follows these finds recompense,
Yet he who turns from these and waits,
The glimmer of the golden gates

Will bless the hand what e'er it be
That tenders chart, or offers key.

Came not the Christ in humble mien?
Poor and despised, the Nazarene,
And humble fishermen chose He
Beside the sea of Galilee.

Left not Lord Buddha throne and power
To meditate at midnight hour?

What matters it what hand bestows
The balm of healing for our woes?
For God is God, and Truth is Truth,
Ripe age is but immortal youth.

Let personalities alone,
Go through the gates! and reach the throne.

How many are turned aside by personalities? How many look to the garb of the messenger, forgetting the message, and yet is not the message plain? At one time the message comes from a manger, at another it descends from a throne. Yet is the message ever the same. Nature and time regard not personalities, but swallow up all alike, yet do nature and time and destiny teach ever the same great lesson, and he who would learn of these must both forego and forget personalities, his own and those of others. Personalities are but the fleeting waves on the river of time, caused by the friction of the winds of fortune; they are thy weakness and not thy strength. Thy strength is in thy soul, and thy soul's strength is in the calm, and not in storm revealed.

Inquire not who or what the messenger, but study well the message that comes to thy soul, and bears thee ban or blessing according as thou receivest it, and while thou waitest with lamps untrimmed the Bridegroom passes by.

What matters it to thee what infirmities the messenger may bear, except as thou mayest help him so to bear them that truth may run a freer race? Is it not enough for thee that truth hath given him her signet ring? Judge then of this, and if he falter in his speech or loiter by the way, take up the theme in clearer tones and speak it from thy soul to all thy kind.

Wilt thou withhold thy blessing from the hand that bears the gift, and covet while rejecting the very gift it bears? If thou art so at cross purposes with thyself how canst thou be *at one* with truth?

Truth is many-sided, speaks every language, is clothed in every garb, yet is she ever still the same, *One*, and unchangeable, now and forever. And if she is no respecter of persons, canst thou be more select than she? Alas! thou canst not find her thus, but error rather, and self-deceived rush down the stream of Time, and when thy personalities fall off then shalt thou realize that thou

didst refuse the banquet of the gods by scorning thus their messenger. Search out, and know and love and serve the truth, *for truth's own sake*. Follow it through all disguises with scent more sure and keen than hound in search of game. Refuse it not, though it reach thee from a dunghill, welcome it as though straight from God's own throne, and thus shall it ne'er escape thee, and neither love nor hate nor fear shall mar thy harvests, and truth shall honor thee, as thou hast welcomed her.

Beware of false authority, for neither pope nor priest nor book can of itself contain it all, and yet despise them not, for so thou'lt miss the truth. The sole authority for truth is *truth's own self* and if thy soul is but akin to her, thy quickened soul will recognise her every garb, by ties more strong than blood, by kinship everlasting, and as the waters mingle with the sea, so flows thy soul into the bosom of the deeps whence springs afresh in thee the everlasting Life which is the vital breath of Truth.

The Path

THE PATH OF ACTION — *Hadji Erinn*

The Mohammedan teacher directs his disciples to tread carefully the razor's edge between the good and the bad; only a hair line divides the false from the true. In this the Asiatic took an excellent illustration, for the "hair line" is the small stroke *alif*, which, placed in a word, may alter the sense from the true to the false.

In chapter four of the Bhagavad-Gita, entitled, "Jnana-Yog," or the book of the Religion of Knowledge, the blessed Krishna instructs Arjuna upon the nature of action, saying: "Renunciation of and devotion through works, are both means of final emancipation; but of these two, devotion through works is more highly esteemed (by Him) than the renunciation of them"; and, "the nature of action, of forbidden action, and of inaction must be well learned. The Path of Action is obscure and difficult to discern."

In ordinary humdrum life these words of Krishna are true enough, but their force is strangely felt in the mind of the devoted student of Theosophy, and especially if he happens to be a member of the Theosophical Society.

That body of investigators has now passed its probationary period, so that, as a whole, it is an accepted chela of the Blessed Masters who gave the impulse that brought it into being. Every member of it, therefore, stands to the whole Society as every fibre in the body of any single chela does to the whole man. Thus now, more than ever before, does each member of the Society feel disturbing influences; and the Path of Action becomes more and more likely to be obscured.

Always existing or coming into existence in our ranks, have been

centres of emotional disturbance. Those who expect that these perturbations ought now to cease and grow less likely to recur, will find themselves mistaken. The increase of interest that is being taken in the Society's work, and the larger number of earnest students who are with us than at any previous period, constitute elements of agitation. Each new member is another nature added, and every one acts after his own nature. Thus the chances for being discomposed are sure to increase; and it is better thus, for peace with stagnation partakes of the nature of what is called in the Bhagavad-Gita, *Tamagunan*, or, of the quality of darkness. This quality of darkness, than which there is nothing worse, is the chief component of indifference, and indifference leads only to extinction.

Still another element in this equation that every earnest Theosophist has to solve, and which in itself contains the potency of manifold commotions, is a law, hard to define, yet inexorable in its action. For its clearer comprehension we may say that it is shown in nature by the rising of the sun. In the night when the moon's rays flooded the scene, every object was covered with a romantic light, and when that luminary went down, it left everything in a partial obscurity wherein many doubtful characters could conceal their identity or even masquerade for that which they were not. But on the sun's arising all objects stand out in their true colors; the rugged bark of the oak has lost the softening cover of partial day; the rank weeds can no longer be imagined as the malwa flowers. The powerful hand of the God of day has unveiled the character of all.

It must not be supposed that a record has been kept by any officials, from which are to be taken and published the characters of our members. There is no need of that; circumstances taking place in natural order, or apparently from eccentric motion, will cause us all, whether we will or not, to stand forth for what we

are.

Every one of us will have to stop and learn in the cave outside of the Hall of Learning, before we can enter there. Very true that cave, with all its dark shadows and agitating influences, is an illusion, but it is one that very few will fail to create, for hard indeed to be overcome are the illusions of matter. In that shall we discover the nature of action and inaction; there we will come to admit that although the quality of action partakes of the nature of badness, yet it is nearer to the quality of truth than is that which we have called darkness, quietude, indifference. Out of the turmoil and the strife of an apparently untamed life may arise one who is a warrior for Truth. A thousand errors of judgment made by an earnest student, who with a pure and high motive strives to push on the Cause, are better than the outward goodness of those who are judges of their fellows. All these errors made in a good cause, while sowing good seed, will be atoned by the motive.

We must not then be judges of any man. We cannot assume to say who shall or shall not be allowed to enter and to work in the Theosophical Society. The Masters who founded it wish us to offer its influence and its light to all regardless of what we may ourselves think; we are to sow the seed, and when it falls on stony ground no blame attaches to the sower.

Nor is our Society for good and respectable people only. Now, as much as when Jesus of Nazareth spoke, is it true that there is more joy in heaven over one sinner who repenteth, than over ninety-nine just men who need no repentance.

Remembering then, that the Path of Action is obscure and difficult to be discerned, let us beware of the illusions of matter.

THE BHAGAVAD-GITA: III — *William Brehon*

(Continued from November number.)

Salutation to Krishna! the Lord of Devotion, the God of Religion, the never failing help of those who trust in him.

We now have discovered that the poem is not disfigured by this account of a conflict that begins in the first chapter; to be then dropped while the two great actors retire to their chariot for a discussion. This description of forces, and the first effect on Arjuna of his survey, show us that we are now to learn from Krishna, what is the duty of man in his warfare with all the forces and tendencies of his nature. Instead of the conflict being a blemish to the poem, it is a necessary and valuable portion. We see that the fight is to be fought by every human being, whether he lives in India, or not, for it is raging on the sacred plain of our body. Each one of us, then, is Arjuna.

In the Sanscrit, the first chapter is called "Arjun-Vishad," which in English means, "The despair and despondency of Arjuna." Some have called it "The Survey of Army"; but while truly an Army is surveyed, that is not the essential meaning intended. It is the result of the survey we are to consider; and that result upon Arjuna, who is the person most interested — the one who is the chief questioner and beneficiary throughout the whole action of the poem — is despondency.

The cause of this despondency is to be inquired into.

Arjuna, in the flush of determination, and before any analysis of either the consequences to himself or to others who might become involved, entered the conflict, after having chosen Krishna as his charioteer. The forces are drawn up in line of

battle, and he rides out to survey them. At once he sees ranged against him, relatives of every class, in their turn preparing to destroy others, their relatives, friends and acquaintances as well as Arjuna's, who are enlisted on his side. Turning to Krishna, he says that he cannot engage in such a war, that he perceives only evil omens, and that even if the opposers, being ignorant, may be willing to fight with such dreadful consequences in view, he cannot do so, but must give up the battle 'ere it is begun.

Thereupon:

"Arjuna, whose heart was troubled with grief, let fall his bow and arrows, and sat down on the bench of his chariot."

Every student of Occultism, Theosophy or true religion, — all being the one thing — will go through Arjuna's experiences. Attracted by the beauty or other seductive quality, for him, of this study, he enters upon the prosecution of it, and soon discovers that he arouses two sets of forces.

One of them consists of all his friends and relations who do not view life as he does, who are wedded to the "established order," and think him a fool for devoting any attention to anything else, while the general mass of his acquaintances and those whom he meets in the world, instinctively array themselves against one who is thus starting upon a crusade that begins with his own follies and faults, but must end in a condemnation of theirs, if only by the force of example. The other opponents are far more difficult to meet, because they have their camp and base of action upon the Astral and other hidden planes; they are all his lower tendencies and faculties, that up to this time have been in the sole service of material life. By the mere force of moral gravity, they fly to the other side, where they assist his living friends and relatives in their struggle against him. They have more efficiency in producing despondency than anything else. In the poem, it is

referred to in the words addressed by Arjuna to Krishna:

"I am not able to stand; for my understanding, as it were turneth round and I behold inauspicious omens on all sides."

All of us are brought to this study by our own request made to our Higher Self, who is Krishna. Arjuna requested Krishna to be his charioteer, and to drive him forth between the two armies. It does not matter whether he now is consciously aware of having made the request, nor whether it was made as a specific act, in this life or in many another precedent one; *it was made and it is to be answered at the right time*. Some of us have asked this many times before, in ancient births of ours in other bodies and other lands; others are making the request now; but it is more than likely in the case of those who are spurred on to intense effort and longing to know the truth, and to strive for unity with God, that they have put up the petition ages since. So now Krishna, the charioteer of this body with its horses — the mind — drives us forth so that we may stand with our Higher Self and all the tendencies connected with it on one side, and all the lower (but not all necessarily evil) principles on the other. The student may, perhaps, with ease face the crowd of friends and relatives, having probably gone through that experience in other lives and is now proof against it, but he is not proof against the first dark shadow of despair and ill result that falls upon him. Every elemental that he has vivified by evil thinking now casts upon him the thought,

"After all, it is no use; I cannot win; If I did, the gain would be nothing; I can see no great or lasting result to be attained, for all, all, is impermanent."

This dreadful feeling is sure in each case to supervene, and we might as well be prepared for it. We cannot always live on the enthusiasm of heavenly joys. The rosy hue of dawn does not

reach round the world; it chases darkness. Let us be prepared for it, not only at the first stage, but all along in our progress to the Holy seat; for it comes at each pause; at that slight pause when we are about to begin another breath, to take another step, to pass into another condition.

And here it is wise, turning to the 18th, and last, chapter of the poem, to read the words of the Immortal Master of life:

"From a confidence in thy own self-sufficiency thy mayest think that thou wilt not fight. Such is a fallacious determination, *for the principles of thy nature will compel thee*. Being confined to actions by the duties of thy natural calling, *thou wilt involuntarily do that from necessity*, which thou wantest through ignorance to avoid."

In this, Krishna uses the very argument advanced by Arjuna against the fight, as one in its favor. In the chapter we are considering, Arjuna repeats the Old Brahmanical injunction against those who break up the "eternal institutions of caste and tribe," for, as he says, the penalty annexed is a sojourn in hell, since, when the caste and tribe are destroyed, the ancestors being deprived of the rites of funeral-cakes and libations of water, (1) fall from heaven, and the whole tribe is thus lost. But Krishna shows, as above, that each man is naturally, by His bodily tendencies, compelled to do the acts of some particular calling, and that body with its tendencies are merely the manifestation of what the inner man is, as the result of all his former thoughts up to that incarnation. So he is forced by nature's law — which is his own — to be born just where he must have the experience that is needed. And Arjuna, being a warrior, is compelled to fight, whether he will or no.

In another chapter, the institution of caste is more particularly referred to, and there we will have occasion to go into that subject

with more detail.

As stated in the last paper, the substratum, or support, for the whole Cosmos, is the presiding spirit, and all the various changes in life, whether of a material nature or solely in mental states, are cognizable because the presiding spirit within is not modifiable. Were it otherwise, then we would have no memory, for with each passing event, we, becoming merged in it, could not remember anything, that is, we would see no changes. There must therefore be something eternally persisting, which is the witness and perceiver of every passing change, itself unchangeable. All objects, and all states of what western philosophers call Mind, are modifications, for in order to be seen or known by us, there must be some change, either partial or total, from a precedent state. The perceiver of these changes is the inner man — Arjuna-Krishna.

This leads us to the conviction that there must be a universal presiding spirit, the producer as well as the spectator, of all this collection of animate and inanimate things. The philosophy taught by Krishna, holds, that at first this spirit — so called, however, by me only for the purpose of the discussion — remained in a state of quiet with no objects, because as yet there was no modification. But, resolving to create, or rather to emanate the universe, IT formed a picture of what should be, and this at once was a modification willingly brought about in the hitherto wholly unmodified spirit; thereupon the Divine Idea was gradually expanded, coming forth into objectivity, while the essence of the presiding spirit remained unmodified, and became the perceiver of its own expanded idea. Its modifications are visible (and invisible) nature. Its essence then differentiates itself continually in various directions, becoming the immortal part of each man — the Krishna who talks to Arjuna. Coming like a spark from the central fire, it partakes of that nature, that is, the quality

of being unmodifiable, and assumes to itself — as a cover, so to speak — the human body (2) and thus, being in essence unmodified, it has the capacity to perceive all the changes going on around the body.

This *Self* must be recognized as being within, pondered over, and as much as possible understood, if we are to gain any true knowledge.

We have thus quickly, and perhaps in an inadequate way, come down to a consideration of Arjuna as composed of all these generals and heroes enumerated in this chapter, and who are as we said, the various powers, passions and qualities included in the Western terms, "Brain and Mind."

Modern, physical, mental and psychological sciences, have as yet but scratched the surface of that which they are engaged in examining. Physical science confessedly is empiric, knowing but the very outposts of the laws of nature: and our psychology is in a worse state. The latter has less chance for arriving at the truth than physical science, because scientists are proceeding to a gradual demonstration of natural laws by careful examination of facts easily observable, but psychology is a something which demands the pursuit of another method than that of science, or those now observed.

It would avail nothing at present to specify the Aryan nomenclature for all the sheaths — as they call them — that envelope the soul, because we as yet have not acquired the necessary ideas. Of what use is it to say that certain impressions reside in the *Anandamaya* sheath. But there is such an one, whether we call it by that name or by any other. We can, however, believe that the soul, in order to at last reach the objective plane where its experience is gained, places upon itself, one after the other, various sheaths, each having its peculiar

property and function. The mere physical brain is thus seen to be only the material organ first used by the real percipient in receiving or conveying ideas and perceptions; and so with all the other organs, they are only the special seats for centralizing the power of the real man in order to experience the modifications of nature at that particular spot.

Who is the sufferer from this despondency?

It is our false personality, (as it has been called in Theosophical literature) as distinguished from Krishna — the higher self — which is oppressed by the immediate resistance offered by all the lower part of our nature, and by those persons with whom we are most closely connected, as soon as we begin to draw them away from all old habits, and to present a new style of thinking for their consideration.

For Arjuna, sinking down upon the seat of that chariot which is his body, fell back upon his own nature, and found therein the elements of search and courage, as well as those previous ones of gloom which arise first, being nearer the natural man. Reliance and pressure upon our own inner nature, in moments of darkness, are sure to be answered by the voice of Krishna, the inner guide.

The first consequences of the despondency

Are, to make us feel that the battle we have invited ought not to be carried on, and we then are almost overwhelmed with the desire to give it up. Some do give it up, to begin it again, in a succeeding life, while others like Arjuna, listen to the voice of Krishna, and bravely fight it out to the end.

"Thus, in the Upanishads, in the holy Bhagavad-Gita, in the science of the Supreme Spirit, in the Book of Devotion, in the colloquy between the Holy Krishna and Arjuna, stands the first

chapter by name:

"THE DESPONDENCY OF ARJUNA."

Salutation to the God of battles, to the charioteer, to him who disposeth the forces aright, who leadeth us on to victory, with whom alone success is certain: that he may guide us to where the never-dying light shineth: Om!

(To be continued.)

FOOTNOTES:

1. This reference by Arjuna is to the immemorial custom of the son, or descendants, offering to the departed, at stated times, funeral-cakes and water, called "Shradda and Pinda" — one of the so-called superstitions of the Hindus.

It has always been a grave question with me, whether the boasted "freedom from superstition," of Western 19th century civilization is an unmixed good, or any evidence of real progress. All such ancient forms have been swept away, and with them nearly every vestige of true religious feeling, leaving only an unquenchable thirst for money and power. In the present ignorance of the true reason at the bottom of these forms, the assertion is made that they mean nothing whatever. But in the Catholic church it is continued, and to some extent believed in, as is shown in their masses for the dead; surely these masses would not be offered if supposed to have no effect on the state of those for whom they are offered.

Although greatly corrupted and debased, it is in this church alone that these old practices are preserved. *Shradda* and *Pinda* are now neglected, because the inner constitution of man, and the constitution of the Macrocosm, are not understood in such a way as to make the ceremony of the slightest use. — W. B. ([return to](#)

[text](#))

2. It is also, of course, inherent in all nature. — W. B. ([return to text](#))

The Path

SONGS OF THE UNSEEN — *J. Campbell Ver Planck*

I.

EFFLUX AND INFLUX.

When Brahma opes his golden door,
 What ambient shapes of Life and Light,
What radiant tides of Being pour
 With song into the dazzled night!
The winds that fashion worlds take flight,
Glad heralds of the Sons of Might;
And dancing stars trip on before
When Brahma opes his golden door.

When Brahm would close his gates supreme,
 With Life's vast ebb his halls are strown.
Thunders, and powers, and forms that teem,
 Fear to be shut in space alone.
Along the meteoric foam
World after world comes shuddering home.
The last pale hours slip swift between
And Brahm hath closed his gates supreme.

II.

RECOLLECTION.

When from mysterious spheres outflows
 A Voice that calls my hidden name,
The world's strong ties like bubbles break
 Against its ancient claim.
"Have I forgot thee? Never!
No Age our bond can sever.

*I love thee now, as I have ever,
And ever shall, forever."*

In vain my heart seeks earthly homes,
 In vain my thought declares me free.
Those mighty tones sweep o'er my soul,
 And they are one with me.
*"Can'st thou forget me? Never!
What power the bond can sever?
Then love? me now, as thou hast ever,
And ever shalt, forever."*

ENVOI.

When Brahma opes his golden door
Within the soul, rich visions soar:
But desolation reigns, I ween,
When Brahm hath closed that gate Supreme.

The Path

**THE THEOSOPHICAL MEANING OF GOETHE'S FAUST: II — F. S.
*Collins***

IN TWO PARTS

PART II.

In passing to the second part of Faust, we find quite a change in the character of the poem; the interest in the strictly personal career of Faust lessens, the limitations of space and time become more vague and indistinct; we pass from what Mephistopheles called the lesser to the greater world. Activity in the state, in humanity in general, characterizes the second part; we have gone through the contest in Faust's own mind, then in the family, and in the limited civic relations shown in the Gretchen episode; Faust has turned from his care for pure self to something higher, and we shall see this broaden out still more now. The first part was all within a short space of time, and the scene was all in or near a German city of some medieval period. Now we find medieval emperors and their courts, Helen and Menelaus, and hints at men of the present century, mingled, orderly enough with regard to their poetic and inner significance, but without any regard for chronology. In its main lines, the plot, if so we may call it, of this part, follows the medieval Faust legend; the making of gold, the bringing of Helen, the winning a battle, and the contest with the devil at death; these four are here reproduced, but with a much higher and broader significance. The making of gold, the material gold, is transformed into a myth of industry, the development of wealth by modern progress, its value when guided by the ideal, beneficent to all; but when wealth is sought for itself, destructive to self and all. The bringing of Helen, the "teufelin" from Mephistopheles' own home, is transformed into a representation

of the love of the beautiful and of culture, as a necessary stage in man's progress.

The winning of a battle for the emperor is transformed into a study of true and false governments; and the last scene is changed from the devil's triumphantly claiming his bargain, to the final victory of unselfish endeavor. Through all these the line of Faust's development follows, not always in clear sight, but always moving forward.

The introduction to the second part shows Faust, asleep, among the forms and spirits of bright, natural, elemental life. These are to wipe away from his brain the remembrance of the past, that he may awake afresh to a new career. We may see in this much resemblance to the subjective state between two incarnations, when the sorrowful remembrances of the past fade out, and the man begins his new career with refreshed energy. Faust so awakens, looking round at the bright landscape with delight. In his soliloquy, we will do well to notice these lines, showing his changed mental attitude.

"Life's pulses now with fresher force awaken
To greet the mild ethereal twilight o'er me;
This night, thou, Earth! hast also stood unshaken
And now thou breathest new-refreshed before me,
And now beginnest, all thy gladness granting,
A vigorous resolution to restore me,
To seek that highest life for which I'm panting.
The world unfolded lies in twilight glimmer,
A thousand voices in the grove are chanting;
Vale in, vale out, the misty streaks grow dimmer;
The deeps with heavenly light are penetrated;
The boughs, refreshed, lift up their leafy shimmer
From gulfs of air where sleepily they waited;

Color on color from the background cleareth,
Where flower and leaf with trembling pearls are freighted:
And all around a Paradise appeareth.

Look up! — The mountain summits, grand, supernal,
Herald, e'en now, the solemn hour that neareth;
They earliest enjoy the light eternal
That later sinks, till here below we find it.
Now to the Alpine meadows, sloping vernal,
A newer beam descends ere we divined it,
And step by step unto the base hath bounded;
The sun comes forth! Alas, already blinded,
I turn away, with eyesight pierced and wounded!

'Tis thus, when, unto yearning hope's endeavor,
Its highest wish on sweet attainment grounded,
The portals of fulfilment widely sever;
But if there burst from those eternal spaces
A flood of flame, we stand confounded ever;
For life's pure torch we sought the shining traces,
And seas of fire — and what a fire! — surprise us.
Is't Love? Is't Hate? that burningly embraces,
And that with pain and joy alternate tries us?
So that, our glances once more earthward throwing,
We seek in youthful drapery to disguise us.

Behind me, therefore, let the sun be glowing!
The cataract, between the crags deep-riven,
I thus behold with rapture ever-growing.
From plunge to plunge in thousand streams 'tis given,
And yet a thousand, to the valleys shaded,
While foam and spray in air are whirled and driven.
Yet how superb, across the tumult braided,
The painted rainbow's changeful life is bending,

Now clearly drawn, dissolving now and faded,
And evermore the showers of dew descending!
Of human striving there's no symbol fuller:
Consider, and 'tis easy comprehending —
Life is not light, but the refracted color.

No longer is it a contradiction between the aspiration to gaze directly at truth, and the denial of the possibility of truth; he realizes that truth is, but also realizes that before he can gaze directly upon it, he must learn to see its reflection in every part of the manifold life around him.

We need not dwell on the next act, the Mythos of Industry, but merely note that, through Faust's suggestions of utilizing the resources of nature, represented under the form of treasures hidden in the earth, the Emperor's court is enriched, and every one feels himself a wealthy man. And now Faust is to furnish amusements before the Emperor, and the scene of Paris and Helen is to be shown. That is to say, the new wealth demands artistic display, but cannot create the beautiful in art: it can only demand it in exchange for money. Faust, by the aid of Mephistopheles, is to furnish it. and to do so must descend to the "Mothers" "throned in venerable solitude," in the void and desolation. Mephistopheles declares that it is nothing, where they dwell: Faust logically concluding that what Mephistopheles, himself the spirit of negation, pronounces nothing, must be distinctly something; just as in mathematics, the product of two minus quantities is a plus quantity; and he exclaims "In thy nothing I hope to find the All." And indeed, that which seems to the purely earthly mind to be no existence at all, to be pure annihilation, may be to a higher spiritual insight, the perfection of being. Faust succeeds in abstracting himself from all space and time; and from the realm of pure form brings back Helen, the impersonation of Greek classic beauty; but when he exhibits her

to the court, he is himself so charmed with her, though a mere shadow, that he tries to seize her, to keep her for himself from Paris, also a shade, who appears with her. The consequence is that both the forms instantly vanish, and Faust falls senseless.

Faust now fully believes in the truth as revealed in beauty; the old negation of the intellect is gone as far as that is concerned; but, as he has so often seen, aspiration alone will not give him the truth, and we next find him in the old German University, which he left so long before: no longer he denies the possibility of attaining truth; he sees where it is, in the form of the beautiful; but he must rise gradually to it, his soul must gradually grow up to it, through the same steps by which it was developed: as Helen is the perfect flower of classic culture and beauty, Faust must pass through the various forms through which the Greek mythus arose.

Passing over a number of scenes of the drama, for want of time, we come to the Classic Walpurgis Night, where we trace the development of the Greek idea. First, on the Pharsalian Field, we have a gallery of strange forms, which well illustrate how the divine in man, in his upward progress, gradually overpowers the animal. In this gallery of mythical forms, we first meet a group of three oriental forms: the griffon, half bird and half lion; a colossal ant; and the Arimaspeans, a one eyed race. Next a group of sphinxes, Egyptian forms, in which though the animal predominates, the human is more conspicuous than in the last group. Third, the sirens, Greek forms, in which humanity becomes more preponderant.

Another series begins with the water nymphs, pure children of nature, who beckon Faust on, and charm him by their beauty, but cannot delay him in his pursuit of Helen, the perfection of beauty. Next Chiron, the centaur, the human strongly predominating the animal; useful as a guide and to carry Faust, but not high enough

to bring him directly to Helen, or indeed to appreciate the passion for her: he carries Faust to Manto the prophetess, an impersonation of the Ideal as Chiron is of the Practical. He is incessantly in motion, but she gives her character in the line "I wait and time around me wheels"; she can help Faust to find Helen, for when Chiron half sarcastically tells her this is Faust's longing, she replies:

"Him I love that longs for the Impossible."

A saying of Goethe's which comes quite appositely here "To live in the Idea, means to treat the Impossible as if it were possible," may be compared with the eleventh rule in *Light on the Path*, "Desire only that which is unattainable." Through Manto's abode Faust passes to Helen's and we see him no more at present.

In the next act Helen herself appears; not a mere shade, but a living woman; and as in the first part we saw Margaret's fall and redemption, as an episode in Faust's career, though in itself independent, so also the Helena poem may be viewed as independent in itself, or as a part of the Faust drama. We may consider her as she first appears the ideal of beauty the sensuous beauty of the Greek race; and as Faust to win her must pass through a long experience, so she, to be fitted for Faust, must have her nature changed from this to something higher.

Troy has fallen, and Menelaus has brought back to Greece his recaptured wife; his ship has reached the Spartan shore, and he sends Helena, accompanied by a troop of attendants, captive Trojan women, before him to his palace to have all preparations made for a sacrifice to the gods, as soon as he shall arrive. The Trojan women, who always speak as chorus, represent the purely sensual element; as Mephistopheles represented the negative side of Faust's character, to overcome which is the work of the whole drama, so this chorus represents the lower side of Helena's

character, and it is only because she has the capacity for something higher, that she can become, if she can endure the experiences before her, worthy to be the wife of Faust. The chorus praises her beauty, but she feels that that has been the cause of all the misery that has come upon her, and through her upon her kindred and nation. The chorus has but little sorrow over the past, if only they can enjoy the bright sunshine, and the sensual happiness of the present; but her heart is full of remorse for the past and apprehension for the future; her world-wide fame gives her no satisfaction. As she enters the palace, in which she passed her happy childhood, she now knows not whether she returns as wife and mistress, or as sacrificial victim; and at the family hearth she sees, cowering, a hideous form; she turns to enter the bridal chamber and the form springs up against her, a veritable Dweller of the Threshold; a violent storm of abuse rages between this monster, Phorkyas, and the chorus of Trojan women. The latter symbolically represent the charm of sensual pleasure, the former its evil result; both, though dramatically distinct from Helena, are really parts of her own nature, but she is higher than the sensual longing, and will prove higher than the sharp remorse, which, in the form of Phorkyas, now brings before her with stinging clearness, her many sins and their terrible results: crushed by the weight of these, she sinks to the ground, but rises again, willing to bear the appointed doom, not disputing the justice of her condemnation. Phorkyas is conquered; now she has but to obey, and is ready to aid. Helen's strength of character has now made her fit for Faust, to whom Phorkyas conducts her and the chorus, passing at once from classic Greece to medieval times. We cannot follow all of this but can note that we may consider the whole of the third act as representing Faust, the universal man, gathering to himself the highest possible culture, impersonated in Helena; he makes her wholly his own, his wife. Is not this the highest attainable for man? No, we shall see later

that it is not. Helen leaves Faust at the end of this act, returning to Persephone in Hades. She disappears from out Faust's career, but her influence remains forever. The chorus refuses to follow her to the underworld, preferring the pleasures of sunny day, the only pleasure they can comprehend; though with the certainty that it must soon end, and they disappear into the elements to cease to exist as individuals. Panthalis only, the leader of the chorus, turns from them, and descends to Hades, faithful to the queen; faithful service and unselfish devotion gain for her the immortality which her fellows lose. For the descent to Hades is only the passing out of the Faust consciousness, not from existence: the subjective Devachanic consciousness may be, as we know, far stronger than the consciousness of the objective world which we too often look at as the only real one.

Faust has won the highest culture, but instead of crowning his career it will be a curse to him if he stops here. Unless he turn and use all he has acquired for an unselfish end, he will yet lose his forfeit to Mephistopheles. As in the tale of the gem, (1) "he who tells not of his gem, and shares it not with all men, must lose it," it is "the stone no man could keep unless he gave it away."

"The true and the Beautiful must now be employed in the service of the Good."

But as we read in the notes to *Light on the Path*: "It is impossible to help others till you have obtained some certainty of your own."

The fourth act shows the outworking of Faust on the world around him; he has formed the plan to reclaim from the sea a new land, and to rill it with his own activity; his individual culture is to be for the benefit of all. To this end he joins the Emperor, now hard pressed by a revolt which threatens to overthrow State and Church. Faust gains the victory over the insurgents, saves the ancient established order, which now

reorganizes with all the old abuses; but Faust is granted his strip of land, from which he proceeds to build up a new civilization; not by violent overthrow, but by gradual gain and progress.

In the fifth act we find him, a very old man, still unsatisfied; nowhere has he found the moment which was to fulfill his contract with Mephistopheles. Mephistopheles himself has lately been far less prominent; no longer Faust's guide, he is hardly more than his unwilling servant. True to his spirit of denial, he mocks at the tasks Faust sets to him, but more and more he fulfills his description of himself in the first act. "A part of that power which always wills the bad and always accomplishes the good."

At last, old and blind, comes upon Faust his last struggle, the contest with "Sorge," in this case anxiety for the future, the state after death. Faust is not overcome. "Let a man stand fast here and look about: what need he to sweep into eternity? To the strong man this world is not dumb. Thy might, O Sorge, I shall not recognize." Faster he pushes on his work of providing a happy home for untold generations, and in the enthusiasm of his vision of future ages, pronounces this distant view, the supreme moment of bliss. The promise of Mephistopheles is now fulfilled in the letter: Faust's term on earth is ended— he falls lifeless. But only in the letter is the contract fulfilled: it is by no delight of the senses, by no selfish pleasure, even the highest, that Faust is satisfied. Pure unselfish happiness: he has identified the individual with the all, it is the true brotherhood of humanity, no temptation of Mephistopheles could have done this. Faust dies freed from every personal desire, not in the hope of a reward in the future life, any more than with an unsatisfied longing on earth.

In the first part, the chorus of angels at Easter sang a song of love, but it was met by the denial and unbelief of Faust. Now the same

songs of love are sung, but the answer of denial comes from Mephistopheles. In the first scene, Mephistopheles had not yet been evolved externally, but was still contained in Faust's soul; the gradual process of evolving Mephistopheles from Faust and freeing the latter from his influence is the story of the whole poem, and now at last the spirits of love find Faust responsive to their invitation. He has fully purified himself from the spirit of denial, which is the same as the spirit of selfishness, of limitation. As the angels sing "Love leads only loving ones in," and "who unceasingly strives, him can we redeem," we see the vindication of the prophecy of the prologue:

"A good man, through obscurest aspiration,
Has still an instinct of the one true way."

And as, in the final scene, Faust's soul is borne upward, through sphere after sphere of spiritual glory, to the Queen of Heaven herself, we see again the spirit, "once called Gretchen," who long before called in despair on the Virgin to help her in her need, now again appealing, in almost the same words, but this time joyously asking for the privilege of welcoming the loved one yet dazzled by the new day.

As in Faust, so in Margaret, self is lost in pure devoted love, and at the word of the Mater Gloriosa she rises to higher spheres, there to draw him after her; as the mystic chorus tells, the summing up of the whole wonderful drama, whose meaning every one must feel to the measure of his apprehension, but can hardly express in words.

Alles vergaengliche All that's impermanent
Ist nur ein Gleichniss. Is but a likeness.
Das Unzulaengliche The Unattainable
Hier wird's Ereignis. Here findeth witness;
Das Unbeschreibliche The Indescribable,

Hier ist es gethan;	Here is it done;
Das Ewig-weibliche	The Ever-womanly
Zieht uns heran.	Leadeth us on. (2)

FOOTNOTE:

1. Papyrus-The Gem, THE PATH, Vol. I, p. 359. ([return to text](#))
2. Translated from article "Poetical Occultism" in THE PATH, Vol. I, p.212 ([return to text](#))

The Path

NOTES ON THE ASTRAL LIGHT: IV — *B. N. Acle*

From Eliphas Levi's *WORKS*.

(Concluded.)

We have alluded, heretofore, to a substance diffused throughout Infinity: this unique substance is at once Heaven and Earth, that is to say, according to its degrees of polarization, subtile or fixed.

It is this substance that Hermes Trismegistus denominates the great Telesma; when it produces brilliancy, it is called Light; it is this substance that God created, first of all, when He said, "Let there be Light."

It is at once matter and motion, a fluid and a perpetual vibration; and the force that is inherent in it, and sets it in motion, is called Magnetism.

In Infinity, this unique substance is Ether or Etherial Light; in the stars, which it magnetizes, it becomes the Astral Light; in organic beings, magnetic or fluidic light; and in man, the astral body or the plastic medium.

The wills of all intelligent beings act directly upon this light, and through it, on all Nature, which is thus subjected to the modifications of intelligence.

This light is the universal mirror of all thought and all form; it preserves the images of all that has been, the reflections of worlds that have passed away, and, by analogy, the prophecies of worlds that are yet to come. This light, which is called in Hebrew "Aour," is the liquid and living Gold of the Hermetic philosophy; the positive principle is its sulphur, the negative its Mercury; and these principles, when equilibrated, form its Salt. All matter,

therefore, is impelled to motion by reason of its double magnetism, and tends, inevitably, to equilibrium; the regularity and variety in this motion, result from different combinations of this equilibrium.

A fluid is matter in active motion, and constantly agitated by reason of the variation of its equilibrium; a "solid," is the same matter in less active motion; or in apparent repose, because it is more or less solidly equilibrated.

There is no solid that cannot be immediately reduced to powder, dissipated in smoke, and rendered invisible, if the equilibrium of its molecules should suddenly be entirely destroyed; and there is no fluid that cannot be instantly rendered harder than the diamond, if its constituent molecules could be immediately equilibrated.

To direct these two magnetisms, therefore, is to destroy or create, to produce forms or to annihilate them — in a word, to exercise the omnipotence of nature.

Our plastic medium is a magnet that attracts or repels the Astral Light, by the compulsion of the will: it is a luminous body, that reproduces, with the greatest fidelity, the forms that correspond to ideas: it is the mirror of the imagination.

This plastic body is nourished by the Astral Light, precisely as the organic body is nourished by the products of the earth. During sleep, it absorbs the Astral Light, by immersion; and in waking hours, by a kind of respiration, more or less slow.

In natural somnambulism, the plastic medium is surcharged with nutriment, which it does not perfectly assimilate: the will, although fettered by the torpor of sleep, strives to repel the medium; and a reaction, which is to some extent mechanical, ensues, whereby the light of the medium is equilibrated, by

means of the movement of the body; this explains why it is dangerous to awaken somnambulists suddenly — for the surcharged medium might, in such cases instantly withdraw to the universal reservoir, and entirely abandon the organs which, at that time, are separated from the soul, thus causing death. Hallucinations and visions, result from wounds inflicted on the plastic medium, causing local paralysis; sometimes it ceases to radiate, and substitutes images of its own, for the realities existing in the light, sometimes it radiates too powerfully, and condenses itself in some undesirable or fortuitous locality just as the blood settles in excrescences of the flesh: then the chimeras of the brain take form, and we appear to ourselves glorious or deformed, according to the ideal of our hopes or fears.

Hallucinations, being dreams of our waking hours, always presuppose a state analogous to somnambulism, and somnambulism may be regarded as sleep borrowing its phenomena from waking states; hallucination is the waking state, still swayed, in part, by the astral intoxication of sleep. Our fluidic bodies attract and repel one another, according to laws analogous to those of electricity; thus are produced instinctive sympathies and antipathies, which equilibrate each other: for this reason, hallucinations are often contagious; a circle of illusion is formed, and a whole multitude is easily carried away; this is the history of strange apparitions and popular prodigies; thus are explained the performances of the Mediums in America, and the folly of tableturning. Lunatics and idiots are more susceptible to magnetism than persons of sound mind — and the reason is apparent; it requires very little to completely turn the head of a man who has been drinking heavily, and disease is much more easily contracted, when all the organs are predisposed to submit to its impressions, and already manifest its symptoms. Fluidic maladies have their fatal crises; every abnormal tension of the

nervous apparatus, leads to a contrary tension, in accordance with the inexorable law of equilibrium; exaggerated love changes to aversion, and all exalted hatred approximates closely to love. The reaction comes with the violence and the suddenness of the thunderbolt. Ignorance is dismayed or indignant — science accepts the inevitable in silence.

The vibrations of the voice modify the movement of the Astral Light, and are powerful factors of magnetism. Baron du Potet says, in his recent book on "Magic," that it is possible to kill by means of magnetism, just as it is by electricity; this revelation has nothing surprising for those who understand the analogies of Nature; it is certain that, by unduly dilating, or suddenly contracting, the plastic medium of a person, it can be separated from his body; cases have been known where one was thus killed, by being thrown into a paroxysm of anger, or overwhelming fear. Our plastic medium inhales and exhales the Astral Light, or the vital breath of the earth, just as our body breathes the terrestrial atmosphere; and as, in some localities, the air is impure, and unfit to be breathed, so certain phenomenal circumstances may render the Astral Light unwholesome and incapable of being assimilated; and as the air in some places is too stimulating for certain organizations, but exactly suited to others, so it is with the Astral Light.

The Path

RAYS FROM THE EAST

(FRAGMENTS OF M.S.S., WRITTEN DOWN BY J.)

The longings of no human heart are to be lightly set aside; each one of them is a sub-tone in the great harmony of life; each one is the cry of some brother who has often forgotten his language, but still feels his wants. In his heart burns, however feebly, the spark from the Divine ever seeking the way back to the centre from which it came.

True it is that a man may have been initiated, in his past lives, into many degrees of knowledge and power, who yet had not had certain experiences necessary before entering on the next degree; and furthermore, that not one single degree can be lost to him, even though he may now appear before you, in a human garb not inviting, not puissant, not impetuous, nor in any sense free from faults.

•• once wrote: "An abyss opens behind each step; he cannot go back, and an irresistible impulse urges him forward."

That "abyss" is the "era of achievement," the passage from an "intermediate form" into a "new type." It is *not* mere absorption. Absorption goes on for periods anterior to it. During the absorption, and after saturation, the being goes on assimilating. Adjacent tissue — so to say — alters by either what your scientists call *infiltration*, or by what Patanjali calls *supply of natures*. There could not be, when the process is completed, any recession to the old type after the intermediate form has disappeared. But truly, just as in your material world, during vast shadowy periods, the vacated — almost — intermediate types floated about until the *habit* of nature had changed and they became useless, and many

beings had again and again reoccupied these forms, so in each daily life, or moral life, the intermediate forms remain until *your* habit has totally altered. They then disappear forever. So it is an abyss, great, profound, wide, silent and tenantless.

In a sense it is like the closed valve in the circulation, which permits no blood to engorge the heart. And the impulse that urges forward, has its source in the great heart which urges on the astral light that makes our poor human hearts beat to and fro. And as the mere motion of the heart cannot be stopped at ease because it is the servant of the great heart, so the impulse cannot be resisted by him who has voluntarily gone into the vast circulation of the great Adam; who, urged on by reverberating echoes from a *living* past, has started toward the goal. Often he knows not why he does so, and is perhaps unaware that the echoes have transformed themselves, by the subtle alchemy of nature, into unconscious leanings very often called "atavistic" (wrongly) by scientific men. So he knows them not as echoes.

Perhaps failure to carry out a chosen plan is part of a necessary step. Our failures to encompass a set end are our best teachers, provided we recognize the real work that inevitably is contained in the failure.

The very rush of the onset made by him who impetuously enters *the path*, has in itself the recoil, and a brave ship is required; and not only a brave ship, but also the pilot called by the name "experience," and the captain who has sailed in many seas.

Each man keeps his own account — with his eyes closed; but his hand writes down the correct sums, and the balance *has to be struck*.

The examiner of accounts is deaf, dumb and blind; the entries are in relief, and he measures them by touch.

I charge you to give these words to those whom you know are waiting and anxious to hear or see any words of mine.

May we be guided towards the living Truth.

The Path

THE BHAGAVAD-GITA: IV — *William Brehon*

(Continued from December number.)

Salutation to the Prowess of Krishna! May it be with us in the fight, strengthening our hearts that they faint not in the gloomy night that follows in the path of the day.

THE FIRST ABYSS.

The first chapter is ended. In one aspect, the Bhagavad-Gita is a personal book. It is for each man; and it is in that way we have so far considered it. Some have called it obscure, and others a book which deals solely with the great principles of nature; with only great questions of cosmogony; with difficult and bewildering questions relating to the first cause; and still others think it is contradictory and vague. But this first scene in the great colloquy is plain. It has the din of arms, the movement of battalions and the disposition of forces with their generals. No one need feel any hesitation now, for we are face to face with ourselves. The weak man, or he who does not care for Truth no matter where it leads, had better shut the book now. Unless he can go on reading the poem with the fixed intention of applying it to himself, it will do him no good whatever. He may say, however, that he will read it for what it may seem to contain, but if he reads to the end of time and does not fairly regard this first lecture, his knowledge gained further on will be no knowledge. It is indeed the book of the great mystery; but that problem was never solved *for* any one; it must be settled and solved *by* each one *for himself*. No doubt it was for this reason that Vyasa, to whom the poem is attributed, placed this conflict, in which the principal characters are Arjuna and Krishna, at the outset. It would have been easier to have made them sit down for a philosophical discourse beforehand in which

reasons *pro* and *con* regarding any battle would be discussed, and then, after all that was done, to show us Arjuna, encouraged and equipped, entering upon the war sure of victory because he had spent much time in dispelling his doubts. But instead of doing this he pictures the impetuous Arjuna precipitating the battle before he had considered whom it was he had to fight.

It does not appear in the Bhagavad-Gita, that Krishna had induced Arjuna, as was the case, to make the war for the purpose of regaining his kingdom. While stirring him up to it Krishna had wisely refrained from telling that which Arjuna finds out on the first day, that he had to oppose all these friends, kinsmen and preceptors. It was a wise reticence. If we completely apprehended the enormous power of our passions and various tendencies, most of us would throw up the fight in advance; for nothing would persuade us that any power within could withstand against such overwhelming odds. For us then the incitement to fight is found, not so much in any conversation that we hold now with Krishna, but in the impulses which are carried across, again and again, from incarnation to incarnation.

We take up the gage over and over, life after life, in experience after experience, never completely defeated if we always look to Krishna — our Higher Self. And in the tale of Arjuna we find this also. For in a succeeding book called "Anugita," is an account of the hero walking with Krishna through the Palace of Maya. The battle over, for the time, Arjuna tells his friend that he has really forgotten much that he had told him (in Bhagavad-Gita) and asks for a succinct repetition. This is given to him by the great warrior.

The palace of Maya is this body of illusion, built up around us by desire. In our last births we had all the advice given in this poem, and walking to-day through the palace, which sometimes seems so lovely, we now and then have reminiscences from the past:

sometimes we stoutly take up the fight: but surely, if we have listened to the Guide aright we will compel ourselves at last to carry it out until finished.

In coming to the conclusion of this first chapter, we reach *the first abyss*. It is not the great abyss, albeit it may seem to us, in our experience, to be the greatest. We are now *vis-a-vis* with our own despair, and doubt his companion. Many a student of Theosophy has in our own sight reached this point — all true students do. Like a little child who first ventures from the parent's side, we are affrighted at what seems new to us, and dropping our weapons attempt to get away; but, in the pursuit of Theosophy it is not possible to go back,

Because the abyss is behind us.

There is in nature a law that operates in every department whether moral or physical, and which may now be called that of undulation and then that of inhibition; while at other times it reappears as vibration, and still again as attraction and repulsion, but all these changes are only apparent because at bottom it is the same. Among vegetables it causes the sap to flow up the tree in one way and will not permit it to return in the same direction. In our own blood circulation we find the blood propelled from the heart, and that nature has provided little valves which will not permit it to return to the heart by the way it came, but by the way provided. Medical and anatomical science are not quite sure what it is that causes the blood to pass these valves; whether it is pressure from behind communicated by the heart, or the pressure by atmosphere from without which gently squeezes, as it were, the blood upon its way. But the Occultist does not find himself limited by these empirical deductions. He goes at once to the centre and declares that the impulse *is* from the heart and that that organ receives its impulse from the great astral heart or

the Akasa, which has been said by all mystics to have a double motion, or alternate vibration — the systole and diastole of nature.

So in this sense the valve in the circulation represents the abyss behind us that we cannot re-pass. We are in the great general circulation, and compelled whether we like it or not, to obey its forward impulse.

This place of dejection of Arjuna is also the same thing as is mentioned in "*Light on the Path*" as the silence after the storm. In tropical countries this silence is very apparent. After the storm has burst and passed, there is a quietness when the earth and the trees seem to have momentarily ceased making their familiar, manifold noises. They are obeying the general law and beginning the process of assimilation.

And in the astral world it is just the same. When one enters there for the first time, a great silence falls, during which the regulated soul is imbibing its surroundings and becoming accustomed to them. It says nothing but waits quietly until it has become in vibration precisely the same as the plane in which it is; when that is accomplished then it can speak properly, make itself understood, and likewise understand. But the unregulated soul flies to that plane of the astral world in a disturbed state, hurries to speak before it is able to do so intelligibly and as a consequence is not understood, while it increases its own confusion and makes it less likely that it will soon come to understand. In the Theosophical Society, as well as out of it, we can see the same thing. People are attracted to the astral plane; they hear of its wonders and astonishments and like a child with a new toy in sight they hurry to grasp it. They refuse to learn its philosophy because that seems dry and difficult. So they plunge in, and as Murdhna Joti said in a former article in this magazine, they then

"swim in it and cut capers like a boy in a pool of water."

But for the earnest student and true disciple, the matter is serious. He has vowed to have the truth at whatever cost, willing to go wherever she leads — even if it be to death.

So Krishna, having got Arjuna to where the battle has really begun, where retreat is not possible, begins to tell his loved disciple and friend what is the philosophy that underlies it all and without which success cannot be compassed.

We should not fail to observe at this point, that when Arjuna threw down his bow and arrows, the flying of missiles had already begun. We cannot say that when the philosophical discourse began between these two the opposing forces declared a truce until the mighty heroes should give the signal, because there is nowhere any verse that would authorize it, and we also can read in the accompanying books that all the paraphernalia of war had been brought on to the field and that the enemy would not desist, no matter what Arjuna might do. Now there is a meaning here, which is also a part of the great abyss the son of Pandu saw behind him, and which every one of us also sees.

We enter upon this great path of action in occultism mentally disposed towards final victory. This mental attitude instantly throws all the parts of our being into agitation, during which the tendencies which are by nature antipathetic to each other separate and range themselves upon opposite sides. This creates great distress, with oftentimes wandering of the mind, and adds additional terror to our dark despair. We may then sink down and declare that we will fly to a forest — or as they did once in Europe, to a monastery — so as to get away from what seems to be unfavorable ground for a conflict. But we have evoked a force in nature and set up a current and vibration which *will go on* no matter what we do. This is the meaning of the "flying of arrows"

even when Arjuna sat down on the bench of his chariot.

At this point of our progress we should *examine our motive and desire*.

It has been said in some Theosophical writings of the present day, that a "spiritualized will" ought to be cultivated. As terms are of the highest importance we ought to be careful how we use them, for in the inner life they represent either genuine, regulated forces, or useless and abortive things that lead to nothing but confusion. This term "spiritualized will" leads to error, because in fact it has no existence. The mistake has grown out of the constant dwelling on "will" and "forces" needed for the production of phenomena, as something the disciple should strive to obtain — whether so confessed or not — while the real motive power is lost sight of. It is very essential that we should clearly understand this, for if we make the blunder of attributing to *will* or to any other faculty an action which it does not have, or of placing it in a plane to which it does not belong, we at once remove ourselves far from the real knowledge, since all action on this plane is by mind alone.

The old Hermetic statement is: "*Behind will stands desire*," and it is true.

Will is a pure, colorless force which is moved into action by *desire*. If desire does not give a direction the will is motionless; and just as desire indicates, so the will proceeds to execute.

But as there are countless wills of sentient beings constantly plying to and fro in our sphere, and must be at all times in some manner acting upon one another, the question arises, what is that sort of knowledge, which shows how to use the will so that the effect of counteracting wills may not be felt. That knowledge is lost among the generality of men and is only instinctive here and

there in the world as a matter of Karmic result, giving us examples of men whose will seems to lead them on to success, as Jay Gould and others.

Furthermore, men of the world are not desiring to see results which shall be in accord with the general will of nature, because they are wanting this and that for their own benefit. Their desire, then, no matter how strong, is limited, or nullified: (1) by lack of knowledge of how to counteract other wills; (2) by being in opposition to the general will of nature without the other power of being able to act strongly in opposition to that too.

So it follows — as we see in practice in life — *that men obtain only a portion of that which they desire.*

The question next arises: Can a man go against the general will of nature and escape destruction, and also be able to desire wickedly with knowledge, and accomplish, through will, what he wishes?

Such a man can do all of these — except to escape destruction. That is sure to come, no matter at how remote a period.

He acquires extraordinary knowledge, enabling him to use powers for selfish purposes during immense periods of time, but at last the insidious effects of the opposition to the general true will makes itself felt and he is destroyed forever.

This fact is the origin of the destruction-of-worlds-myths, and of those myths of combats such as between Krishna and Ravana, the demon god, and between Durga and the demons.

For in other ages, as is to again occur in ages to come, these wickedly desiring people, having great knowledge, increase to an enormous extent and threaten the stability of the world. Then the adherents of the good law can no longer quietly work on

humanity, but come out in force, and a fight ensues in which the black magicians are always destroyed, because the good Adepts possess not only equal knowledge with the bad ones, but have in addition the great assistance of the general will of nature which is not in control of the others, and so it is inevitable that the good should triumph always. This assistance is also the heritage of every true student, and may be invoked by the real disciple when he has arrived at and passed the first abyss.

"And when the Great King of Glory saw the Heavenly Treasure of the Wheel, he sprinkled it with water and said: 'Roll onward, O my Lord, the Wheel! O my Lord, go forth and overcome!'"

(To be continued.)

The Path

RAHULA'S INHERITANCE — *J. Campbell Ver Planck*

"* * The spirit promised me that I should dwell with the crooked moon in her eternal beauty."

In that wonderful Age which our nurses call Once-upon-a-time, the Prince Rahula came into the Hall of Sages and demanded his birthright. The Wise Ones heard him in silence, and he seemed to be dismissed without an answer. On the following day he came again, with the same ill success; so the third time and up to the seventh demand, being always unnoticed and even, as he thought, unseen. On the eighth day a messenger returning to the Council of Sages, found Rahula seated upon a plinth at the entrance to the temple.

"What doest thou there, my Lord?" demanded the messenger.

"I have taken up my abode here, nor will I stir hence until the Wise Ones shall have heard me," answered Rahula.

"But is it meet that thou shouldst sit here so lowly, Prince that thou art?"

"It is meet that a man do all things to obtain his birthright. For him there is nothing else, and great or small, honey or poison, mine shall be mine."

The messenger bowed before him. "Thou art more than royal: thou art wise," he said. Then he hastened within, and when the Sages heard what he had seen they sent for Prince Rahula, who presently saluted them reverently and said: "I am come to claim mine own. I am the Prince Rahula and I am well known to you; seven times already have I claimed it."

"Yes, my Son," answered the Elder; "but it is customary to prove a

man, that his determination may show him the true heir, so that no impostor shall receive the inheritance kept for him by the Sons of Wisdom. Only those who know their rights and wrest them from Fate by strong courage, are true Princes of the royal line. But there is still a sign and countersign to pass between us ere we bestow thy birthright upon thee. Dost thou know them?"

The young Prince smiled a smile that was rarely sweet, drew himself to his full height, and tossing back his mantle, displayed to the Sages a crimson heart, transfixed with a golden lance. The Sages rose and saluted the Emblem, and parting their robes, each showed such a heart beneath his own breast. Only in the centre of theirs was written the word *Humanity*, and the lances were of living light, and a musical throb that was in itself a perfume was the pulse of each heart.

"Thou knowest the sign indeed," said the Elder to Rahula. "Take now the countersign. Remember that the wise and perfect heart pulsates for man alone. Thou hast demanded thy birthright in the name of the pierced heart: take it, and go in Peace."

At his signal the messenger brought to Rahula a large and brilliant crystal. It was shaped like the crescent moon: one side of it was covered with hieroglyphs cut into the stone; the other sparkled from innumerable facets like a field of hoar frost at sunrise. Rahula looked at it seriously. "A strange gift for a warrior," he said. "What is its use, my Lords? What shall I do with it?"

The Elder answered: "It is the birthright deposited with us at thy coming into the world and we can give thee no other. Its use is for thee to discover. We are but the guardians, not the interpreters. I have spoken."

Vainly Rahula besought him, no other word was uttered; the

Sages had resumed their silence and at last, lit by the rays of the shining moon, Rahula left the temple and re-entered life. Long he considered the jewel: of the characters he could make nothing. So he determined to hang the great crystal beneath the royal gateway, where all men might see it, and perchance its use might be discovered. This was done, and the life of the great city passed on beneath the mysterious crystal. Soon strange tales were told of it; at night its wonderful brilliance shattered the darkness with a thousand rays, which were never so softly penetrating as when they lit the weary to his home, or pointed out his task; which were never so blinding and sharp as when they shone into the face of sin and confessed it. These living rays seemed to single out certain men and passing before them, to light them to happiness and good fortune. It was found that such men had always sought after the light with single hearts, so that people began to desire to be well considered by the spirit of the gem, and to take its rays for guidance. Others still, looking for the solution of grave problems of labor and of want, found the answer in the hieroglyphs of the crystal moon, and translated them into many longing lives. Nor was this all. The gem reflected the heavens and their mysteries to those who looked down upon it from hard won heights, and cast also an illumination from those holy lands upon the wayfarers beneath who could not climb so far. It shed from its resplendent facets the life and warmth of the sun, and through the solemn marches of the nights it testified to the living Truth beyond the stars, and so renewed the religion of the people. All who appealed in faith to its hidden spirit were helped: the sick who struggled to touch it were made whole or given great patience and content. At the first touch of sunrise, at the last ray of sunset, seven musical notes rang from its flashing rim and turned to ineffable harmony the lives of all who heard them. Thus the light of a great peace fell over the city; friend and foe alike came from afar to share it and the reign of Rahula blessed even his enemies.

The Prince thought long over the strange power of the crystal as the happy people passed and repassed beneath it. He thought it too diffused; he determined to concentrate and heighten it, and summoning his servants, bade them take down the crystal from the gateway and bring it into one of the great halls of the palace. When this was done, and the soft shining no longer lit those stony ways, the people murmured, so that the Prince went out and himself spoke with them:

"I have been long learning the use of my birthright," he said, "The crystal is too rare a thing to hang thus exposed to the elements, to the enterprise of my rivals, the greed of envious men and to all the chances of fate. I have built an altar in the palace hall; the gem shall hang above it; incense shall rise; the gods will answer me from between the horns of my crystal moon, and send riches to me and to my kingdom. These I will myself dispense to you, and the jewel shall still bless you, but my foes shall be confounded."

All were silent a moment. Afterwards a woman in the crowd fell to weeping and cried out: "Do not this thing, my Lord! Hide not the light of thy birthright from us. We love the gem, and that love is more to us than any riches."

"You shall still love it," replied Rahula "more, you shall worship it, for this crystal is the abode of a mighty spirit; it is the signet of the Gods."

"To worship is not always to love," sobbed the woman, and the crowd complained loudly. But Rahula replied again: "The gem will make my reign renowned. It shall not be profaned by the dust and steam of the byways, by the fevered touch of the sick and the desecration of unhallowed eyes. In the shelter of a sacred place it shall shine for the good alone, and those who do homage

to me and who are taught of my priests, these the crystal shall bless, and not my enemies; yea, it shall still bless all untrue people. I have said." Rahula disappeared and the crowd went away muttering.

A great change came over the city. Little by little, the old turmoil came back, the old discord and wrangling went on beneath the gateways. The memory of that soft shining died out of the fevered hearts, and soon only the aged and the little children remembered to mourn for the lost gem. But within the temple incense rolled, priests knelt consulting the oracles, wise men interpreted the hieroglyphs seeking riches and fame for Rahula, while over all the white moon hung pale and shuddering in the perfumed breeze. A change came over it like the change in the city. The smoke of worship obscured the rays, then obstructed them; then they ceased shining altogether and the face of the moon was veiled in mist. The temple music drowned the bell notes, and though it was stopped when this was discovered, those notes sounded no more, for the sunrise and sunset glow no longer flooded the crystal rim. The hieroglyphs told wonderful tales of fame and pomp and war, but all turned out illy, and Rahula found that his priests had read them backward, that only the people knew their language by instinct, as the language of their infancy. The glory and beauty of the great gem were gone: none but the priests would do it homage, and it hung, a dulled and impotent thing in the chill silence above the altar. Rahula felt a certain awe, a sense of coming disaster. He bade his servants take down the crystal, set cunning artificers to brighten and restore it, and then, ordering a great festival to be held, he had the stone replaced above the gateway, and waited for the joy and praises of the people.

Instead he heard jeers, flouting and anger. "Does he weary of his pleasure, that he flings it forth to us again?" cried some. Others

said: "The stone has brought him ill fortune, and he would cast it over the city instead." Some pointed at it as an old superstition; some prostrated themselves in loud worship, but these were men of evil conscience who sought to propitiate the Prince for their own ends. Some indeed there were who tried to read words of comfort or peace in the gem, but the artificers of the Prince had altered the signs unknowingly and all the real meaning was defaced. While Rahula saw this, first with anger, then with deadly pain and grief, a black storm slowly rolled up, gathered, burst, and in an hundred lightnings the stone was shattered, its splintered fragments hurled down the tempest and lost. The people fled the city in terror, crying that the gods had punished them for reverencing a birthright other than their own, as was forbidden to man. When the storm was over, one pallid star looked out of the clouds upon a deserted palace, and a lonely Prince brooding over his lost birthright, questioning the mystery of that destruction.

Long he searched his heart in the solitude but it gave no answer that he understood; he too had forgotten a language. He rose with sudden recollection; he would go to the hall of Sages. Even as he thought this the Elder stood before him. The Prince shot a glance of hope into that calm face, a glance that changed to one of dismay as the Sage said gravely: "What hast thou done with thy birthright?"

"I? Nothing;" stammered Rahula. Mocking echoes multiplied the word. "Nothing! Nothing!" came back to him from all his empty halls like an accusation. He turned quickly upon the Elder:

"Answer me this," he said. "What is this gem, whose power and value are so great, and yet so small? What is it that is both everything and nothing?"

"It is Life. Life which bestowed upon the world is of priceless

worth to thee and to all, and which for selfish ends is but an empty thing; Life which thou shalt lose if thou keepest it for thyself. Used as a means, Life is glorious in power and opportunity, fruitful in blessing. Used as an end, a thing sought and worshipped in itself, it is the scorn of mortals and the sport of gods. This was thy only birthright, and thou hast lost it."

"But I will find it again; I will seek the world for the fragments," spoke Rahula. "They shall once more mirror heaven and once more shine upon the people." He went forth to search strongly, a weary search of centuries, for wherever mankind may dwell, there still wanders Rahula, seeking those broken fragments, seeking to restore their scattered meaning. Happy he, who having received Life whole from the gods, gives it back to them in unbroken integrity through the lives of all the people.

The Path

KEELEY'S "INTER-ETHERIC FORCE."

The following is a free translation from a French rendering of some important passages from the new book Mme. H. P. Blavatsky is now finishing in London, and entitled "*The Secret Doctrine*." Our translation has not been revised by the author, so that she must not be held accountable for any possible small errors that may have crept in through such double filtering: but the general sense is in strict accord with her views expressed long ago to us, and we feel warranted in saying that any errors are only verbal and not substantive. It was not thought necessary, either, to give the long quotations respecting Keeley's claims, as these are well known in this country.

"Every student of occultism knows that *sound* is one of the most formidable of occult powers: one whose least exercise, by an occultist, is productive of results a hundred thousand fold greater than all the electricity that could be produced even by such a waterfall as Niagara. It is possible to produce a sound capable of lifting in air the Pyramid of Cheops: or of bringing back to life, and inspiring with renewed vigor, one who is at the very point of death.

"For *sound* comprises the elements of a species of ozone whose production is beyond the powers of Chemistry, but appertains to those of Alchemy. This ozone can recall a man to life, provided that the Astral, or vital, body has not been irrevocably separated from the physical body, by the severance of the odic or magnetic tie which unites them. The Author ought to know something about this by personal experience, having been snatched from the jaws of death, on three separate occasions, thanks to this power.

"In the opinion of occultists, Mr. Keeley is on the threshold of one

of the greatest secrets of the universe: a secret upon which depends the whole mystery of physical forces, as well as the esoteric meanings of *the egg of the world*. Occult philosophy regarding the manifested and the non manifested Cosmos as forming a *unity*, it follows that the ideal conception of the first is symbolically expressed by this '*golden egg*,' which has two poles.

"It is the positive pole that exerts itself in the manifested world of matter; while the negative pole loses itself in the absolute unknowable, the *Sat*.

"This, however, cannot be the doctrine of Mr. Keeley, since he believes in a personal God. However, his ideas about the etheric, material constitution of the universe bear a striking likeness to ours: in fact, they are almost identical.

"But Mr. Keeley's *inter-etheric* centre is not exactly the centre of *laya* of the Eastern Occultists. The former can be produced at will, as has been proved by the phenomena of the Astral bells:(1) but the *centre of laya* cannot be produced by *human* will.

"If we are unwilling to accept the explanation that Mr. Keeley gives us — one which, from the occultist point of view, is perfectly orthodox, except for some obscurities of language — what answer will official science make to *facts* which it is impossible to deny? Occult philosophy only discloses its sacred mysteries one at a time. It drops them, like precious pearls, from time to time, during the course of the centuries, and only at those epochs which are marked by the movement of the rising wave of Evolution which bears humanity slowly, silently, but surely towards the birth of the sixth race. For once having passed out of the possession of their legitimate guardians, these mysteries cease to be occult: they fall into possession of the public, and run the risk of becoming in the hands of egoists — the Cains of the human race — curses, instead of the blessings that they formerly were.

"However, when men like Mr. Keeley are born, endowed with special mental and psychic powers, they are, as a general rule, aided by the guardians of the occult; since if they were left to their own resources, they would advance but slowly, and would soon become martyrs of their discoveries, or victims of less scrupulous speculations. But they are never thus aided except upon the express condition that they shall never, whether consciously or unconsciously, become a new peril to the humanity of their century, one more danger to the poor, who are daily offered in holocausts to the very rich by those who are less so.

"Mr. Keeley, then, is what the Kabbalists term a 'magician born.' Such as he is, however, he does not know, and never will know, the full extent of his powers. He will only be able to profit by such as he has discovered himself, in his own nature. And this for two reasons. Firstly, because he attributes to these powers a false origin which will prevent him from giving them full play; and secondly, because he is incapable of communicating to others that which is an inherent capacity of his own nature. He will, therefore, be unable to transmit all of his secret for permanent application.

"It is not *rare* to find individuals endowed with a like faculty. If we do not hear them spoken of more frequently, it is because in almost all cases they live and die without suspecting that they are possessors of any abnormal powers. Such powers are considered abnormal to-day, only because they are as little known as was the circulation of the blood before the epoch of Harvey. The blood existed and acted in the same way that it does to-day, in the first man that was born of woman: just so there is in man a principle that is capable of directing and regulating the vibratory inter-etheric force. This principle exists, at least, in those whose 'inner

self' is connected by direct descent with that group of *Dhyan-Chohans* called the 'first-born of the Ether.' From the psychic point of view, humanity is divided into different branches, each of which is attached to one of the groups of *Dhyan-Chohans* who 'in the Beginning' created the *psychic man*. Mr. Keeley, favored by such a connection, and being endowed, in addition, with a remarkable psychic temperament and an extraordinary mechanical genius, is capable of achieving the most marvellous results. That which he has just accomplished is in itself sufficient 'to demolish, with the hammer of science, the idols of science' — those idols whose feet are clay.

"There are limits which Mr. Keeley will be unable to pass: yet, without doubt, his name will go down to posterity for that which he shall have accomplished in the domain of *psycho-physical* inventions. He will be known as *the benefactor of the rich*. Whether *the poor* will have cause to bless this great man is quite another question. The miners, the engineers, the mechanics, the millions of unfortunate working men who gain with difficulty their daily bread by the work of their hands, will find themselves without occupation on the day that the 'etheric force' of Mr. Keeley shall have taken the place of steam engines and other means of locomotion. *But that day will not come!*

"The force that Mr. Keeley has just unwittingly discovered is none other than that terrible astral power known to the Atlanteans, and called by them *Mash-mak*. It is 'vril' of 'the Coming Race' of Bulwer's romance, and of the future races of humanity. The word 'vril' may possibly be an invention of the writer of that story: but the force itself is not, for it is referred to in all of the secret books of India. It is this identical vibratory force which, directed against an army by means of a machine (*agni-rath*) stationed in a 'flying vessel,' according to the instructions laid down in the *Ashtar Vidya* (2) would reduce a hundred thousand men and elephants to

cinders as easily as if they were wisps of straw. It is mentioned in the '*Vishnu Purana*' under the symbol of the 'glance' of Kapila, — the Sage who, by the glance of his eye, reduced the sixty thousand sons of King Sagara to a heap of ashes.

"And is it conceivable that it will be permitted to our generation to add this *Satanic* power to the choice collection of the toys of the children of Anarchy, — such as melinite, dynamite clocks, explosive oranges, 'bouquets of flowers,' and such like innocent trifles? Is it possible that the 'Elder Brothers' of the race should deliver, to the cupidity of our century, this destructive agent, which, in the hands of some modern Attila or of some Anarchist thirsting for blood, could in a few days reduce Europe to primitive chaos? Never! The discovery of Mr. Keeley comes a hundred thousand years before its proper time. It will never truly take its place in the cyclic evolution of humanity until the threatening tide of capitalistic monopoly shall have ebbed; which will take place when just claims shall have been listened to.

"When such a thing as unjustly paid labor exists only as a matter of history — when the cry of famine ceases to be heard in the world, — then only will the discovery of Mr. Keeley cease to be an anachronism, because then the poor will have more use for it than the rich."

In the foregoing we find additional interest upon reading in the *N. Y. Sun*, of December 15, 1887, an account of the last annual meeting of Mr. Keeley's company, at which his report upon his discovery was read. Among other things he said:

"After a succession of interesting but laborious experiments, he produced in March of 1885 what he termed a liberator, which could be operated in conjunction with the generator, and was a vast stride in advance of anything accomplished hitherto. Meanwhile phenomena

had been unfolded to him, opening "a new field of experiment, as the result of which he became possessed of a new and important discovery. Hereafter he shall not, he says, require the generator or liberator, and his operations will be conducted without either the vaperic or etheric forces, which heretofore played such an important part in his exhibitions. What name to give his new form of force he does not know, but the basis of it all, he says, is vibratory sympathy. It may be divided, too, into negative and sympathetic attraction, these two forms of force being the antithesis of each other. As to the practical outcome of his work, Mr Keeley could make no promises.

"Among the work yet to be done is the construction of a sympathetic machine of a very delicate character. While this will be a perfect vibratory structure itself, its function is to complete the work of graduation or governing of the force, but as to what length of time it will take to complete the work he cannot say."

Evidently the end is not yet. By this report we see that even since Madame Blavatsky wrote her remarks, Mr. Keeley has been thrown off the track, has *given up* — or gone beyond — all that he had hitherto done, and now is engaged on "a new form" and a "sympathetic vibrator," which will take longer to complete than he cares to say; and when that is completed, there will be further steps necessary before practical results are seen.

FOOTNOTES:

1. See "Occult World." ([return to text](#))
2. A Hindu book. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

THE APPEAL UNTO CAESAR — *Jasper Niemand*

When Rome ruled the world, in her Caesar was focussed all her power. A claimant for Justice, challenging judgment with the cry: — "I appeal unto Caesar!" was answered: "Then Caesar will hear you." He had taken refuge at the foot of the throne, and men spoke of an appeal unto Caesar, as a supreme and final step. It evoked an irrevocable decision. Despite the lapse of time this appeal impresses the mind with unimpaired majesty because it is the type of a living truth. The appeal unto Caesar has eternally place in the spiritual world.

When a man first feels within himself the strange throb of that power which tells of a higher life than that in which he is immersed; when it spurs him away from the material and beckons to him as from glimpses of the spiritual, he looks about him for information, for traces of a course to be pursued. He questions his fellows; he reads many books; he hearkens to teachers and authorities, both real and nominal. A huge mass of external information is sifted by him, and in the end he finds — confusion! His intellect may be fed for a while, but at last the support of the heart fails it; it is saturated, plethoric, atrophied. He turns then to Life itself. He questions the boasts and the despair, the revelry and the agony; he asks of Love, of Hope, of Fear, and Faith. He contemplates the ideals of all art and the untrammelled freedom of Nature, aiming perhaps nearer to the secret as he marks the inalterable round of seasons, and how winter draws itself together with bitter contraction to burst into the ferment, the vernal revel of spring. He snatches at the wings of dreams; he confronts the phalanx of great problems and the most shadowy suggestions alike; but he has not the clue to the labyrinth; he knows not that this eternal alternation is Life itself,

and that he must look deeper still. The heart, unsupported by the intellect, now fails him also. He hears, perhaps of the teachers of the East, or of the "Leaders of the world" from whom. "*when the wind is blowing*," comes the mystical fragrance which is the ambrosia of the soul. (1) But the wind is not then blowing (that is — his time has not come in the Law), and it is borne in upon him that he is but one of millions along the centuries who have given a momentary cry out of the press of existence, and have then returned contentedly to the "flesh pots of Egypt," He has yet to prove that he possesses, in some degree at least, the power of flight. So he receives no valid or enduring comfort from any of these directions; and meanwhile, all about him, the enticements of Life are plucking at his garments, the currents of the world are urging him to and fro. Here, many desist: he who perseveres listens next *within*. He hears vaguely, now this prompting and now that, in the multiform vacillations of the soul, itself bewildered by the long sojourn in matter; even the inner sanctuary, in which he most trusts, seems to betray his hope. Then if his soul be as yet weak, his thought fails, the spiritual vision fades into the mists, and he resumes the accustomed march of life, keeping "lock step," with his imprisoned companions like one awakening, heavy and unrefreshed, from the phantasmagoria of dreams. We lose sight of him in the struggling multitude; he has leapt from the wave only to fall back into the depths. But he who is strong, rendered stronger still as he gathers to himself the forces he has overcome, now discards all other powers, and takes his resolute stand upon his own nature. He declares that since he can conceive a higher Life, it must exist within his reach, and he wills with an indomitable will to attain it. How, he knows not, but he relies upon that inner prompting alone.

Then he makes the appeal unto Caesar. By Caesar he is never

unheard.

In those shining spheres where dwell the glorious ones forever, all is peace and silence. A far sound travels up the star strewn cope. The stir of its approach touches the Gods with a tremor; they thrill to it, bending closer, for it has that charm which alone conjures them, the essential charm of humanity. (2) It is the voice of man, which selfless, is stronger than all the angels, and selfish, is weaker than the dumb plaint of the brute. Perhaps this is the first intelligence of the wanderer received in his Father's house. Perhaps they have heard it coming before, and Life has beaten it back. Nearer it comes and nearer, gaining force as it advances, from the sympathies of heaven's messengers and powers all leaping forth to increase and sustain it; it falls like a star into the sea of eternity which swells to meet it, and ripples spread and overflow, magical, musical and full of healing. Oh! with what exultant flight, with what a rush of glory the strong voice of humanity cleaves the interstellar space and opens up the way from Gods to men. Along that way, long retarded souls come flocking after, jubilant among the jewelled auroras. Celestial spheres flash responsively; the silver echoes waken, and God proclaims to God, with solemn triumph, that man once more has claimed his own! "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth." (3) For this hour the God has waited longer than souls can remember. The power of the divine self rests upon the rights of the man who has appealed to it. They are the two poles of a sphere, and the might of the higher can only be universally manifest, below as above, through complete union with the lower. This union ensures immortality to the human soul, and the splendor of distinct fruition to the divine spirit. So when the Higher Self hears the appeal, it responds to the holiest of pledges. This appeal may have been made before in other ages, and the present cry may be the renewal of forgotten

vows; or it may now be made for the first time in the first expansion of psychic evolution. For this no special rule can be given. In each life all previous lives repeat themselves, just as the law of reproductive thought or association operates at any cataclysm, so that all similar events may thus be seen. Each sleep brings up all former sleep, and an accident today would enable one sufficiently developed to see and feel all the accidents that had before come to the sufferer. (4) So it seems that there comes finally one incarnation which repeats with emphasis the sum total of all other lives, so that the man is hurried through the round of experience with furious rapidity. Such an incarnation ripens the period known as "the moment of choice." The actual advent of this period is denoted by the strength of the soul which encounters it: it must *know*, before it can decide. It is not a "moment" in the usual sense of the word, but a period of greater or lesser duration, and I believe it may even extend over several lives. It cannot be entered upon, until the appeal to Caesar has been made.

This appeal is not really the initiative. The spark within, which we carry from the Father's house as a traveller takes with him the love tokens of his home; that exiled spark awakens. It does so because it has at last heard a messenger from the heavenly mansion, and it asserts its remembrance in answer, just as ties of blood assert themselves when estranged brothers meet suddenly in foreign lands, or as the bonds of humanity draw close, in automatic and inherent action, before a common danger. The divine spark knows, what the mind of man ignores, and what the soul forgets, that there is peril for its associates, even peril of eternal death. As from time to time the God remembers the wanderer, so its responsive longings break forth in muffled warning within the troubled breast of man. The Great one, waiting patiently through the ages, sends airy heralds, an impulse

of power, a formless, soundless, vibratory message like a flaming light, down the mysterious thread which connects man and God as the moonbeam connects earth and sky. Up that wondrous way every aspiration of man must travel, and down it scintillate the responses of that enduring Love by which alone we live.

He who is strong now passes into a blank darkness, which no power can penetrate for him: from the vortex of pain he suddenly snatches his soul and places it upon the outer verge of peace. Then he must find his way into the heart of the silence.

He is answered, I said; but he does not always hear the answer. The spiritual language is not understood by him. At first, the echoes of his own need are all that come back to him, fraught with a majesty and a pathos from the spheres they have touched, which often intoxicate him into a passion of self pity. He does not recognize that this added grandeur is the olive branch brought him from beyond the waste of waters; that it is a guarantee of the divine hearing. He does not know that its significance enters his heart, his eyes, his speech, and that in the added dignity of his mien, weary seekers feel blindly an assurance that the higher life exists. They feel, though too often unable to translate clearly, that another has called upon Caesar and that the Supreme Power lives. He has touched IT for a moment, though he knows it not, and all are heartened though none may discover it of himself or of the others.

A certain melancholy then floods the heart of the seeker. It is a sadness sweeter than the ringing clamor of worldly joys; its aftertaste is gracious and not fevered. It is "that which in the beginning is as poison, and in the end is as the water of life." (5) He continues to meditate and to search his soul; to look for truth apart from his conceptions of it; to distinguish the necessities of his lower nature from the intuitions of his higher nature (though

both seemingly speak through the one voice,) and to send up aspirations to the God, who responds with a vivifying shower of new hopes. He feels them faintly. For as the ray of light speeds to his succor, it encounters the material darkness in which he lives. A small portion of it may pass through and invigorate his heart, but part is refracted by the things about him, reflected in the surface thoughts and customs of the world and reaches him distorted and falsified. Then too, the more powerful the ray, the more the darkness, receding before it, impacts itself about him, denser than ever, and the faults, the errors nearest his heart are driven home and hold riot there. So it often happens that when rescue is nearest it seems to the beleaguered one immeasurably remote, and that the response of Caesar seems to condemn him in the mocking voices of despair and sin. Men fancy that the answer of the Divine Self must bring peace; it is not so at first. Jesus said: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." (6) There is much warfare yet; only through it do we enter into the peace. We have to wrestle with the power, as Jacob did with the angel, before it will wholly bless us. When it does so, it is for the sake of humanity and man must make his appeal for the same reason. This is the rite of sacrifice which the Gita speaks of as having been instituted from the beginning — this interchange with the Divine. Having consciously appealed, we have challenged the Supreme: we have placed ourselves within the grasp of the law and the compact must be kept. Nor can we advance until then. A master once wrote to one who asked to become his disciple: "May the powers to which you have appealed *be permitted by still greater and much higher powers* to help you." He meant the Great One and the law.

I knew a seeker after Truth who was beaten back at every point. He lay prostrate in despair under the most awful weight that ever crushes the human soul. All his nature cried out for God. He felt a

touch that rolled the stone away and looking upward, he beheld in the air above him a shape of light all calm and resplendent, whose aspect was a transfiguration of his own. More I know not, but this my brother who was lost has been found again.

There are many of you, my comrades, who stand in just this stead: you have called and you have been answered; but you have not heard. You will say to me: "How shall we hear, and how interpret the voice?" I cannot tell you this; there are as many ways as there are men. Each of you, and he only, is judge of himself; he and Caesar. But I can assure you that every aspiration you feel, and the renewal of them, are messages from the God. His replies may take the shape of added sorrows and gathering storms, for all these are the means of your trial and your growth, and you have elected them yourself, sowing their seeds in other lives. Try then to look upon each as just the help which you now need. So long as you have an unselfish thought, you are not deserted; so long as you have faith, you have heard. This succor stands fast in the True: it can never be uprooted, severed or lessened. It is your inheritance, your right which no one can deny you but yourself. Even your ignorance can only obscure it. The true voice will speak to you of the sorrows of the world, of the grand futurity of mankind, of your diviner Self.

The hour of appeal is the pregnant moment. If you lose it now, how long may you not have to wait, powerless dreamers in the heavenly lands, tasting rich rewards which fail at last? Then you must return again from that world of effects to this one. Seek the world of cause instead. Causes are sovereign; they alone are eternal.

Amid the roar of the world, the stupendous rush of its fierce tides, the swoop of its hurricanes, the fell power of its lightnings which reveal only darkness to the seared soul; amid its miasmatic

pettiness, amid its joys and its better hopes, cling still to that one thought which, like the sea gull, can well outride a thousand storms, the thought of that Humanity which shall merge into Divinity; the thought of the Self, the All. Strengthen it with all the love of your heart, all the sweetness of your nature, and send up a mighty cry to heaven. For when through the spirit, the man wills, when his soul soars to claim its right, then distant spheres are shaken and Being is apprehended. Appeal! Appeal unto Caesar!

FOOTNOTES:

1. Saddharma Pundarika. ([return to text](#))
2. In the Hindu and Buddhist books we find this referred to as, the growing warm of Indra, or other Deity, who thus knows that his interposition below is needed; as, when Buddha's father wished to build a lotus pond: then Indra, in one night had it done. — J. N. ([return to text](#))
3. St. Luke XV:10 and 7. ([return to text](#))
4. A friend, sitting recently with an injured man, saw in the astral light an accident that had happened to him 25 years before. — J. N. ([return to text](#))
5. Bhagavad-Gita, Ch. 18. ([return to text](#))
6. St. Matt 10, v. 34. ([return to text](#))

THE BHAGAVAD-GITA: V — *William Brehon*

(Continued from January number.)

SECOND CHAPTER.

"And now, under the Lotus in the Heart, glows the lamp of the Soul. Protected by the gods who there stand guard, it sheds its soft rays in every direction."

A mighty spirit moves through the pages of the Bhagavad-Gita. It has the seductive influence of beauty; yet, like strength, it fills one as with the sound of armies assembling or the roar of great waters; appealing alike to the warrior and the philosopher, it shows to the one the righteousness of lawful action, and to the other the calmness which results to him who has reached inaction through action. Schlegel, after studying the poem, pays tribute to it in these words: "By the Brahmins, reverence of masters is considered the most sacred of duties. Thee therefore, first, most holy prophet, interpreter of the Deity, by whatever name thou wast called among mortals, the author of this poem, by whose oracles the mind is rapt with ineffable delight to doctrines lofty, eternal, and divine — thee first, I say, I hail, and shall always worship at thy feet."

The second chapter begins to teach philosophy, but in such a way that Arjuna is led on gradually step by step to the end of the dialogue; and yet the very first instructions from Krishna are so couched that the end and purpose of the scheme are seen at the beginning.

Although philosophy seems dry to most people, and especially to minds in the Western world who are surrounded by the rush of their new and quite undeveloped civilization, yet it must be

taught and understood. It has become the fashion to some extent even in the Theosophical Society to scout careful study or practice and go in for the rapid methods inaugurated in America. In many places emotional goodness is declared to exceed in value the calmness that results from a broad philosophical foundation, and in others astral wonder seeking, or great strength of mind whether discriminative or not, is given the first rank. Strength without knowledge, and sympathetic tears without the ability to be calm, — in fine, faith without works — will not save us. And this is one of the lessons of the second chapter.

The greatest of the Ancients inculcated by both symbols and books the absolute necessity for the acquirement of philosophical knowledge, inasmuch as strength or special faculties are useless without it. Those Greeks and others who recorded some of the wisdom of the elder Egyptians well illustrated this. They said, "that in the symbols it was shown, as where Hermes is represented as an old and a young man, intending by this to signify that he who rightly inspects sacred matters ought to be both intelligent and strong, one of these without the other being imperfect. And for the same reason the symbol of the great Sphinx was established; the beast signifying strength, and the man wisdom. For strength when destitute of the ruling aid of wisdom, is overcome by stupid astonishment confusing all things together; and for the purpose of action the intellect is useless when it is deprived of strength." So, whether our strength is that of sympathy or of astral vision, we will be confounded if philosophical knowledge be absent.

But, so as not to be misunderstood, I must answer the question that will be asked, "Do you then condemn sympathy and love, and preach a cold philosophy only?" By no means. Sympathy and emotion are as much parts of the great whole as knowledge, but inquiring students wish to know all that lies in the path. The

office of sympathy, charity, and all other forms of goodness, so far as the effect on us is concerned, is to entitle us to help. By this exercise we inevitably attract to us those souls who have the knowledge and are ready to help us to acquire it also. But while we ignore philosophy and do not try to attain to right discrimination, we must pass through many lives, many weary treadmills of life, until at last little by little we have been forced, without our will, into the possession of the proper seeds of mental action from which the crop of right discrimination may be gathered.

Arjuna asks Krishna:

"As I am of a disposition which is affected by compassion and the fear of doing wrong, my mind is bewildered. Tell me truly what may be best for me to do! I am thy disciple, wherefore instruct me in my duty, who am under thy tuition; for my understanding is confounded by the dictates of my duty, and I see nothing that may assuage the grief which drieth up my faculties, although I were to obtain a kingdom without a rival upon earth or dominion over the hosts of heaven."

Krishna, now the Guru — or spiritual teacher — of Arjuna, makes a reply which is not excelled anywhere in the poem; pointing out the permanence and eternal nature of the soul, the progress it has to make through reincarnation to perfection, the error of imagining that we really do anything ourselves, and showing how all duties must be performed by him who desires to reach salvation. The words used by the Blessed Lord in speaking of the soul cannot be added to by me. He says:

"The wise grieve not for dead or living. But never at any period did I, or thou, or these Kings of men, not exist, nor shall any of us at any time henceforward cease to exist. As

the soul in the body undergoes the changes of childhood, prime, and age, so it obtains a new body hereafter; a sensible man is not troubled about that. But the contact of the elements, O son of Kunti! which bring cold and heat, pleasure and pain, which come and go and are temporary, these do thou endure, O Bharata (1) For that man whom, being the same in pain and pleasure and ever constant, these elements do not afflict, is fitted for immortality.

There is no existence for what does not exist, nor is there any non-existence for what exists. * * * Know this, that that by which all this universe is created is indestructible. No one can cause the destruction of this inexhaustible thing *

* He who believes that this spirit can kill, and he who thinks it can be killed, both of these are wrong in judgment.

It is not born, nor dies at any time; it has no origin, nor will it ever have an origin. Unborn, changeless, eternal both as to future and past time, it is not slain when the body is killed. How can that man, O Son of Pritha! who knows that it is indestructible, constant, unborn, and inexhaustible, really cause the death of anybody or kill anybody himself? As a man abandons worn-out clothes and takes other new ones, so does the soul quit worn-out bodies and enter other new ones. Weapons cannot cleave it. Fire cannot burn it, nor can water wet it, nor wind dry it. It is constant, capable of going everywhere, firm, immovable, and eternal. It is said to be invisible, incomprehensible, immutable.

Therefore, knowing it to be such, thou art not right to grieve for it."

This is the same doctrine as is found in the Isavasaya-Upanishad: — *The Identity of all Spiritual Beings, and Resignation*. And by "Spiritual Beings" is meant all life above the inorganic, for Man is not admitted to be material. There is only one life, one

consciousness. It masquerades under all the different forms of sentient beings, and those varying forms with their intelligences mirror a portion of the *One Life*, thus producing in each a false idea of egoism. A continuance of belief in that false ego produces a continuance of ignorance, thus delaying salvation. The beginning of the effort to dissipate this false belief is the beginning of *the Path*; the total dissipation of it is the perfection of Yoga, or union with God. The entry upon that Path *cannot be made until resignation is consummated*; for, as the Upanishad and the Bagavad-Gita say:

"All this: whatsoever moves on earth, is to be surrendered to the Lord — the Self. When thou hast surrendered all this; then thou mayest enjoy."

If this be true, then how necessary to consider philosophy so as to be able to cut off the false belief? And how useless to pursue occultism merely for your own benefit? You may know all about currents and polarities, about any and *every* phenomenon possible in the astral world, but with the death of your body it is lost, leaving to you only the amount of real Spiritual advance you happen to have made. But once resign and all is possible. This will not ruin your life nor destroy any proper ideals; poor and petty ideals had better be at once lost. It may seem that all ideals are gone, but that will be only the first effect *of* taking this step.

We must be ready to say at any moment under whatever circumstances, whether expected or unexpected: "It is just what I in fact desired." For only those ideals can be dissipated which rest upon a lower basis than the highest aim, or which are not in accord with Nature's (God's) law. And as our aim ought to be to reach the supreme condition and to help all other sentient beings to do so also, we must cultivate complete resignation to the Law, the expression and operation of which is seen in the

circumstances of life and the ebb and flow of our inner being. All that can be gotten out of wealth, or beauty, or art, or pleasure, are merely pools of water found along our path as it wanders through the desert of life. If we are not seeking them their appearance gives us intense pleasure, and we are thus able to use them for our good and that of others just so long as the Law leaves them to us; but when that superior power removes them, we must say: "It is just what I in fact desired." Any other course is blindness. All the passing shows of life, whether fraught with disaster or full of fame and glory, are teachers; he who neglects them, neglects opportunities which seldom the gods repeat. And the only way to learn from them is through the heart's resignation; for when we become in heart completely poor, we at once are the treasurers and disbursers of enormous riches.

Krishna then insists on the scrupulous performance of natural duty. (2)

And considering thine own duty as a Kshatriya, thou art not right to waver. For there is nothing better for a Kshatriya than lawful war." (3)

In order to see more clearly the occasion for his insistence upon performance of duty, we must remember that at the opening of the battle Arjuna "threw down his bow and arrows." This, in India, meant that he then resolved to desert the circumstances in which Karma had placed him and *to become an ascetic*, or, as has been frequently proposed by Western students, he wished to get away from a state of Society which offered apparent obstruction to spiritual culture. But Krishna refers him to his birth in the Kshatriya — or Warrior — caste, and to the natural duty of a Kshatriya. which is war. The natural caste of Arjuna might have been represented as that of [Merchant, but wisely it was not, for this is the book of action, and only a warrior fitly typifies action:

(4) so his natural duty will stand for whatever be that of any man. We are not to shirk our Karma; by abhorring it we only make new Karma. Our only true course is to "let the motive for action be in the action itself, never in its reward; not to be incited to action by the hope of the result, nor yet indulge a propensity to inertness." (5) This advice and the direction (6) to see the one Spirit in all things and all things in *it* express the gist of the Bhagavad-Gita's teaching as to the proper attitude to be assumed by those striving after salvation.

In verse 40 Krishna alludes to this system as being one of initiation:

"In this no initiation is lost, nor are there any evil consequences, and even a little of this practice saves from great danger; there is no destruction of nor detriment to one's efforts."

Although not proclaimed in the newspapers nor advertised here and there through Secretaries, Delegates, and "Doors," this is the mother and the head of all systems of initiation. It is the progenitor of the mystic Rosicrucians, who have adopted the *lotus* and changed it into a *rose*, (7) and all the other hundreds of initiating occult societies are merely faint and incomplete copies of this real one; but, unlike those, *it* has never dissolved. It is secret, because, founded in nature and having only real Hierophants at the head, its privacy cannot be invaded without the real key. And that key, in each degree, is the *aspirant himself*. Until that aspirant has become in fact the sign and the key, he cannot enter the degree above him. As a whole then, and in each degree, it is self-protective.

Thus including all other systems, it is the most difficult of all; but as at some time, in this life or in a succeeding age, we must perforce enter this *Lodge*, the attempt at entry might as well be

made at once. Of this we will speak in our next.

(To be continued.)

FOOTNOTES:

1. In this verse — the 14th — Krishna calls Arjuna by two names; first — as son of Kunti his mother, and second — as Bharata descendant of the mighty Bharata. He is reminded of his earthly origin in the beginning when reference is made to the elements that produce bodily sensations: and at the end, when adjured to endure these changes, his attention is directed to a great and powerful, spiritual, paternal ancestor. All of this is significant. —

B. ([return to text](#))

2. Some students, as well as critics, have said that theosophy teaches a running away from family and from the world, and that neither knowledge nor salvation can be gained without a ridiculous asceticism which would upset the natural order. This is wrong. And when it is believed to be a fact — now asserted by me in confidence of support from all real theosophists — that the Blessed Masters who ordered the founding of our Society constantly read and inculcate the Bhagavad-Gita's philosophy, we perceive that such assertions against the Society's aims are incorrect. — B. ([return to text](#))

3. Verse 31. ([return to text](#))

4. My opinion is that the Kshatriya caste is the greatest. The Brahmans, it is true, have always had more veneration paid them as being spiritual teachers and thus representing the *head* of Brahma; but in some of the Aryan sacrifices there is an occasion when the Kshatriya ranks the Brahman. The latter are more the conservators of true Doctrine; but when the time comes for the "gods to descend in order to establish a new harmony on earth," they always begin with a warrior. Osiris who educated and

solidified the Egyptians was a warrior, and the mysterious Melchisedek, who blessed Abraham, was Prophet, Priest, and King, that is — warrior. Then, too, the warrior caste could learn and speak the Vedas as well as engage in war, whereas the Brahman's only duty was that of a teacher and not fighter. The Kshatriya therefore stands in the position of mediator between the action of the body of Brahma and the calm inaction of Brahma's head. — B. ([return to text](#))

5. Verse 47. ([return to text](#))

6. Chapter 13. ([return to text](#))

7. The probability is, that the Rosicrucian "rose" was altered from the *lotus* because the latter flower was not understood in Europe, whereas the rose was: and the rose is the nearest to the lotus, taken all in all. In Japan the *lotus in the heart* is adhered to; they say that by directing attention to the heart, it is found to burst open into a lotus of eight petals, in each of which resides one power, while in the centre sits the lord of all. — B. ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE LESSONS OF KARMA — *Charles Johnston*

"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
"Rough-hew them how we will."

The idea most usually attached to the word Karma is, a power, inherent in the nature of things, — by the action of which good deeds are rewarded with happiness, while evil deeds bring suffering and pain. According to this view, Karma becomes a sort of moral police, continually adjusting and correcting the errors and extravagances of the human race, and vigilantly providing that none shall trespass on the domain of another.

Karma has been described as an application of the Law of Action and Re-action to the mental forces, and its spirit has been summed up in the words: "Whatsoever a man soweth, the same shall he also reap." And all this is undoubtedly true; and these ideas, when displacing the belief that occurrences are merely accidental and fortuitous, are of the highest importance; but though true in itself, this idea falls far short of the whole truth; for when examined scientifically it is found to be aimless; the continual action of this compensatory law, its perpetual adjusting and correcting, is mere temporising, it goes nowhither. It is nothing more than the endless swingings to-and-fro of an isolated pendulum. The pendulum is merely mechanical, and, when detached is unnatural; for all nature has a purpose, and moves ever onward. Nature is organic; much more so is super-nature.

If the limited view of Karma be compared to a pendulum, its true action might be represented by a tree; (1) and its rewards and punishments may be compared to leaves, produced in spring only to fall in autumn and again produced the next spring, only again to fall. But the tree is better than it was a year ago; the pendulum

merely does its work to undo it again; but not so the tree. It has added something to itself by every effort, it has assimilated to itself an enlarged territory won from the inorganic world.

The force within and behind the tree works forward, and for definite ends, and this fact makes the tree a fitting emblem of the law of Karma.

Observation of life teaches us that beyond the mere rewarding, or compensatory action of pain and pleasure, they have another use; this deeper use is for discipline — development. In the light of subsequent insight, events which at the time seemed quite insignificant and objectless appear in their true light as teachers, and the lesson which they have taught — and for which and no other the learner was ripe, becomes evident.

By what appears at the time mere chance, one may meet a certain person, or group of people; conversation on various subjects may take place; various views may be expressed, various feelings manifested: the necessary nourishment which the learner's growth demands may be received quite unnoticed; and years after, a sudden necessity or circumstance may reveal the purpose of that meeting, and may turn a beam of light on the grain of gold unconsciously received. This is true of all events, but chiefly of persons, the greatest of events.

Persons are the great teachers, the greatest revealers in the lesson of life; we may learn through another what our single sight might never have perceived.

Amongst the lessons to be learned from persons, perhaps the most important are those to be drawn from Sex.

Nature has grouped all human beings into two great classes, — sexes; each being complementary to the other, and this being true especially on the mental plane. Every peculiarity of each sex, each

feature which differentiates it most notably from the other, is a further perfection of this complementary character, an additional attraction to bind the two sexes together in mutual harmony.

And when the highest perfection of this mutual harmony is attained, in complete good understanding and perfect sympathy, what lesson is learned?

The more perfect the sympathy — in its best sense, of sharing another's life, and penetrating it with filaments of love, — the more clearly this truth is apprehended: — that, far deeper than any difference between the sexes, lies a radical unity and identity; though masquerading under very different appearances, the soul of man and the soul of woman are the same, the same in the laws which govern their life, in their nature, and in their divinity.

It would seem that Life, the great teacher, having brought the evolving souls to vivid individual consciousness, and despairing of ever teaching them sympathy, of ever illumining for them the inner spiritual nature of each other and revealing to them their identity, had organised this charade of the sexes, had invented these masks of man and woman, male and female.

Besides this perception of identity, there is another lesson taught, another object subserved, by the complementary nature of the sexes. A poor cramped egotist enters the arena of life; all things seem to look bitterly upon him; a cloak of perpetual misery seems thrown over him; he seems tied and bound with iron bonds, so that in the presence of others he can never even be *himself*; he feels frost-bitten and crushed, and he knows that if by some miracle he could drink a deep draught of elixir and burst his bonds, he could at last walk upright — a man among men.

He is an egotist, an unfortunate, not sufficiently developed to learn the grand lesson of sympathy, and this through no taint of

evil, but because the stream of life is half congealed within him, awaiting some miracle, some angel to stir the waters into life. By and by the miracle happens; the great teacher brings him face to face with another soul, qualified in all things to supplement his deficiencies. At once he feels an infusion of supernal power. In the presence of this elect one, he feels thrilled with warm waves of celestial vigour; a part of the infinite promise of life is realised, one of the prophecies of spirit is fulfilled in joy. At last the poor egotist can burst his bonds; he tastes the divine sweetness of sympathy with another soul; he learns that threads of gold bind soul to soul, that soul traverses soul with ethereal arteries conveying to each the life of the other in addition to its own. And he learns also one sublime lesson — the divinity of renunciation. Through giving he receives; through self-sacrifice he inherits his kingdom.

And the lesson by no means ends here, in sympathy with a single soul, — great and notable benefit though that be. Gaining such large good from one, he learns to credit others with the same excellence; his faith extends in an ever widening circle, till at last he embraces all humanity in holy bonds of love.

If harmony teaches great lessons, great also are the lessons to be learned from discord.

All strife produces pain; as great pain to the oppressor as to the oppressed, — perhaps greater. Seek to tyrannize over another, and not only does that other rise against you, but within you rises a truer self, and takes the part of the oppressed. My every tyranny against my brother is at once punished by this truer self, with a corresponding weight of fear.

At last I learn the lesson, that one cannot be harmed without the harm reacting on the other, on all; that the well-being of one is inseparable from the well-being of all. I throw down my arms,

and make amends by generous dealing. At once my brother's attitude changes, from enemy he becomes friend. He has been waiting for this opportunity to acknowledge me as brother; and once again the great teacher teaches the lesson of sympathy. Henceforth my brother's life is a part of my life, and the power we command belongs to both.

And thus the most ordinary events, and even our own errors, are turned to benefits. A firm hand, a power that sits above us, and whose secret we cannot command, guides our evil to wider good, and turns our erring energies into right channels.

Every event in life teaches its lesson, consciously or unconsciously, to us. If we are dull learners it may have to be repeated twice or many times: if we aid the teaching by ready perception, it may be taught but once, and then we can pass on to grander problems and higher themes.

Since every event thus bears for us a secret and spiritual value, and we cannot guess beforehand the nature of that value, is it not futile in us officiously to take on ourselves the direction of the lessons, with a grand assumption of omniscience; saying "To such a life I shall devote myself; such and such things shall I perform; and from such and such I shall abstain"; like an unskilled pilot without chart or compass, steering in the dark to an unknown land.

Were it not better to drop this pretence of wisdom which we cannot make good; boldly to face events as they meet us, and with good courage and resolution to dare and endure all things, so only that the golden lesson hidden in the events be not lost?

It has been hinted that those who seek wisdom should abandon all their present occupations and live the life of a desert ascetic; and some have even thought to draw down on themselves the

gifts of divinity by a mere mechanical walking away from their duties; but not thus is life's secret to be surprised, by turning the back on our appointed duties, and more important still on the lessons they contain for us.

The books on wisdom are written in cypher; the true ascetic is he who, without abandoning his duties, renounces all selfish aims, and leaving behind his animal nature, takes refuge in the secret place of his soul.

Much more than this is allegorical, concealing a spiritual nature within it; perhaps, amongst others, the saying that earth's greatest sages dwell on her loftiest mountains is an allegorical picture of the truth that the divinest souls are those who have raised themselves furthest from earthly things to the peaks of purity, forever embosomed in the serene azure of spirit; for all things in the physical world have thus their inner vital meanings; though doubtless, were we to search earth's loftiest summits we would come face to face with the stately forms of holy sages, for as the spiritual fact is complete so also must the earthly picture of it be complete.

Life, the great Teacher, has thus designed his lessons. For those whose sight is gross, the teaching is framed in physical pictures, in faces, in trees, in mountains, and in the broad bosom of earth; but those whose sight is finer perceive within each of these a deeper and truer fact, for which alone these have their being.

These externals, forests and hills, the restless ocean, the everlasting stars, are ever eloquent sermons hymning the divinity of spirit. The life of the world says, with the *Erd-Geist* in *Faust* —

"Thus at the roaring Loom of Time I ply,

"And weave for God *the garment thou see'st him by.*"

The great teacher brings to us person after person, event after

event; from each, as we are able, we learn its lesson; from each, as we are able, we wrest its secret, a value unknown and inscrutable until we are face to face with it.

Though at first the lesson may be bitter and unwelcome, we learn at last that what seemed bitter was in reality most sweet, and that what seemed hurtful was pregnant with healing; in our highest moods we are one with the teacher and perceive his ends; in our moments of deepest insight, we perceive that the teacher is our true self; and though we may writhe under subsequent sharp lessons, we are willing to endure; certain that the suffering is for our ultimate benefit.

These considerations teach no indolent and idle acquiescence in the tide of events; our duty and advantage is to throw ourselves on the side of the teacher and to check all perverse tendencies which else would thwart and neutralise the lesson. Let those who esteem this an easy task, try it conscientiously for a single day.

Since all events and persons have thus an interior and unapparent value, since all are intimately related to our development and lasting good, we infer that this truth holds for others also; and we are thus able to perceive dimly the mighty power and beneficent directing energy which lies behind life, turning the good and evil of each to the welfare of all. Let us therefore cast ourselves on Truth and work out our divine destiny without fear; this is the truest good for ourselves, and as surely is it the truest good for all others.

By working out our own divine destiny we gain the power of well doing, for he alone who has access to the heart of good can do good to his neighbor. Such laws as these teach us a noble carelessness of petty ends and events, and forbid forever all sordid taking thought for the morrow.

Perceiving the swing of these grand laws, we can boldly take in hand the game of life, with a heart for every fate. And so we find the first and last word of Karma to be discipline — development. But discipline to what end? Is it for the great prizes of earthly life? to glorify our three score years and ten?

Far otherwise is the tendency of these mighty laws; they lead not to wealth so often as to poverty, not to praise and fame so often as to contempt and obloquy, not so often to the throne as to the scaffold.

And thus, — unless we are bemocked by a lifelong illusion, unless we are the fools of a never-ending nightmare, — we have, in the sweep and tendency of these majestic laws, an intimation of our higher destiny and a sure certificate of our immortal good.

"Then first shalt them know,
"That in the wild turmoil,
"Horsed on the Proteus,
"Thou ridest to power,
"And to endurance,"

FOOTNOTE:

1. The symbol of the Tree is an ancient Aryan one. They said the Tree grew head downward, its roots above. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE BEANS OF PYTHAGORAS — *H. L. Sumner*

In a recent number of the *Theosophist* is a paragraph in reply to an enquirer as to "why Pythagoras banned the bean," which seems to me as far from correct as the explanations given by an Athenian skeptic who derisively said that "beans are the substance which contains the largest portion of that animated matter of which our souls are particles," and that the flowers of the bean put in a vessel and buried ninety days would deposit in the bottom of the vessel the head of a child; concluding, amid bursts of laughter, that Pythagoras himself has made the experiment.

Beans were anciently used in casting votes by balloting, the white beans for affirmative and the black ones negative. When Pythagoras said to his disciples, "Abstain from beans," he had no reference to them as an article of diet, for he ate them himself. What he did mean, and what his immediate followers already understood, was that they should abstain from the intrigues of politics as being antagonistic to a philosopher's pursuits.

It also couched a warning of the danger of criticising the popular government.

All the divine teachers have taught in symbols and inverted language, and time has proven the wisdom of this method.

He that had "eyes to see," or "ears to hear," saw and heard then, as now; and the poor little cursed bean is a symbol of the "letter that killeth."

If I have restored the bean to its deserved place of honor on our tables, I have done a good work for the oncoming rule of vegetarianism under which all true theosophists must come soon

or late.

Perhaps it may be in place to say that *all* the supposed gastric difficulties the bean is reported to cause may be entirely overcome by boiling, both the green and the dry, in a weak solution of soda, for ten or fifteen minutes, before reboiling them in the usual manner.

The foregoing considerations arose in my mind because of the question frequently raised by vegetarian occultists — in embryo — that beans, having some unknown and peculiar property of retarding spiritual development, should be eschewed by those who are cultivating psychic powers. Nothing was certain in the matter, however, and the great fear of beans has seemed to have its foundation in a mystery that I hope I have solved.

I am quite sure too that, even if the bean has any retarding influence, it cannot act upon real spiritual progress, for that rests primarily upon right thought, speech, and action.

The Path

THE BHAGAVAD-GITA: VI — *William Brehon*

(Continued from February number.)

In my last I said that a system of initiation is spoken of which is the mother of all others, and that all the rest are mere exoteric copies or perversions of the real. In order that the idea intended to be expressed may be made clear, it is to be stated that the system is not confined to India, but at the same time it is true that the Western world has up to this time been so deeply engaged in the pursuit of mere money and external enjoyment that no body of Hierophants has taken up its actual residence in Europe or America as yet. There is very little force in the objection that, if those Adepts have such powers as have been ascribed to them, they could very easily have a residence here and overcome all the influences of the place. If it were in the least necessary that they should be here, no doubt can there be that they would come. But as all of the work required to be done, all that could possibly be accomplished, is to be achieved by the Messengers sent out into each country who, so to say, prepare the ground, with the assistance of the Adepts, for others who follow them, there would be a waste of energy if the Hierophants appeared in person. Nor are those Messengers dismayed by the critical attitude of those persons who, wanting a sign, continually deny that the help for the workers is afforded because the givers of it cannot be seen; and it can also be admitted that even the workers themselves are not continually in receipt of instruction or telegrams showing how and where to work. They are men and women who possess a faith that carries them through a long course of effort without a glimpse of those who have sent them. Yet at the same time some of them now and then see very plain evidence of the fact that they are constantly assisted.

"That we all labor together transmitting the same charge
and succession,
We few equals indifferent of lands, indifferent of times,
We, enclosers of all continents, all castes, allowers of all
theologies,
Compassionaters, perceivers, rapport of men,
We walk silent among disputes and assertions, but reject
not the disputers nor anything that is asserted,
We hear the bawling and din, we are reached at by
divisions, jealousies, recriminations on every side,
They close peremptorily upon us to surround us, my
comrade,
Yet we walk unheld, free, the whole earth over, journeying
up and down till we make our ineffaceable mark upon
time and the diverse eras,
Till we saturate time and eras, that the men and women of
races, ages to come, may prove brethren and lovers as we
are."

So all this preparation is similar to that of the primeval forest by the early settlers in America; it is as yet hardly a tilling of the soil, but rather a clearing off of trees and weeds. This is not because they are unable to do more, but because the weeds and trees are there requiring to be removed before the Elder Ones can usefully push on in person the further development.

"When the materials are all prepared and ready the architects shall appear."

All human beings are working through this system of initiation, and for that reason it includes all the exoteric societies. Very often the Masters in this have appeared in those when they saw an opportunity for sowing the seed, which, although for a time to be enclosed in the shell of formalism, was to be preserved for future

use; just as the Egyptian mummy held in its hand for centuries the germ that blossomed and bore fruit in our day. And since man in all his struggles must be helped, they have assisted in political changes where a hope was held out for the rise of a beneficent era. (1) The great mass of men are not with their own knowledge engaged in the work of this powerful and impregnable *Lodge*, but they will knowingly engage therein some point in the course of their long evolution. And yet at every hour of each day these Masters are willing and anxious to meet those who are clear-eyed enough to see their true destiny, and noble-hearted so as to work for "the great orphan, Humanity."

Then, further, none of us, and especially those who have heard of the Path or of Occultism or of the Masters, can say with confidence that he is not already one who has passed through some initiations with knowledge of them. We may be already initiated into some higher degree than our present attainments would suggest, and are undergoing a new trial unknown to ourselves. It is better to consider that we are, being sure to eliminate all pride of that unknown advance we have made. Having so concluded, we know that this long life is in itself another initiation, wherein we succeed or fail just as we learn the lesson of life. Some, I know, will not hasten to adopt this view, for they desire the Law to work in the manner appointed by them; they wish to have a sign or a password or a parchment or some wonderful test profounded, to which they shall be ready to submit at a certain time and place. But this is not the manner of it, and all true students know that. Surely if the little circumstances of life are not understood, if they have yet power to light the torch of anger or blow up the smouldering fire of lust, no set time or tournament will be offered for you by the Masters of this *Lodge*. Those set times and larger tests *are* given and have in their place to be overcome, but they belong to the day when you have raised

the arch of attainment all perfect but the keystone; — that is found or lost in the appointed trial.

Reaching to the actual door of this Lodge is the path that I spoke of in my last, and leading to that Path are many roads. We might as well attempt to enter the Path in this incarnation as to wait for succeeding lives.

There is great encouragement in Krishna's words to Arjuna in the second chapter: "In this system there is no destruction of or detriment to one's efforts; even a very small portion of this duty delivereth a man from great fear." This refers to the Law of Karma. Every point of progress gained is never in reality lost. Even did we die at a time when our lives were not stainless, the real level of our development would not be lowered, for upon reassuming a mortal body in some after life on this earth we take up the thread just where we dropped it. In a later chapter Krishna says that we "come in contact with the knowledge which belonged to us in our former body, and from that time we struggle more diligently toward perfection." Patanjali also says the same thing, and all the Aryan sacred books concur in the opinion. (2) The thoughts and aspirations of our life form a mass of force that operates instantly upon our acquirement of a body that furnishes the corresponding instrument, or upon our so altering our mental state as to give it opportunity for action. The objection that this would be a suspension of energy is not tenable, since such a thing is well known in the physical world, even if called by some other name. We are not obliged to rest on that objection, as it by no means follows that the energy is suspended; it has its operation in other ways.

The encouragement given by Krishna leads us to consider what method is offered for entering upon the Path. We find it to be a right knowledge of the Spirit. This right knowledge is found in the

second chapter.

As by all illuminated sages, the ultimate truth is first declared by the Blessed Lord as we have seen, and in the very chapter wherein Right Action is insisted upon as the way to liberation. He then, proceeding to explain himself further, points out errors common to humanity, and certain false views that prevailed in India then, as they do now.

Verse 41: — In this system there is only one single object of a steady, constant nature, O Son of Kuru. Those who do not persevere, and whose principles are indefinite, have objects with many ramifications and without end.

In the men thus described, desires for worldly or intellectual acquisitions prevail, and, desires being infinite, as also capable of producing endless modifications of desire, there is no concentration possible. This also has an application to the methods of our present scientific schools, which indulge in an eternal seeking for so-called facts before general principles are admitted. One single branch of investigation with them has endless ramifications that no human being could compass in a life-time, Then: —

Not disposed to meditation and perseverance is the intention of those who are devoted to enjoyments and dominion, and whose minds are seduced by that flowery sentence which is proclaimed by the unwise, who delight in texts from the Vedas, O son of Pritha, and say, "There is nothing else than that," being covetous-minded and considering heaven as the very highest good; offering rebirth as the reward of actions, and enjoining many special ceremonies for the sake of obtaining pleasures and dominion, and preferring the transient enjoyment of heaven to eternal absorption.

This is better understood when some of the ideas held in India regarding sacrifices and ceremonies are known. In the Occident sacrifices have long gone out of use, as there appeared to be no reason for them. And yet it must seem strange to the reflective mind that Christian nations should claim redemption through the Jews whose prophet enjoined sacrifices, and when Jesus himself said that not one jot or tittle of the law should pass away. In the place of the sacrifices of the East, the West has adopted a mere theory to be embraced, together with an uncertain moral code to be followed, with a result which is the same as that claimed by the Hindus — save only in one respect. That difference lies in the doctrine of Reincarnation. The Christian looks for an eternal reward in heaven and knows nothing of reincarnation on earth, while the Hindu relies upon pleasure to be had in heaven — called *Swarga* — and a continuation of it upon earth by reason of a fortunate rebirth. They have special ceremonies, certain sorts of sacrifices, penances, prayers, and actions, the result of which is a rebirth on earth in a royal family, or with great riches, or in any other sort of pleasant circumstances; and also a sure admittance to heaven. Some ceremonies procure entrance into a delightful state after death which will last for incalculable periods of time.

Now no one of these sorts of procedure leads us to the ultimate, but all are causes of Karma and of delusion: therefore Krishna did not approve them to Arjuna. And his warning is useful to theosophists who are students or wish to become such. With them the false view warned against by Krishna has altered itself into a craving for phenomena, or to perform some action that shall bring them the favor of Mahatmas, or a morbid fear of making Karma, or else an equally accentuated desire to acquire good Karma. They should abandon those attitudes and carefully study the following verses, trying to incorporate their true meaning into their very being.

The subject of the three Vedas is the assemblage of the three qualities. O Arjuna! be thou free from these three qualities, from the ordinary influence of the natural opposites, reposing on eternal truth, free from worldly anxieties, self-possessed. * * Let, then, the motive for action be in the action itself, never in its event. Be not one whose motive for action is the hope of reward. Let not thy life be spent in inaction. Depend upon concentration, perform thy duty, abandon all thought of the consequence, and make the event equal to thee, whether it terminate in good or evil; for such an equanimity is called Yoga (union with God).

By far inferior to union with wisdom is action. Seek an asylum, then, in wisdom alone; for the miserable and unhappy are so on account of the event of things. Men who are endued with true wisdom dismiss, by means of this concentration, alike successful and unsuccessful results. Study then to obtain this concentration of thy understanding, for such concentration is a precious art.

Wise men, who have abandoned all thought of the fruit which is produced from their actions, are freed from the chains of birth in this world, and go to the regions of eternal happiness.

When thy reason shall get the better of the gloomy weakness of thy heart, then shalt thou have obtained all knowledge which has been or is to be taught. When thy understanding, by study brought to maturity, shall be fixed immovably in contemplation, then shall it obtain true wisdom.

The first portion of this paper was designedly enlarged in order to

precede the above. The last quoted verses contain the essence of what is called Karma-Yoga, or, as it might be translated, *concentration and contemplation while engaged in action*. It is difficult, just as it is difficult to enter upon the Path, and if we desire to tread that aright we must know what we should do as true travellers. Krishna seems to me to here settle the dispute as to whether faith or works will save us. Mere faith will not do it, because in every act of faith there is some action. And it would appear to be impossible to acquire true faith without at once turning it into that sort of action which our faith shows us must be done, as it were, in evidence; yet action, pure and simple, will not be a cause of liberation, inasmuch as action, or Karma, will produce new Karma. We must therefore seek for concentration in order that we may be able to do those actions which the All-Wise presents to us to be done, remaining the while unaffected. We have nothing to do with the results; they will come of themselves, and are beyond us: they are already done so far as we are concerned. But if we perform either an act of faith or an action of the body, hoping for any result — no matter what —, we become to that extent attached to the consequences, and thus bound by them. It matters not whether those consequences be good or bad. Many will think that it is well to have attachment to good consequences, since that has been the received opinion. But this is unwise, because the only reason for it is found in the idea that thereby one is somewhat better than some other persons who are enamoured of evil results and desire to see them come to pass. This idea produces separateness, and is opposed to that *identity* without the realization of which there can be no true knowledge. We should therefore be imitators of the Deity, who, while acting as he does in the manifestation of universes, is at the same time free from all consequences. To the extent that we do so we become the Deity himself, for, as we follow the dictates of the Lord who dwells in us, we resign every act upon the altar, leaving

the consequences to Him.

The attitude to be assumed, then, is that of doing every act, small and great, trilling or important, because it is before us to do, and as a mere carrying out by us as instruments of the will of that Deity who is ourself. Nor should we stop to inquire whether the act is of any use to the Lord within, (3) as some ask. For, they say, of what possible benefit to Him can be the small hourly acts which, as soon as done, are forgotten? It is not for us to inquire. The act that pleases that Lord is the act which is done as presented with no attachment to its result, while the act that is displeasing to Him is the one which we do, desiring some result therefrom.

This practice is the highest; that which some day we must and will learn to perform. Other sorts are inculcated in other writings, but they are only steps to lead us at last to this. Therefore I said, Let us enter the Path as soon as we can.

FOOTNOTES:

1. It has been asserted by some Theosophical writer that these Adepts were concerned in the formation of the American Republic, and either were here in person or sent Messengers. — [B.] ([return to text](#))
2. See Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms, Book 2; and Vishnu Smriti, chap, xcvi, v. 11. ([return to text](#))
3. *Ishwar*, the particular manifestation of Brahma in each human being. B. ([return to text](#))

EAST AND WEST — *Jasper Niemand*

When Shakespeare wrote "Comparisons are odious," his rare art condensed into those three words a signal truth. Each person, plane, or thing has its own conditions of Being, which temporarily subserve universal conditions, and any comparison can only establish the difference between them. This difference is ephemeral and deceptive. To examine it is wise. For in examining we learn something of the *modus operandi* of Nature. But to insist upon the difference, to dwell upon it, to "point a moral and adorn a tale" with it, is folly, since we accustom ourselves to regard it as a finality, whereas it is only a means. We invest this brief effect with the authority of a cause, losing sight of the fact that the terminus of differentiation is the higher Unity. These contrasts reveal only the workings of the Real Essence, while veiling that Reality itself.

Many theosophists — and others, for the matter of that — have contracted a habit of comparing the East with the West to the disadvantage of the former. A smaller number, while they also emphasize this contrast, reverse the decision, awarding the place of honor among nations to India. The merits of either civilization are often discussed with such heat that the amenities of all civilization are forgotten. Seeds of jealousy are thus sown, and the impartial observer finds his friend on the right exclaiming; — "How is it possible for a sane man to compare a stagnant civilization like that of India with the affluent vigor of American life;" — and his friend on the left retorting; — "Every thinking man knows that the wealth of life consists in its results and not in its action; in this view India stands first." The question is never solved as between these disputants, since it remains a matter of opinion. On that plane you cannot solve it at all. Its decision must

depend upon your own conception of the evolutionary goal. If that goal is the efflorescence of material life, then indeed the East lies prostrate, and the West may flaunt it from her colossal throne. But if the end and aim of Law is the unfoldment of spiritual life; if stars are swung on high and worlds are moved in space in order that the Divine-Human may run its course and attain perfection, then indeed the East has stood and stands nearer that goal than our present western race can well conceive. She alone has in later years borne Great Souls (1) and has reserved silent places for their habitation.

This only holds good in a given period of Time. The case is not so sharply put by Nature. The distinction "East and West" is not of her making; it bears the stamp of man. Nature has evolved but one nation. Its name is Humanity. In this department as in all others she has planned interchange, co-operation, action and reaction. We see this exemplified in families. The children differ much, and the wise Mother, while fostering their affection on the ground of relationship, takes care to strengthen the bond by making the gifts of one child supply the deficiencies of the other. The boy is to protect his sister, and she to reciprocate with painstaking love. So in physical nature, members of a type interact, and each type has a relationship and a meaning, whether hidden or evident, in the life of every other type. Isolation is not the intention of Nature. Where she has decreed the survival of the fittest, the occultist knows well that the inherent energy of souls provides this birthright for every soul that truly wills.

It is otherwise with man. He wrests and divides facts up to suit theories, and his distinctions are often arbitrary. When we consider the art of the potter, the weaver, the artisan in gold or other metals, of the painter, the decorator, the architect, we find that India has long surpassed us in all these things, consigning

marvels of beauty to the dusky splendor of her temples and her tombs. The learning of her pundits is as profound as it is world-renowned. It is then chiefly in her social, industrial, and political institutions, in all the rivalry and competition which this ambitious age has agreed to call "Life," that India falls behind our western ideals. Are we then so happy in this fevered West of ours, and is happiness the chief aim of man or is it not? In China, where the statistics of the past year do not show as many murders among her teeming population as in the single State of New York during the same period; in Tibet, where crime is almost unknown; in Egypt, Japan, and India where real contentment feeds upon itself and upon little else, we are taught that man may be serene and that mind may control matter without our splendid appanage of Life at all. The thought will arise; which nation is the greater, she who must grasp all material possessions, or she who is content to Be? Western nations have breasted the roaring surf of action to be thrown back upon the sands exhausted, dying out at last with

"The Glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome,"

while those of the East arose far back of history and still survive. In India there are now specimens of the first races, as well as the present one to which we belong. She has not changed, but, like the bounteous earth, has given always to her ruling conqueror. Many successive waves of invasion have rolled over her, but she, instead of being altered, has herself changed the habits and beliefs of her conquerors. The present English invasion has not lasted long enough to show this effect. But it will be seen. Already fruits are appearing in the wonderful rise of investigation of Indian literature, and through this English channel a deep effect has been made upon English speaking people in their religious ideas. Nor has she been truly conquered, because from her

greatest to her least institution she is always herself; her development has been from within, and she resists the imprint of all races but her own. All our so-called discoveries, I care not what, are replicas or variations; to the Orient belonged the first mould, and she took it from nature. Our inventors and innovators deny this in good faith. They are ignorant of the achievements of the East; her records are unread by them, her parables and metaphors unsolved, her inscriptions undeciphered, and her scientific tabulation of obscure powers and forces of man and nature are strongly withheld by her own hand. Enough has been shown and "discovered" to prove this statement generally true, and modern learning, which already hails her as mother of all languages, will in course of time unveil the least details of her knowledge.

Such points I should not myself insist upon, because I do not deem them vital. As I said before, we are limited to a moment of Time. We are not yet overlooking the Past from the summits of Futurity and recognizing them as one. In this present moment the important question is not so much what we were or shall be, but what we are. *Now* is the pregnant instant, and the West possesses it, while the East waits and watches from afar. The cyclic impulse is now with us, and not with her. Guardian in chief of the secret doctrine, well-spring of all the great religions, she has now deposited in the West the precious seed gathered by her in remote harvests. The West gives the soil, and richer soil was never precipitated in the crucible of Time. Above and within our seething life, what protean energies have their ebb and flow! In their midst the seed first decays; then, touched by their glowing vigor, it leaps anew to life.

It has been said by men wise in the knowledge of the Eternal, that the end of nature is to provide fruition for the soul. (2) She does this through the mind, whose office as ministrant is to present

pleasure upon pleasure, gift upon gift, experience upon experience to the monarch within; he accepts them one by one, tests and casts them away. When the material treasury is at last exhausted, the King finds that he, and not his officer, is the ruler, and that his real wealth lies within himself. Through this phase the West is now passing; our gorgeous tissue of life is woven for the enjoyment of the awakening soul. Already in more advanced individuals of the race, that soul has begun to discriminate, to turn from the outer to the inner life, and the tremendous activity and momentum of our civilization are urging on this crisis.

Those who have found the priceless pearl shining softly within their lives are bewildered at the sight. Telling the tale to other men they are pitied or derided, and they learn to work on in silence, striving to break through to this inner light, watching with longing eyes for some comrade who knows the way. It is here that the Eastern science meets them, teaching the application of this new knowledge, its unfoldment and its possibilities. She is like the nurse who helps the woman in travail, who cares for her new born babe. The hour comes when the nurse is not needed in that life but passes to others, just as the child in time outgrows the sweet fountains of his mother's breast, and his need of her is only a memory to his manhood. She does not stand lower in his eyes for all that. Even so the universe is no longer needed by God, and in its turn passes away.

There is then, no cause for pride, for jealousy, or for any comparison whatsoever in this matter. Theosophists who believe in Reincarnation can easily see that their particular country does not in reality belong specially to them, since they may have been Hindus in their last previous birth, and those spirits now inhabiting Hindu bodies were quite as likely, in *their* last incarnation, owners of European or American tenements of clay; and both, in long anterior times, may have trod the cities of

ancient Egypt or Chaldea. It is quite as narrow for the Brahman to talk of his glorious Aryavarta as it is for the American or Englishman to claim for the West the first beginning of civilization, light, or progress. There is neither right nor priority. Truth is not enclosed within the boundaries of physical geography. It is not found within any boundaries at all; it is the Boundless. It is neither ours nor India's. It is not even Humanity's, but Humanity is Truth. Let us then become this Truth. To become it, we must leave idle distinctions aside. As children, we once lived in our toys. A noble boy yesterday showed me a drawer full of his most cherished playthings. He was keeping them, he said, so as to have a lot when he should be grown up, for he had noticed that his parents had now no toys to play with: he supposed they had broken all theirs in their childhood, and, while pitying them, he resolved not to be caught in that sad plight! How much we resemble this little fellow: we think we can never dispense with the baubles of the mind. When we slip away from all these involved ideas, these ingenious mechanisms, these traps which Nature sets to detain unripe souls from her secrets; when we stride out under the heavens resolved to Be, we find that Truth is not divided off into town lots, but is everywhere: it is not purchasable stock held by limited companies, but is to be had freely for the seeking. Since to seek it is to acknowledge that we have not found it yet, we must be presently in error upon some points, and most probably those to which our tastes or prejudices have most strongly attached themselves, because their ferment disturbs the nature and clouds that inner mirror which alone can reflect Truth, but to whose glass we so often hold up Error. We have forgotten that Truth which once we knew. It is ourselves; it is within us. Our elder brothers have reminded us of our common birthright; they have given a portion of it back to us. They do not ask us to adopt it, but to adapt it. They proclaim our right to revive this knowledge. We have snatched the blazing beacon

from their hands, and we will pass it on. Perhaps, in our turn, we may restore it to the East. The tasks of future cycles are not ours. This present moment we may read. We may see that only in our narrow purview does any distinction exist between us; we may see that we are inextricably interlinked. Our interests and our future are one and the same: our possessions we exchange; shall we not exchange hearts?

Though brothers, we play different parts in the universal scheme. Inheritors and future custodians, we cannot refuse to acknowledge the pioneers of Truth. If there be any reality in evolutionary law, this ancient race must have developed the rare blossoms of human perfection before our own. A mighty, though unseen, current of spiritual energy flows from them to us, and it is urged onward by higher spheres from which they receive it. Shall we cut ourselves off in thought from this sacred influx? Shall we like spendthrifts, cast our inheritance away and stand beggared before the just demands of races yet to be? Shall we not rather endeavor to fit ourselves to replenish that living tribute which Nature pays to the Eternal? All that comes to us being already our own in the Law, shall we not receive this seed with grateful souls and make it bear a thousandfold in the fields of the West. Ah! blot me out that word! There is neither East nor West; neither above nor below; neither distinction nor difference. There is only the Whole; we are part of its organic life, and there is none greater than we save *He who has no Name*.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Mahatmas — Great Souls. ([return to text](#))
2. See Patanjali, Page 164. ([return to text](#))

THE PRIDE OF POSSESSION — *Harij*

We often see the term "Just Pride" used as though pride in any form were justifiable. Most persons nowadays are ready enough to condemn pride of blood and pride of wealth, though such condemnation is not often unmixed with envy, but the pride of an honorable name or of worthy achievement or of genius few think of condemning, and there is even a pride in poverty itself which is often its greatest burden and which stands squarely against all progress and all improvement. Yet are not all these things incidents of life, mere accessories or human nature, only fancied possessions, not real.

Let it be understood that pride *per se* is evil and that only, and that the indulgence of it in any form or for any reason is also evil and folly. Pride is the basis of all caste and caste legislation in State or in society. The meaning of it is that, because of this or that, I am better than my neighbor, and, being better than he, I cannot therefore associate with him on equal terms, and this it is, more than all else save only greed, that prevents the reign of Universal Brotherhood.

"What, then," says one, "do you deny that there are inequalities in life that one is wise and another foolish, one beautiful and another deformed and ugly, one strong and another weak?" Surely not; but he who is strong is weakened by pride; he who is beautiful is deformed by pride; and he who is wise is degraded by pride to the level of folly. Pride of wealth, blood, power, and place is by no means the only offence. Who has not seen the so-called educated dominate and trample upon the ignorant as ruthlessly as the strong can anywhere overcome the weak, or the rich oppress the poor?

Such are never educated in any true sense, though they have that base coinage which passes current in an age of mediocrity and is often mistaken for true gold, to be found at last but "fool's gold." How many people are brave and noble in adversity; how many good people have been spoiled by prosperity. And what are good and bad, rich and poor, wise and ignorant, but terms of comparison, mere temporary states, inns for the night, stations for a day in the journey of the soul!

The desire to better one's condition in life is natural enough, and is the key to all personal progress. To feel that one is designed for better things than he has yet achieved is an intuition of the soul, its choicest heritage, but all such achievements should be by honest endeavor, not by fraud. He who can simply grumble at Providence for having placed him below his deserts is not likely to better his condition. Thousands of poor persons who hate and envy others because they are rich would, if grown suddenly rich, be more proud and oppressive than any whom they now despise; and very few among these envious poor are willing to practice the economy and self-denial which are the cause of the wealth they envy; and yet they are fond of saying "we are as good as they," and will often repel kindness and offers of assistance with scorn, too proud to be pensioners, yet not too proud to be envious.

Pride doth indeed cover a multitude of sins. Pride is evil in any form, though it may and doubtless does serve to push the soul to better things, just as fear restrains it from worse things. When once it has been clearly perceived that nothing which can by any possibility be the subject of envy or pride is in any sense a true possession, then pride and envy must cease. Wealth, fame, and power, — these are but relative terms for temporary states, and envy is the false light by which they allure their pursuers, while pride is the miasm by which they silence the voice of the soul and

lull it to lethargy and decay. He who seeks real possessions, to have and to hold by the soul's franchise, envieth not and is never proud, for he well knows that the things that he prizes are the heritage of humanity. He cannot hold them or compass them, create or destroy them, though he can become a part of them through the serving of all, and thus partake of their nature. These are Truth, Justice, Love, and Understanding, not mere "abstract qualities," but the Jewels of the soul no less than the crown and glory of the Deity. These shine by their own light, and are to be loved and sought for themselves alone. We shall not envy, but rather honor, him who possesses them. Possessing them, we shall not be proud, but reverent, grateful, helpful, and so help on the reign of Universal Brotherhood, well knowing that every jewel we help to place in the crown of a brother will add lustre to our own. These are the true possessions, and they are divested of all pride and envy.

THE GREAT ORPHAN. (1)

Woe stalks abroad in all the land,
Want and despair together stand,
God's image trampled in the dust!
How long, O Lord! and Thou art just?
 How long! How long! O just and wise!
 These empty hands, these hungry cries?

God's providence is always seen
Through man, in garb of Nazarene:
Man prays to God with up-turned eyes,
While at his feet his brother lies:
 How long! How long, O Pharisee!
 Ere brazen skies will answer thee.

All store of food, all wealth of gold,
Are given to man to have and hold;

To hold at peril, if he dare
Deprive his brother of his share,
 Enough for all by measure just,
 Who holdeth more but holds *in* trust.

The almoner of God is he
Whose hands are filled by destiny.
God's special providence to show
Through man, to man, to lighten woe.
 Relief of needs through human deeds,
 All Heaven waits; all Nature pleads.

Great suffering soul! Humanity!
Father divine,! Humanity!
Mother divine! no more concealed,
Behold the mystery revealed!
 These three in one, and one in three,
 God all in all, Humanity!

FOOTNOTE:

1. "Humanity is the Great Orphan." *St. Martin*. ([return to text](#))

The Path

GIVE US ONE FACT — *Nilakant*

Since last I wrote for *THE PATH*, the most distinct call I have heard from many students in the West is found in the cry: "Give us one fact!"

They have acquired the desire to know the truth, but have lingered still around the market places of earth and the halls of those scientific leaders of the blind who are the prophets of materialism. They say that some "scientific" men, while talking of Theosophy, have asked why the Masters have not "given us one fact on which we may begin and from which a conclusion might be reached;" and they — these students — most earnestly ask for that fact for themselves, even though they shall conceal it from the very men who have formulated the question.

Poor children. What are the facts ye desire? Is it some astounding thaumaturgical exhibitions that shall leave no room for doubt? If so, please say whether the feat is to be performed in the sight of thousands, or only in the presence of one postulant and his select circle? If the last, then ye are self-convicted of a desire to retain unto yourselves what belongeth to many. Or perhaps ye wish a statement of fact. But that would of course have to be supported by authority, and we, poor wanderers, have no force of authority in science or art; statements of facts coming from us would therefore be useless to you.

And I must tell you in confidence, as the messengers have before this been directed to do and have not failed therein, that an exhibition of thaumaturgical skill in the presence of a multitude would subvert the very ends the perfected men have in view. Suppose that some of those who know were now to appear in the busy hum of American life, where the total sum of objects

appears, at this distance, to be the gain of wealth, and like the two young princes of Buddha's time were to rise in the air unaided and there emit sheets of fire alternately from their heads and feet, or were to rise again, and float off to a distance in plain sight of all; would that fact demonstrate anything to you? Perhaps in the breasts of some aspiring students might spring up the desire to acquire the power to do likewise. But pause and tell me what would the many do to whom such things are myths? I will tell you. Some would admit the possibility of a genuine phenomenon, seeking ways and means to do it too, so that they might exhibit it for an admission price. Others, and including your scientific fact-seekers, would begin by denying its truth, by ascribing it to delusion, and by charging those who did it, no matter how really spiritual those were, with deliberate fraud and imposture, while a certain section would deny the very happening of the matter and falsify the eye-knowledge of hundreds. (1) Still others would say "It is a God!" or — "It is a devil," with consequence to correspond. No, friends, the true teachers do not begin by laying the foundations for greater error and more fast-bound superstition than those we are trying to destroy.

Then I must tell you in all seriousness and truth that statements of the facts you really wish have been over and over again made in many places, books, and times. Not alone are they to be found in your new theosophical literature, but in that of older times. In every year for centuries past these facts have been given out, — even in English. They were told in the days of the German and English Alchemists, and by the Kabbalists. But greed and wrong motive have ever formed the self-constructed barriers and obscurers.

The Alchemists of the pure school spoke of the gold they could make by means of their powders, and the salt, together with their mercury; and the Kabbalists said that by pronouncing Jehovah's

name not only was the gold formed, but power obtained in all worlds. Very true these statements. Are they not statements of fact? Did they satisfy the mass of seekers? So far from that, the result was to lead them into error. Many patiently sought for the powder and the proper combination of the salt or sulphur and mercury, so that they might make worthless gold metal, which today is exchangeable and tomorrow is useless, and which never could give peace of mind or open the door of the future. Then others went by themselves and tried various modulations of sound in pronouncing the supposed name of their Mighty God, until they today have some two-score sorts. What purblind ignorance this, for God is God and has not changed with the rise and fall of empires or the disappearance of languages; his name was once a different sound in ancient Egypt or India, in Lemuria, Atlantis or Copan. Where, then, are those many sounds of His Holy Name, or has that been altered?

"But where," ye say, "is the *fact* in the pronunciation of the name of God?" The answer is by asking "What and who is God?" He is the All; the earth, the sky, the stars in it; the heart of man; the elemental and organic world; the kingdoms of the universe; the realm of sound and the formless void. Is not the pronunciation of that Name to consist therefore in *Becoming* all those kingdoms, realms, and power, focussing in yourself the entire essence of them, each and all *at once*? Is this to be done by breathing forth "Jehovah" in one or many forms? You easily see it is not. And your minds will carry you on the next step to admit that before you can do this you must have passed through every one of those kingdoms, retaining perfect knowledge and memory of each, commander of each, before you can attempt the pronunciation of the whole. Is this a small task? Is it not the task Karma has set before you, compelling you like children to repeat parts of the word in the varied experiences of repeated lives spent on earth,

bringing you back to the lesson until it is well learned?

And so we are brought to ourselves. Our Aryan ancestors have made the declaration, repeated by thousands since, that each man is himself a little universe. Through him pass *all* the threads of energy that ramify to all the worlds, and where any one of those lines crosses him is the door to the kingdom to which that thread belongs. Listen to the Chandogya Upanishad: "There is this city of Brahman — the body — and in it the palace, the small lotus of the heart, and in it that small ether. Both heaven and earth are contained within it, both fire and air, both sun and moon, both lightning and stars; and whatever there is of the Self here in the world, and whatever has been or will be, all that is contained within it."

Vain it is to make search without. No knowledge will reach you from any where but this small lotus of the heart. Just now ye are binding it so that it cannot burst open. It is with the delusions of the mind ye bind it in a knot. That knot ye must break. Break loose from scholastic error, make of your minds a still and placid surface on which the Lord of the palace in the heart can reflect pictures of Truth, become as little children who are not hindered by preconceptions, and ye will have knowledge.

The only fact I have to offer you is — YOURSELVES.

FOOTNOTE:

1. We can agree with the writer, as we have seen just as wonderful things done by H. P. Blavatsky and next day heard accusations of fraud against her and charges of credulity against those who had seen. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

THE TIDE OF LIFE: I — *Charles Johnston*

(Annotated by H. P. Blavatsky)

"Our souls have sight of that immortal sea which brought us hither;

Can in a moment travel thither —

And see the children sport upon the shore,

And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore."

That the book of Genesis is not a homogeneous work, but is composed of several distinct and widely different books, becomes evident from a slight examination. The first thirty-four verses form the first and apparently the most ancient of these. This treatise contains a system of cosmogony closely resembling that of the Puranas and Upanishads. The origin of this ancient tract, and the causes which led to its incorporation with the Hebrew scriptures, we can only guess at. Its source may have been some venerable hieratic manuscript brought by Moses from the temple-libraries of Egypt, where it had lain for thousands of years, from the time when the colonists of Egypt left their early home in ancient India. Or it came, perhaps, from the Chaldaen Magians, the inheritors of the sacred Iranian lore, the younger sister of the wisdom-religion of the motherland of the Aryas. This much we know, that it contains a Divine Cosmogony, of evident Oriental character, and almost identical with the Archaic Sacred theories of the East.

This tract splits off like a flake from the story of Adam and Eve which, from its more vivid colour, has almost cast it into the shade, and a mere preface or pendant to which it has erroneously been considered to be. To make this separation more clearly apparent, a few of the lines of cleavage may be shown. (1) To

begin with, we find two quite different and distinct accounts of the "Creation."

(1.) In the more ancient cosmogony, contained in the first thirty-four verses, the account of the formation of man is similar to, and parallel with, that of the animals. (2)

"The Elohim created man, male and female."

While the second and later account introduces the distinct and peculiar story of the creation of Adam from dust, and of Eve from Adam's rib. Besides this, earlier in the second account, we find that the formation of man as detailed in the first tract is entirely ignored by the words —

"There was not a man to till the ground." (3)

and this nine verses after it had been chronicled that "God created man."

(2.) In the more ancient tract, man and woman are created together, and over them is pronounced the blessing —

"Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth,"

yet in the subsequent story of Adam and Eve, the absence of woman is marked by the words —

"It is not good that the man should be alone:"

and further on, in the story of Eden, the children of Eve are foretold with a curse and not with a blessing,

"I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception,"

for, in this story, while Adam and Eve remained unfallen they remained childless.

(3.) We read in the first account that —

"The Earth brought forth grass, herb yielding seed, and fruit tree."

This is ignored in the second account, when we read twenty-four verses later,

"No plant of the field was yet in the earth."

Similarly, we have a second and distinct account of the formation of the animal kingdom; which, moreover, comes after the Seventh day "on which God rested from all his work which he had created and made." (4)

(4.) In the first account the order of creation is as follows: —

"Birds; beasts; man; woman;"

In the second, we find the order changed,

"Man; beasts; fowls; woman."

In the one case man is created to rule the beasts; in the other the beasts are created as companions for man.

(5.) In the first account all herbs and fruits are given to man unreservedly —

"I have given you *every* tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed"

In the second we read —

"Of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it."

(6.) All through the earlier cosmogony the Divine Creative Energy is called "Elohim;" thus in the first verse we read —

"*Berashit bara Elohim.*"

In the story of Adam and Eve this title is replaced by another, "Jehovah" or "Yava." In the English the difference is veiled by translating the former "God," though it is a plural form, while the latter becomes "the Lord God." In other parts of the Bible several other titles of Deity are introduced, "El," "Adon-ai," "El Shaddai."

(7.) The early cosmogony gives to man a Divine dignity from the first: —

"The Elohim created man in their own image; in the image of the Elohim created they him."

In the story of Adam and Eve this likeness to the Divine comes only after the forbidden fruit is eaten, when man has fallen; then it was that

"Jehovah said, The man is become as one of us."

These facts warrant us in considering this Divine cosmogony, contained in the first thirty-four verses of Genesis, separate and distinct from the less orderly and scientific, though more popular, story of Adam and Eve.

At the present time, when the apparent antagonism between modern evolutionary doctrines and the doctrine of the Adamic Creation is perplexing many, it may not be out of place to draw attention to this earlier and more scientific cosmogony, and to point out that not only is it perfectly in accordance with the latest ascertained facts, but that it is probably "more scientific than the scientists," in that it recognised clearly the dual character of evolution, while modern thought manifests too great a tendency to one-sidedness.

The doctrine of this first cosmogony of Genesis is that of the formation of the phenomenal universe by the expansive or emanative power of the great unmanifested Reality, or

underlying Divine Vigor in virtue of which existence is possible. This unmanifested Reality has no name in the West, but it may be called with the Hindu Vedantins, *Parabrahm*. After a period of Cosmic rest called in the East *a Night of Brahma*, the Unmanifested, by its inherent expansive power, sends forth from itself a series of emanations.

The first emanation, the only Divine and eternal one, which is conceived as lasting even through the *Night of Brahma*, is the Logos. The second emanation is what was called by the cabalistic philosophers the "fifth essence," counting "fire," "air," "water," and "earth" as the other four. It may be termed "Spiritual Ether." From Ether proceeded the element called by the cabalists "fire"; from fire proceeded "air"; from air proceeded the element "water"; from water, "earth."

These five — ether, fire, air, water, earth, are the five emanations which, in their various phases and combinations, make up the phenomenal universe, the Logos being considered Divine and subjective, or noumenal. From Earth sprang in order the vegetable and animal kingdoms, and finally Man.

The "elements", as understood in the above classification, are by no means to be confounded with the elements of modern chemistry; they are arrived at by an entirely different though equally scientific course of reasoning.

In the cosmogony of Genesis the Divine Underlying Reality is called GOD. The expansive power by which, after the period of cosmic rest, the phenomenal universe was formed is thus described: —

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

This "in the beginning," marks off from eternity the point at which the present period of cosmic activity, or *day of Brahma*,

began; when the Universe proceeded from "the everlasting bosom of God" to which it must return when this period comes to an end. Modern scientists are not without some dim perception of this process of emanation and absorption, as may be seen from the speculations in the "Unseen Universe," (5) though the authors of this work confine themselves chiefly to the last emanation, that of physical matter from the emanation which preceded it. Whence the universe emerged, thither also must it return; a truth clear to the pure insight of Shakespeare —

". . . Like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind."

God, the eternal Parabrahm, remains unchanged; with God remains the Logos, the first and eternal emanation —

"The spirit of God. . ."

which, "dove-like, sat brooding on the vast abyss."

This "vast abyss," or, as it is styled in the cosmogony of Genesis —

"The face of the waters,"

is what we have called the elemental Ether, the "Akasa" of the Upanishads. It is of ethereal nature, and is the plane of sound, answering to the sense of hearing; that it is the plane of sound has been taught by the Brahmans and the cabalists, and may be inferred from various considerations, amongst others from the difficulty of locating sounds in their immediate material sources (they having, as it were, an immaterial character), and from their spiritual, ethereal nature.

This element of ether has within it the possibility of innumerable sounds and changes of sound: according to the cabalists the sound becomes apparent to our senses only when it strikes against a material object, such as a vibrating violin-string, which becomes merely a point of reflection for the all-prevading element of sound; just as a beam of sunlight becomes apparent only by reflection from particles of dust floating in the air. (6)

Next in order after the emanation of ether, the matrix of sound, comes the elemental Light, the "fire-element" of the cabalists. It corresponds to the plane of colour and the sense of sight, which should rightly be called the "colour sense," For colour is really the only quality perceived by the eye. "All objects," says Ruskin, "appear to the human eye simply as masses of colour. Take a crocus, and put it on a green cloth. You will see it detach itself as a mere space of yellow from the green behind it, as it does from the grass. Hold it up against the window, you will see it detach itself as a dark space against the white or blue behind it. In either case its outline is the limit of the space of colour by which it expresses itself to your sight. The fact is that all nature is seen as a mosaic composed of graduated portions of different colours." (7) This light, or colour-element, is a pure element containing within itself the possibility of all varieties of colour. After its formation, we find the words —

"The evening and the morning were the first day,"

introducing the element of time first with this emanation. The Logos is, as we have seen, eternal; and the immaterial, semi-physical element of Ether is, as it were, the borderland between the subjective eternal Logos and the objective elements of *fire, air, water, and earth*.

After this light-emanation comes the element called by the cabalists "Air." Its formation in the cosmogony of Genesis is

marked by the words —

"The Elohim said, Let there be an Expanse."

This word, for a long time wrongly translated "firmament," is chosen to express the air-element, because from this element we derive the idea of the extension or expansiveness of a body — its ability to fill a certain quantity of space. The air-element corresponds to the sense of touch, so far as this sense conveys the idea of "expansiveness" or "extension." The sense of touch differs from the senses of sound and sight, in that it is distributed all over the surface of the skin, while they are confined to definite sense-organs, or spaces of localised sensitiveness, and, in proportion as the eye and ear have gained in sensitiveness to light and sound, the rest of the skin has lost its power of responding to these sensations. The whole surface of the body is, on the contrary, still sensitive to touch, as also to the sensation of heat. (8) There is reason to believe that at one time the body's whole surface could respond equally to all sensations; (9) the specialised organs of sense not being then developed, just as the whole surface of the jelly fish still responds to the stimulus of light. An analogy to this condition of unspecialised sensitiveness is furnished by modern experiments in thought transference, from which it appears that the sensations of sound, colour, taste, touch, and smell are all transferred from one mind to another with equal ease. There are some grounds for the belief that when an organ is specialised for some particular sensation it loses the power of responding to other sensations: that the retina, for instance, will be insensible to heat. (10) The sensations of heat and touch are, as we have seen, distributed over the whole surface of the skin; and from this fact, among others, we are led to consider heat as well as touch an attribute of the element "air." Another reason for this conclusion is the fact that we find heat always associated with expansiveness or extension. As elucidating this point we may quote the

researches in the solidification of gases, and speculations on "absolute zero" in temperature, though want of space precludes us from more than merely referring to them. After air comes the element of water, marked in the Genesis cosmogony by the words: —

"The Elohim said, Let the waters be gathered together."

This elemental water corresponds to the sense of taste, and in part to the idea of molecular motion; the motion of masses being one of the ideas attached to the Air-element. It might be thought that the sensation of taste might also be derived from solid bodies; but that this is not so may be inferred from recent scientific researches, which have demonstrated that all bodies, even the metals, and ice far below zero, are covered with a thin layer of liquid, and it is from this liquid layer that we get the sensation of taste from solids. In this element of water are the potentialities of innumerable tastes, every organic body, and even minerals and metals, having a distinctive taste: zinc and steel among the metals for instance, and sugar, vinegar, and wine in the organic world.

This element is followed by the last emanation, the Earth-element of the cabalists, marked in the Cosmogony of Genesis by the words,

"The Elohim said, Let the dry land appear, and it was so, and the Elohim called the dry land Earth."

This emanation corresponds to the extreme of materiality, solidity, and, amongst the senses, to smell. A piece of camphor, for example, throws off small solid particles in every direction, and these, coming in contact with the nerves specialised to this sense, produce the sensation of smell. This Earth-element is the last emanation strictly so-called. To this point the outward expansion

of *Parabrahm* has been tending, and from this point the wave of spirit must again recede.

It must be here stated that these elements, fire, air, water, and earth, are not what we ordinarily mean by these terms, but are, so to speak, the pure elemental or spiritual counterparts of these. Down to this point, Form has been gradually developing, being destined to combine with each of the elements in turn, in the ascending scale.

(To be continued.)

FOOTNOTES:

1. The esoteric teaching accounts for it. The first chapter of Genesis, or the Elohist version, does not treat of the creation of man at all. It is what the Hindu Puranas call the *Primal* creation, while the second chapter is the *Secondary* creation or that of our globe of man. Adam Kadmon is no man, but the *protologos*, the collective Sephirothal Tree — the "Heavenly Man", the *vehicle* (or *Vahan*) used by En-Soph to manifest in the phenomenal world (see Sohar): and as the "male and female" Adam is the "Archetypal man," so the *animals* mentioned in the first chapter are the *sacred* animals, or the zodiacal signs, while "Light" refers to the angels so called. — H. P. Blavatsky. ([return to text](#))

2. *Vide supra* — "The great whale" (v. 21) is the *Makara* of the Hindu Zodiac — translated very queerly as "Capricorn," whereas it is not even a "Crocodile," as "Makara" is translated, but a nondescript aquatic monster, the "Leviathan" in Hebrew symbolism, and the vehicle of Vishnu. Whoever may be right in the recent polemical quarrel on *Genesis* between Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Huxley, it is not *Genesis* that is guilty of the error imputed. The Elohist portion of it is charged with the great zoological blunder of placing the evolution of the birds before the

reptiles (*Vide* — "*Modern Science, and Modern Thought*," by Mr. S. Laing), and Mr. Gladstone is twitted with supporting it. But one has but to read the Hebrew text to find that Verse 20 (Chap. 1) does speak of reptiles before the birds. And God said, "Let the waters bring forth abundantly the (*swimming and creeping*, not moving creatures that hath life, and fowl that may fly" etc. This ought to settle the quarrel and justify Genesis, for here we find it in a perfect zoological order — first the evolution of grass, then of larger vegetation, then of fish (or mollusks), reptiles, birds, etc., etc. Genesis is a purely symbolical and kabalistic volume. It can neither be understood nor appreciated, if judged on the mistranslations and misinterpretations of its Christian remodellers. — H. P. Blavatsky. ([return to text](#))

3. Because Adam is the Symbol of the first *terrestrial* MAN or Humanity. — H. P. Blavatsky. ([return to text](#))

4. *Genesis* being an eastern work, it has to be read in its own language. It is in full agreement, when understood, with the universal cosmogony and evolution of life as given in the Secret Doctrine of the Archaic Ages. The last word of Science is far from being uttered yet. Esoteric philosophy teaches that man was the first living being to appear on earth, all the animal world coming *after* him. This will be proclaimed absurdly *unscientific*. But see in *Lucifer* — "The Latest Romance of Science." — H. P. Blavatsky. ([return to text](#))

5. "The Unseen Universe," by Professors Balfour Stewart and P. G. Tait. — [C. J.] ([return to text](#))

6. While taking this view of sound, we are, of course, perfectly acquainted with modern researches and speculations on the subject. Our standpoint, however, is so widely different from that of modern science that no comparison with its teachings is possible. ([return to text](#))

7. Ruskin, "Lectures on Art," p. 125. ([return to text](#))

8. For speculations on a specialised heat sense we may refer to Mr. E. A. Proctor's ideal visit to Saturn's Satellites. ([return to text](#))

9. Readers will remember the translations which appeared in the PATH some time ago giving the German Mystic Kernning's teachings hereupon. [W. Q. J.] ([return to text](#))

10. *Vide* some experiments with thermal rays in Tyndall's "Heat a Mode of Motion." ([return to text](#))

The Path

A SERVANT OF THE MASTERS — *William Q. Judge*

COL. HENRY S. OLCOTT

A pioneer in a great movement, such as that represented by the Theosophical Society, should be known to the contemporary members of the organization, who ought in justice to have information of the work performed by that pioneer. This is especially the case in our Society, for, although it was started in the United States, Colonel Olcott very soon went to India, and there continued the work begun here. When he left this country there was but one Branch in America, and comparatively few members, but now theosophists are found in nearly every State of the Union. Few of them have had time and opportunity to become acquainted with the facts in respect to Colonel Olcott's connection with the movement, and it is for their information that this statement is especially intended. As his work in India has absorbed most of his time, it has necessarily followed that nearly all new members here were deprived of that attention from him which some of them would perhaps be pleased to receive, and, India being so far distant, he has remained for them almost a stranger. Were that effect of distance not rectified in some way, we might be in danger of taking the position temporarily assumed a few years ago by new members similarly situated in India, who, not concurring in his methods as an American, and feeling that they could perhaps suggest a line of action more suited to the English mind and habits, proposed to the Masters a radical change which would involve his retirement from his then prominent position. The reply from The Brothers is worthy of consideration from every thoughtful theosophist.

Having disposed of personal motives, let us analyze your terms

for helping us to do public good. Broadly stated, these terms are — first, that an independent Anglo-Indian Theosophical Society shall be founded through your kind services, in the management of which our present representatives (Col. Olcott and H. P. Blavatsky) "shall not have any voice." (1) * * And supposing you were thus to come — As Madame B. did and Mr. O. will —, supposing you were to abandon all for the truth, to toil wearily for years up the hard, steep road, not daunted by obstacles, firm under every temptation; were to faithfully keep within your hearts the secrets entrusted to you as a trial; had worked with all your energies and unselfishly to spread the truth and provoke men to correct thinking and a correct life: would you consider it just, if, after all your efforts, we were to grant to Madame B. or Mr. O. as 'outsiders' the terms you now ask for yourselves. Of these two persons, one has already given three-fourths of a life, the other six years of manhood's prime, to us, and both will so labor to the close of their days; though ever working for their merited reward, yet never demanding it, nor murmuring when disappointed. Even though they respectively could accomplish far less than they do, would it not be a palpable injustice to ignore them in an important field of Theosophical effort? Ingratitude is not among our vices, nor do we imagine you would wish to advise it." (2).

What They wanted, and what the Society needs, is a man of intelligence who can and will work for a high and far Ideal regardless of all opposition, unconcerned as to his future reward. In Colonel Olcott such a man has been found, and by knowing what he has done we shall be able to give reasons for our esteem and loyalty.

Colonel Olcott is a lawyer, and for several years practised law in the city of New York. It is a somewhat curious fact that very many of those well known in the theosophical field are lawyers. I might

mention Subba Row and Sreenevasa Row, of Madras. The first is a prominent Hindu pleader; the other is Sub-Judge in Madras. Many Americans have met Mohini M. Chatterji, who was admitted to the Bar in Bengal. A prominent member in Poona, India, is Judge N. D. Khandalavalla, and all over India theosophists are to be found acting as lawyers or judges. In England, a former President of the London Lodge was a well known solicitor, and some of the earnest members there now are in the same profession. In America we of course have a great many members who are lawyers.

When I met Colonel Olcott in 1875, the Theosophical Society had not yet been formed. In October of that year a meeting was held in the apartment of H. P. Blavatsky at 46 Irving Place, New York, at which it was proposed to form a Society for the study of those subjects which have since engaged our attention. In a book now lying before me I have the original minutes of that meeting and of others following it, with the names of all present. So if there be persons anxious to claim the honor of being among the founders of the Society, it will be wise first to be sure that their names are in this book. Possibly such registration will some day be accounted an honor by all, as it now is by advanced minds.

At that first meeting I proposed Colonel Olcott as President of the Society, and was made temporary Secretary myself. A Committee appointed to select a name for the infant met several times after that at Olcott's office, 7 Beekman Street, New York, and decided upon the present name. The objects of the Society had been given to Col. Olcott by the Masters before that; they were adopted and have never been changed. Up to this time Olcott had been a well known Club man, and no one supposed that he would ever show such abnegation as he since has in respect to the things of this world. The wisdom of his selection as President has been vindicated by our history. The Society was unpopular from the

outset, and had indeed so little money that all the first diplomas were engrossed by hand by one of the members in this city.

During the period between October, 1875, and November, 1878, Col. Olcott received many letters from the Masters on the subject of the Society in which no promises were made that have not since been fulfilled. He worked steadily with the Society until 1878, and then, in December, went to India with H. P. Blavatsky. When they arrived there, full as many difficulties had to be met as in America, with the additional disadvantage, to Col. Olcott, of being upon strange ground, but they persevered against all opposition. Among such troubles were those caused by the English police, who for a time suspected H. P. Blavatsky to be a Russian spy, a mistake happily remedied by orders from their superiors. In all I say here, it must not be forgotten that the part played by H. P. Blavatsky can never be rightly given to the world, because it would not be understood. Her service and efforts can never be estimated, but they may be glimpsed by intuitional natures.

In Bombay, in 1878, Col. Olcott hired a bungalow as temporary Headquarters. He had then no help and no acquaintance with Indian methods, but Madame Blavatsky and himself started the publication of the Theosophist, and Masters promised to give certain hints through its pages, a promise fulfilled by the publication of "Fragments of Occult Truth" (since embodied in "Esoteric Buddhism") and other articles. A young Hindu gentleman, Damodar Mavalankar, soon came and cast in his lot with the Founders, to be later called to Tibet by his Master. In these early days enough troubles of all kinds were experienced to bend any ordinary man of soft metal, but Col. Olcott went straight onward, depending upon the help of Masters to enable him to overcome all obstacles. When the project of starting a real Headquarters took shape he removed to Madras, where he was

helped by Iyaloo Naidoo (now of Hyderabad) and others in getting the present building at Adyar. Various Branches had been established and interest was gradually spreading, but nothing could be done anywhere without Col. Olcott, upon whom all the Hindu members had come to rely. This necessitated much travel on his part at a time when his office assistance only comprised Messrs. Damodar, Ananda, and Babajee. Damodar attended to a vast mass of correspondence and worked night and day, snatching his brief rest on skins spread upon the marble floor. Ananda, with similar devotion, gave up a clerkship under Government to work at the accounts and general routine, while Col. Olcott travelled North, South, East, and West, lecturing and stirring up the natives to the truths of ancient philosophy, and, in spite of severe and hurried journeys in a country where all our modern luxury of travel is unknown, his speeches are all excellent, and many of them are thrilling from their exquisite eloquence and diction. He also took complete charge of all Conventions, a step which always resulted in greater unity. Going to Ceylon, he inaugurated a great movement there, and was received into the Buddhist Church by the High Priest, who authorized him to admit others also. He had previously been invested with the Brahminical thread by Brahmins in India, an honor by them considered as the highest possible mark of respect and friendship. The Ceylon movement prospered largely, and now has instituted Sunday Schools, a newspaper, and Headquarters of its own. Each year Col. Olcott makes a tour through India, working with indescribable energy, received everywhere with enthusiasm, lecturing to hundreds in crowded halls, opening schools and other reform societies for boys, and increasing the size and usefulness of Branches in all directions. When he conceived the idea of a grand Asiatic Library at Headquarters in Adyar, he pursued it so vigorously that it soon became a fact, and one of the highest importance. Many palm-leaf

M. S. S. which would otherwise be lost will be preserved there, and many rare and often hitherto unknown books will be presented. The Library already numbers 460 volumes in Sanskrit (inclusive of M. S. S.), 263 volumes in other Indian languages, and about 2,000 volumes in Western languages, including the Classics and Hebrew. The very learned N. Bhashvacharya of Cuddapah has consented to become its Director and Professor. A Permanent Fund was also started by Col. Olcott with the object of providing sufficient income for the maintenance and repair of Headquarters, and, as this Fund is slowly growing, it is hoped that it may also pay the expenses of propoganda in time. Hitherto all excess of expenditure above the small sums received from dues and charters has been met by the private means of the two Founders.

Envious minds may think that Col. Olcott, now known all over India and Ceylon as well as being a name of note in Western countries, knew that he should gain a greater fame and wider acquaintance by resigning all that most men esteem as most pleasant and valued in life, just at a time too when the tendency is to grow fast to the personal centre, and going to a far land, there to pass his days in unremitting and arduous labors for the good of humanity, for a sublime Ideal. This is seen to be wrong when we consider that he had no certainty of success, nothing to go upon but promises made by Masters, who do not mix in public matters. Moreover, he had a wide acquaintance here, and all his American friends thought him foolish to go to a distant country on what they call "a wild goose chase" and an impracticable affair all round that "has no money in it." On the other hand, if they now say that he knew well what he was doing when he thus depended on promises made by the Adepts, there is no escape from the conclusion that those Adepts can be trusted, and on their part know the future and what is best for man. The faith of Col. Olcott

himself in these great Beings has always remained unshaken, as his last act evinces. He has been several times urged by members to promulgate a creed to be accepted, but has always refused to go one step beyond the original lines and objects laid down by Masters, so that he has been thus greatly instrumental in producing an unsectarian and united Society devoted to spiritual things.

The following extract from a letter to the Simla Eclectic Theosophical Society from the Masters, on this subject, sustains him in his position:

"It is time that Theosophy should enter the arena. The sons of Theosophists are more likely to become in their turn Theosophists than anything else. No messenger of Truth, no prophet, has ever achieved during his lifetime a complete triumph, — not even Buddha. The Theosophical Society was chosen as the corner stone, the foundation, of the future religion of humanity. To achieve the proposed object, a greater, wider, and especially more benevolent intermingling of the high and the low, of the alpha and omega, of society was determined upon. The white race must be the first to stretch out the hand of fellowship to the dark nations. This prospect may not smile to all alike. He is no theosophist who objects to the principle. * * and it is we, the humble disciples of the perfect Lamas, who are expected to allow the Theosophical Society to drop its noblest title, '*The Brotherhood of Humanity*,' to become a simple school of philosophy. Let us understand each other. He who does not feel competent enough to grasp the noble idea sufficiently to work for it, need not undertake a task too heavy for him. But there is hardly a theosophist in the whole society unable to effectually help it by correcting the erroneous impression of outsiders, if not by actually

propagating himself this idea."

In this loyalty and faith he has found a power which enables him to go on and on under immense strain, ill at times, often in utter darkness as to the morrow's trials, but ever upheld by a self forgetful enthusiasm, ever devoted and forceful as only those men are who live out their inner convictions, who will throw aside all life seems to hold rather than renounce one of these beliefs, and who have based them upon the holy Cause of Universal Brotherhood and the existence of those Masters Who are sharers in the divine and eternal, Who live but for Humanity.

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Occult World*, p. 72 (4th Ed). ([return to text](#))

2. id. p. 73, 74. ([return to text](#))

The Path

PARTISANSHIP IN THEOSOPHY — *Alexander Fullerton*

(A PAPER READ BEFORE THE ARYAN T. S. OF NEW YORK, MARCH 20TH, 1888.)

Theosophy is both a Philosophy and a Religion, and hence springs from the intellectual faculties which nourish thought and from the emotional faculties which nourish piety. The same fact holds of Theology. It, too, is a combination of a theory of the mind with an aspiration of the heart, the theory expounding the human and the Divine, and the aspiration impelling the human to the Divine. Theosophy and Theology are alike, then, in uniting a mental system with a spiritual impulse, and in deriving them from identical constituents of human nature. Moreover, it might be shown that there is a parallelism in their claim to exposition from authority, in their assertion that things seen are temporal while the things which are not seen are eternal, in their avowal that light comes only to those who seek it with singleness of heart, and in their aim to uplift humanity through the consoling, inspiring, invigorating influences of those who generously teach, prompt, strengthen their kind.

With so much that is common to these systems in their nature, structure, and purpose, one may very naturally infer, some likeness in their dangers, if not in their history; and it is therefore in no way surprising that the brief career of Western Theosophy should have already exhibited some of the traits which have been conspicuous in the far longer course of its sister. Missionary zeal, devoted labor, uncounting sacrifice, the moulding power of conviction, — all are there; but so, too, do we see at times a spirit of assertion, natural perhaps to the devotee, though inconsonant with the philosophy he champions. In its full development, a development reached in the embittered contests over doctrinal

questions in the Christian Church, this spirit became so acrimonious and so virulent, so relentless, uncompromising, and savage, that the accepted term for extreme party-hatred is "odium theologicum," a term which for all time should warn the disputatious and cool the eager. No such development has been attained in Theosophy; it hardly ever can be. Two facts may be relied upon for its restraint. One is that the higher plateaux of spiritual achievement are only gained as the mounting soul expands its sense of brotherhood, toleration, and good-will, *pari passu* with which goes on an atrophy of self-insistence and of all traits making vindictiveness possible. The other is that Theosophy, having no visible hierarchical system, offers no external rewards to partisans, — no mitres, no professorships, no prelatial thrones to tempt ambition and compensate zeal. From controversies like the Arian, and from persecutions like the Papal, we are therefore free.

And yet no discreet Theosophist can say that there are not symptoms of the disease and a consequent need of treatment. Sometimes in literature, sometimes in the Theosophical Society, sometimes in private speech or act, we see an attitude expressing a state of mind which may fitly be called *partisan*. And just so far as it is really so, and just as far as its principle, if logically carried out, would result in some measure of repression, does it embody inchoately a Theosophical Ignatius Loyola. And, conversely, if such an inchoate monster is to be effectually slain, it will be by destroying the source from which comes his vitality.

First let us look at some manifestations of the partisan spirit, and then inspect the cause through the killing of which they too will die. Perhaps we cannot do better than take the departments already referred to.

1. *Literature*. In the explication of any doctrine, especially of any

doctrine at variance from that generally held, there of necessity come efforts to show its conformity with admitted facts and that this conformity is not found elsewhere. Both efforts exact argument, and both meet response. Then comes rejoinder, probably excitement, possibly warfare. The argument and the rejoinder are right, the excitement and the warfare wrong. That they are theosophically wrong will appear later on; that they are philosophically wrong may be evidenced now. Coolness is the attribute of him who is sure of his footing, and of him who knows that to allow perturbation through anger is to give advantage to an opponent: dispassionateness belongs to him who knows that opinion is fallible, that truth has many aspects, that no sincere seeker can be wholly wrong, and that there is common ground beneath contentions; calmness marks him who feels that controversies should be impersonal, that right may be trusted to vindicate itself in time, that spectators are repelled by bitter speech. But is it certain that these facts have always had recognition in our polemics? How as to Theosophical treatment of contemporary science? I have been pained, annoyed, revolted even, at the tone of malignant contempt assumed in part of our best literature towards scientific men and books. It may be that they have stopped short of nature's deepest meanings and have attributed to matter the potency which is spirit's; but their learning, their patient search, their tireless determination to fathom facts, their utter self-abnegation when a truth is to be exhumed or a law disclosed, and the countless, immeasurable, priceless blessings with which they have enriched and prolonged the life of man, it is ungenerous to question and senseless to deny. They may be at times dogmatic. But if dogmatism is unseemly in physical science, is it less so in metaphysical science? If curt contempt is the Occultist's portion from the Professor, is stinging speech the Occultist's best reply? What difference is there in principle between arrogance in the realm of matter and

arrogance in the realm of mind?

In less pronounced colors the partisan spirit has sometimes tinged the treatment of Theosophic doctrine. It is understood that the discussion of whether man's nature is susceptible of a four-fold or a seven-fold division has not been without an infusion of gall. No one will claim that comparison of views on exoteric Christendom has always been conducted with judicial placidity. Take, too, the matter of vegetarianism. To say that to certain people, for certain purposes, and at certain times a purely vegetable diet is essential, is to take a defensible, nay, a demonstrable, position. But to say that the killing of animals is minor murder, that beef constitutes an impassible barrier to beatitude, and that the use of vegetables is a dictate of morals, like truth, or honor, or honesty, is really to distort fact into phantasy and to bring ridicule upon religion. Even more than this: by leveling, like the scientist, spiritual matters to a physical basis, it exemplifies the old proverb of the meeting of extremes, for it is as gross materialism to condition the soul's functions upon the stomach as to condition them upon the brain. Almost the first remark once made to me by a warm Theosophist was, "I trust you are a vegetarian." The tone of suspense, of anxiety, of foreboding implied that otherwise my case was hopeless. So in certain Theosophic articles we are told that, if spiritually stationary, it is because we are not leading "the life," and that "the life" cannot be led if we eat meat. Surely this is the note of a partisan. It recalls the ecclesiastical threat that our souls cannot be quickened till our bodies have been baptized.

2. *The Theosophical Society*. This has not as yet been split asunder into sects. But it easily might be if either of the two sect-producing fortes is allowed to work. One of these is the recognition of a body of dogmas, adhesion to which distinguishes orthodox believers from dissenters. The other is unthinking servitude to a spiritual

leader. Both forces may be studied in Church History. Theosophy discountenances both. It distinctly states that Truth is One, and that apprehension of it will become so only as interior vision escapes the perturbing influence of self-assertion; also that Truth has no value except as realized within, any formal, indiscriminating, thoughtless clinging to a system or a man being absolutely worthless. This sternly individual process of enlightenment precludes the sect idea, for it insists that each man must develop on his own lines, and it forbids an objective measure by which all are to be gauged. There have been times when the cries "I am of Paul" and "I of Apollos" have neared an utterance in the Society, and those are the times when the teachings of the Founders should be re-memorized and the records of Church History re-read.

It may be, too, that broad reaches of Theosophic thought, deep experience of Theosophic moulding, rich perception of Theosophic future, have not saved from a somewhat narrow estimate of the Theosophic mission. The profundity and abstractness of Occultism create at first a very natural supposition that its appeal is only to the higher classes. Two facts at once rebut this, — the welcome it receives among the lowly, and the obvious working of Karma in the distribution of social status. Yet the supposition recurs; and if some of our ablest brethren have felt their sympathies limited or their energies curtailed, it may be because of a certain clannishness, a certain partisanship, which they would eject at once if they so read it.

Clearer than daylight is the truth that any factious organization, any covetousness for office, any effort to carry personal preferences through force of votes, is as incompatible with sincere devotion to the Society as with sincere devotion to a Church. And so would be any action, spirit, policy, aiming to use the Body as an agency for a member, the whole for the purposes

of a part.

3. *Private speech or act.* The possibilities here have been largely indicated above. Yet it is entirely conceivable that the most hospitable thinkers among us are not wholly beyond a start at the presentation of new truth, a suspicion that it is unorthodox because unfamiliar. There is required a very wide training outside of Theosophy to secure full acceptance of some very elemental maxims. For instance: The novelty of a thought is no presumption against its correctness; Propositions are not strengthened by their appearance in print; Affirmations by great names do not dispense from judgment the humblest learner; Self-respect requires the confession, not the maintenance, of mistake. In the onward course of an Occultist any one of these maxims may often need recall; for prejudice is a long-lived influence, swaying sentiment pro or con, vitalizing the instinct of party vindication or of personal consistency.

Nor are we private thinkers safe from yet another pitfall, — race prepossession. Much proper discussion goes on over the comparative merits of the Orient and the West. When any one of us has assigned to each what he conceives its due, it is still possible for a partisan spirit to arise. For warm appreciation may be unqualified; it may refuse to allow error or may always condone it. The services of either section may seem so vast as to make criticism impertinent and discrimination a sacrilege. It is just here that the motto of the Society comes in, — "There is no religion higher than Truth." There is no record so shining, no name so eminent, no position so dignified, as to screen from the application of impartial tests. And it would be a sorry day for the Theosophic cause if the concession was ever made that a hemisphere, a race, a class, a man, or a book, was exempt from respectful, but self-respecting, analysis.

Every form of partisanship, however and wherever displayed, and whether by a Theologian or a Theosophist, is traceable ultimately to one single source, — a conviction of infallibility. When any man is dogmatic or sectional, it is because he knows himself to be right. Caution comes from doubt. But no man can really *know* himself to be right. To infallibility there is one essential pre-requisite, — Omniscience. Approaching it there may be a state so closely allied with the Divine, so dissociated from fleshly bonds that the spiritual eye sees Truth without a medium, without an error. And it may be remarked, in passing, that in such a state all contradictions will vanish and all eyes perceive alike; from which fact follows the consequence that, during our era of controversies and of combats, no such state can have been attained. Nor can it ever be attained during incarnations.

Inevitably the ties of matter bind and confine the spirit's range; the vision is not cloudless or serene; influences from the flesh pervert, distort the mind. No man sees truth absolutely, but only as its light is colored by his constitutional environment. Oliver Wendell Holmes has aptly stated this with an illustration from chemistry. We cannot, he says, get the pure article, for that is combined in the mind with our personal qualities: what we get is the *Smithate* of Truth or the *Brownate* of Truth. But every dogmatist, every partisan, assumes virtually the reverse. He really claims, in the particular topic, to be free from error, to have a right to his own way because that way is in itself right, — in other words, to be infallible. Philosophy and the deeper consciousness unite to nullify that claim.

Partisanship in Theosophy is untheosophic. It is this not merely because it contravenes the doctrine of Fraternity, jeopardizes the existence and the expansion of the Society, invites all the evils which ecclesiasticism might teach to shun, disappoints the hopes of those who thought to find a refuge from the strife of creeds,

and paralyzes the functions of the Higher self; but because it impugns the conviction that there is no monopoly of truth to race or caste or man, and because it falsifies the law that we advance only as we abate selfhood and increase docility. Any man can tell whether he is guilty of it by inquiring whether his opinions are soluble. If they are not, he may be a student or a sciolist or a dilettante, but not a disciple, not a Theosophist. And if at any time, for any purpose, or with any motive, he feels the impatient spirit rise within him, he may know that its root is a consciousness of infallibility arid that its perfected fruit would be a devastation of mankind.

The Path

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM: I

THE KALI YUGA — THE PRESENT AGE.

Student. — I am very much puzzled about the present age. Some theosophists seem to abhor it as if wishing to be taken away from it altogether, inveighing against modern inventions such as the telegraph, railways, machinery, and the like, and bewailing the disappearance of former civilizations. Others take a different view, insisting that this is a better time than any other, and hailing modern methods as the best. Tell me, please, which of these is right, or, if both are wrong, what ought we to know about the age we live in.

Sage. — The teachers of Truth know all about this age. But they do not mistake the present century for the whole cycle. The older times of European history, for example, when might was right and when darkness prevailed over Western nations, was as much a part of this age, from the standpoint of the Masters, as is the present hour, for the Yuga — to use a Sanskrit word — in which we are now had begun many thousands of years before. And during that period of European darkness, although this Yuga had already begun, there was much light, learning, and civilization in India and China. The meaning of the words "present age" must therefore be extended over a far greater period than is at present assigned. In fact, modern science has reached no definite conclusion yet as to what should properly be called "an age," and the truth of the Eastern doctrine is denied. Hence we find writers speaking of the "Golden Age," the "Iron Age," and so on, whereas they are only parts of the real age that began so far back that modern archaeologists deny it altogether.

Student. — What is the Sanskrit name for this age, and what is its

meaning?

Sage. — The sanskrit is "Kali" which added to Yuga gives us "Kali-Yuga." The meaning of it is "Dark Age." Its approach was known to the ancients, its characteristics are described in the Indian poem "The Mahabharata." As I said that it takes in an immense period of the glorious part of Indian history, there is no chance for anyone to be jealous and to say that we are comparing the present hour with that wonderful division of Indian development.

Student. — What are the characteristics to which you refer, by which *Kali-Yuga* may be known?

Sage. — As its name implies, darkness is the chief. This of course is not deducible by comparing today with 800 A. D., for this would be no comparison at all. The present century is certainly ahead of the middle ages, but as compared with the preceding Yuga it is dark. To the Occultist, material advancement is not of the quality of light, and he finds no proof of progress in merely mechanical contrivances that give comfort to a few of the human family while the many are in misery. For the darkness he would have to point but to one nation, even the great American Republic. Here he sees a mere extension of the habits and life of the Europe from which it sprang; here a great experiment with entirely new conditions and material was tried; here for many years very little poverty was known; but here today there is as much grinding poverty as anywhere, and as large a criminal class with corresponding prisons as in Europe, and more than in India. Again, the great thirst for riches and material betterment, while spiritual life is to a great extent ignored, is regarded by us as darkness. The great conflict already begun between the wealthy classes and the poorer is a sign of darkness. Were spiritual light prevalent, the rich and the poor would still be with us, for Karma

cannot be blotted out, but the poor would know how to accept their lot and the rich how to improve the poor; now, on the contrary, the rich wonder why the poor do not go to the poorhouse, meanwhile seeking in the laws for cures for strikes and socialism, and the poor continually growl at fate and their supposed oppressors. All this is of the quality of spiritual darkness.

Student. — Is it wise to inquire as to the periods when the cycle changes, and to speculate on the great astronomical or other changes that herald a turn?

Sage. — It is not. There is an old saying that the gods are jealous about these things, not wishing mortals to know them. We may analyse the age, but it is better not to attempt to fix the hour of a change of cycle. Besides that, you will be unable to settle it, because a cycle does not begin on a day or year clear of any other cycle; they interblend, so that, although the wheel of one period is still turning, the initial point of another has already arrived.

Student. — Are these some of the reasons why Mr. Sinnett was not given certain definite periods of years about which he asked?

Sage. — Yes.

Student. — Has the age in which one lives any effect on the student; and what is it?

Sage. — It has effect on every one, but the student after passing along in his development feels the effect more than the ordinary man. Were it otherwise, the sincere and aspiring students all over the world would advance at once to those heights towards which they strive. It takes a very strong soul to hold back the age's heavy hand, and it is all the more difficult because that influence, being a part of the student's larger life, is not so well understood by him. It operates in the same way as a structural defect in a vessel.

All the inner as well as the outer fibre of the man is the result of the long centuries of earthly lives lived here by his ancestors. These sow seeds of thought and physical tendencies in a way that you cannot comprehend. All those tendencies affect him. Many powers once possessed are hidden so deep as to be unseen, and he struggles against obstacles constructed ages ago. Further yet are the peculiar alterations brought about in the astral world. It, being at once a photographic plate, so to say, and also a reflector, has become the keeper of the mistakes of ages past which it continually reflects upon us from a plane to which most of us are strangers. In that sense therefore, free as we suppose ourselves, we are walking about completely hypnotized by the past, acting blindly under the suggestions thus cast upon us.

Student. — Was that why Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, *for they know not what they do?*"

Sage. — That was one meaning. In one aspect they acted blindly, impelled by the age, thinking they were right.

Regarding these astral alterations, you will remember how in the time of Julian the seers reported that they could see the gods, but they were decaying, some headless, others flaccid, others minus limbs, and all appearing weak. The reverence for these ideals was departing, and their astral pictures had already begun to fade.

Student. — What mitigation is there about this age? Is there nothing at all to relieve the picture?

Sage. — There is one thing peculiar to the present *Kali-Yuga* that may be used by the Student. All causes now bring about their effects much more rapidly than in any other or better age. A sincere lover of the race can accomplish more in three incarnations under *Kali-Yugas* reign than he could in a much greater number in any other age. Thus by bearing all the

manifold troubles of this Age and steadily triumphing, the object of his efforts will be more quickly realized, for, while the obstacles seem great, the powers to be invoked can be reached more quickly.

Student. — Even if this is, spiritually considered, a Dark Age, is it not in part redeemed by the increasing triumphs of mind over matter, and by the effects of science in mitigating human ills, such as the causes of disease, disease itself, cruelty, intolerance, bad laws. etc.?

Sage. — Yes, these are mitigations of the darkness in just the same way that a lamp gives some light at night but does not restore daylight. In this age there are great triumphs of science, but they are nearly all directed to *effects* and do not take away the *causes* of the evils. Great strides have been made in the arts and in cure of diseases, but in the future, as the flower of our civilization unfolds, new diseases will arise and more strange disorders will be known, springing from causes that lie deep in the minds of men and which can only be eradicated by spiritual living.

Student. — Admitting all you say, are not we, as Theosophists, to welcome every discovery of truth in any field, especially such truth as lessens suffering or enlarges the moral sense?

Sage. — That is our duty. All truths discovered must be parts of the one Absolute Truth, and so much added to the sum of our outer knowledge. There will always be a large number of men who seek for these parts of truth, and others who try to alleviate present human misery. They each do a great and appointed work that no true Theosophist should ignore. And it is also the duty of the latter to make similar efforts when possible, for Theosophy is a dead thing if it is not turned into the life. At the same time, no one of us may be the judge of just how much or how little our brother is doing in that direction. If he does all that he can and

knows how to do, he does his whole present duty.

Student. — I fear that a hostile attitude by Occult teachers towards the learning and philanthropy of the time may arouse prejudice against Theosophy and Occultism, and needlessly impede the spread of Truth. May it not be so?

Sage. — The real Occult Teachers have no hostile attitude toward these things. If some persons, who like theosophy and try to spread it, take such a position, they do not thereby alter the one assumed by the real Teachers who work with all classes of men and use every possible instrument for good. But at the same time we have found that an excess of the technical and special knowledge of the day very often acts to prevent men from apprehending the truth.

Student. — Are there any causes, other than the spread of Theosophy, which may operate to reverse the present drift towards materialism?

Sage. — The spread of the knowledge of the laws of Karma and Reincarnation and of a belief in the absolute spiritual unity of all beings will alone prevent this drift. The cycle must, however, run its course, and until that is ended all beneficial causes will of necessity act slowly and not to the extent they would in a brighter age. As each student *lives* a better life and by his example imprints upon the astral light the picture of a higher aspiration acted in the world, he *thus aids souls of advanced development to descend from other spheres* where the cycles are so dark that they can no longer stay there.

Student. — Accept my thanks for your instruction. *Sage.* — May you reach the terrace of enlightenment.

THE SINGING SILENCES (1) — *Nizida*

Rapt in rare dreams one morn I lay
Upon the threshold of the day;
My body, in soft languid sleep,
Releas'd my soul, whose wings might sweep
Through Fancy's bright realm, far and wide.

At length before mine eyes did glide
A vision of a stately Rose.
Within its ruby-vesture close
A dew-drop lay: e'er long it broke.
At once a sound of music woke,
And shudder'd thro' the petals red;
And, wafted wide, afar it sped.
Then in my ear the words below
Were whispered, as I wakened slow.

O Rose, sweet Rose!
Sublime repose
Is thine, self-pois'd in still content:
But Love thy stillness doth resent.
Within the fragrant silence of thy breast
He sends a drop of aqueous light,
Red-blushing, like thy bosom ruby-drest.

And, yielding to a fond delight,
It melteth, for thy love, away.
E'en as its crystal curves evaporate
Harmonious sounds reverberate,
And shiver in their echo-play
Amidst thy waxen petal-walls
Concav'd, to bear the incense-freight
Of thy sweet breath. Soft echo calls

To echo, as they die away,
 Slow swooning in sweet ecstasy;
And all thy round, rose-bosom sways
 Harmonious, — saith my fantasy.

Within life's seeming silence dwell
Soft, mystic sounds, whose whisp'rings swell

 Upon the soul's attentive ear,
 Out-breathing music, far and near.

The Self is hidden in all beings and does not shine forth, but it is seen by subtle seers through their sharp and subtle intellect. —
Katha-Upanishad.

OM.

FOOTNOTE:

1. See PATH for August '87. ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE BHAGAVAD GITA: VII — *William Brehon*

(Continued from March number.)

We are still on the second chapter. If my object were merely to skim through the poem, showing where it agreed with, differed from, or reconciled the various systems of philosophy that were followed in India, we could have long ago reached the end of the book. But we are looking at it in one of its aspects — the one most important for all earnest students — the personal interior view that aids us to reach Moksha. (1) From this standpoint we can easily defer a consideration of the philosophical discussion to a later period.

Let us take up some of the instruction given in the portion of the second chapter just finished. The remainder of the lecture is devoted to a reply from Krishna to Arjuna's question as to what is the description, appearance, carriage, and conversation of the man who has attained to steady meditation.

Krishna says that "the subject of the three Vedas is the assemblage of the three qualities." These three qualities are *Satwa*, *Rajah*, and *Tamo*, and are separately treated in a succeeding chapter. Now *Satwa-guna* (2) is a pure, high quality, the opposite of *Tamoguna* which is darkness and indifference. Yet the remarkable advice is here given, "be thou free from these three qualities." It is a very great wonder that this has not been pounced upon before as showing that Krishna directs his follower to renounce the quality of goodness, and thus directly encourages wickedness, but as that is immediately followed by the direction to "repose upon eternal truth," possible critics have been perhaps deterred by the seeming paradox. It is evident at once that a higher sort of *Satwaa* is referred to in the words "eternal truth."

Satwa is the Sanskrit for *truth*, and is not qualified when its place among the three qualities is given, so that, when the disciple frees himself from this ordinary *Satwa*, he is to take refuge in its eternal counterpart. Further, the instruction is not to *renounce* truth or either of the other two qualities, but to remain freed from the influence or binding force that any sort of quality has upon the human Ego.

It is difficult for a great Being such as Krishna to convey to the inquiring mind these high themes, and so, perforce, language must be used that forever has two meanings, — it continually retreats before us, going from one to the other. "Satwa" — truth — had to be taken to express the highest quality of any being who possesses them, and yet, when we begin to speak of the highest conceivable state in which attributes are absent, we still use the same word, only adding to it *eternal*.

The essence of the instruction given by Krishna is *to become devoted*, as he says, "Therefore give thyself up to devotion." He prepared the way for that by showing, as adverted to in the last article, how erroneous it was to follow even the special ceremonies and texts laid down for the people in the Vedas. Those ceremonies procured either rewards in heaven, or upon the earth during subsequent lives as well as in those in which the ceremonies were performed. We can more easily understand what Krishna meant if we will suppose him to be referring to a doctrine that in those days was precisely similar in its scheme of rewards to the old-fashioned Christian belief that, by following the Scriptures, one secured happiness and prosperity on earth and great bliss forever in heaven with the saints. This is declared by him to be a deluding doctrine. He does not say that the rewards as laid down will not follow the practice, but implies that they will. But as the wheel of rebirth will eternally revolve, drawing us inevitably back to a mortal body, we are continually

deluded and never succeed in attaining to God, — that being the goal for us all.

Heaven, whether it be that of the Christian or of the Hindu, is what Buddha called a thing or state that has a beginning and will have an end. It may, surely, last Aeons of time, but it will come to an end, and then the weary task of treading the world — whether this or some other one — has to be recommenced. Hence Krishna said that men were deluded by those flowery sentences proclaiming a means of reaching heaven, than which there was nothing better.

Doubtless there are many students who, believing in the possibility of reaching heaven, say that they are willing to take the risk of what may happen after the enjoyment for such a long period is ended. But those risks would not be taken were they well understood. They are numerous and great. Many of them cannot be stated, because, in order to be understood at all, more must be known of the power of mind and the real meaning of meditation. But the ordinary risks are found in what we may roughly, for the present, call delayed Karma and unspent affinities.

The power of these two has its root in the vast complexity of man's nature. Such is its complexity that a man cannot, as a complete being, ever enjoy heaven or any state short of union with the Divine. Learned theosophists talk of a man's going to Devachan, and of his being here on earth suffering or enjoying Karma, when as a fact only a small part of him is either here or there. When he has lived out his life and gone to Devachan, the vast root of his being stands waiting in the One Life, waiting patiently for him to return and exhaust some more Karma. That is, in any one life the ordinary man only takes up and exhausts what Karma his bodily apparatus permits. Part of the power of

Karma is in the 'mysterious power of meditation," which exhibits itself according to the particular corporeal body one has assumed. So the man may in this life perform "special ceremonies" and conform to texts and doctrine, attaining thereby the reward of heaven, and still have left over a quantity of that "mysterious power of meditation" unexpended; and what its complexion is he does not know. Its risk therefore is that it may be very bad, and, when he does return from heaven, his next body may furnish the needed apparatus to bring up to the front this mass of unexpended Karma, and his next compensation might be a sojourn in hell.

In reassuming a body, the "mysterious power" spoken of reaches out to numberless affinities engendered in other lives, and takes hold of all that come in its reach. Other beings once known to the man arrive into incarnation at the same time, and bring into action affinities, attractions, and powers that can only act through them and him. Their influence cannot be calculated. It may be good or bad, and, just as he is swayed by them or as his sway the other being, so will work out the Karma of each. Krishna therefore advises Arjuna to be free from the influence of the quality, so that he may obtain a *complete* release. And that freedom can only be attained, as he says, by means of Devotion.

These effects, divergencies and swaying, are well known to occultists, and, although the idea is very new in the West, it is not unknown in India. This law is both an angel of mercy and a messenger of justice, for, while we have just stated its operation as among the risks, it is also a means whereby nature saves men often from damnation.

Suppose in some life long-past I had a dear friend, or wife, or relative, with whom my intimacy was interior and deep. Death separates us, and in subsequent lives he devotes himself to truth,

to wisdom, to the highest in him, while I go on careless of all but pleasure in the present. After many lives we meet again as either friends or acquaintances. At once the old intimacy asserts itself, and my former friend — although maybe neither of us knows it — has a strange power to touch my inward life, and wakes me up to search for truth and my own soul. It is the unexpended affinity, and by its aid nature works my salvation.

Then we should both seek devotion. This devotion is what is inculcated by the Adepts to their Chelas. It involves a mental abnegation not agreeable to our modern mind, but that must be acquired or real progress is impossible. We must by means of this mental devotion to the Divine, which means abnegation of all the rest, dismiss all results of our actions. It is not ours to say what shall be the result of an action; the Law will bring about a result much better, perhaps, than we had imagined. If the results, in the passing daily circumstances, are not those we expected, then by means of Devotion we accept them as just what the Law intended. But if we fix our desire on accomplishing even a seeming good result, we are bound by that desire, no matter whether our wish is accomplished or not.

This exhortation to devotion is at once the most simple and the most difficult. Some deride it because they want powers and "development;" others because they think it too simple; but the wise student, even when he cannot at first grasp its meaning, will revolve it in his mind, strive after it, and make it a thing to be attained by him.

(To be continued.)

FOOTNOTES:

1. Salvation. ([return to text](#))
2. Quality of Truth or Purity. ([return to text](#))

THEOSOPHY IN IDYLLS OF THE KING: I — *F. S. Collins*

(A PAPER READ BEFORE THE MALDEN THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.)

In Two Parts.

PART I.

Of all of Tennyson's works, the two in which we find the deepest thought and the broadest scope are "In Memoriam" and the "Idylls of the King". In the former the thoughts, the questionings, the hopes of a strong intellect and warm heart in the presence of a great sorrow are clearly written in beautiful verse; one may read, study, and meditate long on it, for it deals with the profoundest problems of life: but one does not have to look for a second meaning hidden beneath the apparent. Quite different is it with the "Idylls," where the external form is that of a collection of legends from the misty past of Britain, from that period between the times of the Roman and the Saxon of which history tell us nothing. And probably the greater part of the readers of these poems, even among those who admire them, see nothing more than this; overlooking the clear statement of the author in the Epilogue: —

"this imperfect tale
New-old, and shadowing Sense at war with Soul,
Rather than that gray king, whose name, a ghost,
Streams like a cloud, man-shaped, from mountain peak,
And cleaves to cairn and cromlech still."

It may be interesting to us to look at this a little more closely; and the first thing we notice is that the Idylls are not so many independent poems, but constitute one organic whole, though written at widely different times.

The idea of a great poem, based on the Arthurian legends, appears to have been a favorite conception of Tennyson at an early date. The fragment "Mort d' Arthur" was published in 1842, but the poet apparently not having received encouragement for the greater work of which this was to be a part, the original plan was forgotten, or at any rate kept back; and four of the idylls appeared in 1859 as separate poems, without indication of belonging to a larger work. But when, in 1870, the four other idylls and the introduction had been given to the public, and the work appeared in the form we now have it, the earlier parts were found to fit perfectly into their places, though these were not at all determined by the order in which they had previously appeared. Only slight verbal alterations had been made in them; but the "Mort d' Arthur" had now the title "The Passing of Arthur," a very significant change; its length was about doubled by the verses prefixed and added to the original, which remained almost unchanged in the midst. As a counterpart to this, an entirely new "Coming of Arthur" was prefixed to the series; and in these two, the Coming and the Passing, we shall find a great part of the occult and symbolical ideas which we are seeking.

As a general statement of the work, nothing that I can say will be so satisfactory as some quotations from an article which appeared in the *Contemporary Review* at the time of the first publication of the complete work. Though in some of the details we may differ from this writer's interpretation, his appreciation of the great motive is certainly striking.

"Our first impression on reading the Idylls is one of simple and complete external loveliness — of a series of gorgeous landscapes taken exactly from nature — of a glittering and splendid revival of the past — of knightly days and doings set to mellifluous music under the shining skies of chivalry. Soon, however, artistic unities begin to emerge and add the charm of purpose and intention, if

only in the sense of aesthetic completeness. We go from the marriage season of *Spring* in the "Coming of Arthur," where the blossom of the May seems to spread its perfume over the whole scene, to the *Early Summer* of the honeysuckle in "Gareth," the quickly following mowing season of "Geraint," and the sudden summer thunder shower of "Vivien"; thence to the "*Full Summer*" of "Elaine," with oriel casement "standing wide for heat;" and later to the sweep of equinoctial storms and broken weather of the "Holy Grail." Then the *Autumn* roses and brambles of "Pelleas," and in the "Last Tournament" the *close of Autumntide* with all its "slowly mellowing avenues," through which we see Sir Tristram riding to his doom. In "Guinevere" the creeping mists of *coming winter* pervade the picture, and in the "Passing of Arthur" we come to the "deep midwinter on the frozen hills," and the end of all, on the year's shortest day, — "that day when the great light of heaven burned at his lowest in the rolling year." The King, who first appears on "the night of the new year," disappears into the dawning light of "the new sun bringing the new year," and thus the whole action of the poem is comprised precisely within the limits of the one principal and ever-recurring cycle of time.

Note also the keeping which exists between the local color in each poem proper to the season, and the dramatic action which is presented in it.

* * * * *

But, by the time we have discovered and followed out such unities as these, we find that the whole series of poems is gradually transforming itself into a moral series and unity, with a significance far greater than any aesthetical one. We come to see, at length, that the high cycle of the *soul* on earth is set before us, as completely by the human actions and passions of the piece as the cycle of the year by its landscapes and seasons.

* * * * * The central figure of the poem appears and reappears, through all the series of events, in a way which irresistibly suggests that more, if not quite clearly what, is meant by his kingship than mere outward kingliness. So that when we are at last plainly told in the Epilogue that he shadows Soul in its war with Sense, a sudden clearance of haze seems to take place, and a sort of diffused and luminous gleaming of which we had been dimly conscious all along "orbs into a perfect star" of meaning.

If now we read the poems by the light of this meaning, we shall find the Soul come first before us as a conqueror in a waste and desert land, groaning under mere brute power. Its history before then is dark with doubt and mystery, and the questions about its origin and authority form the main subject of the introductory poem: "Many, themselves the basest, hold it to be base-born, and rage against its rule." —

"And since his ways are sweet,
And theirs are bestial, hold him less than man;
And there be those who hold him more than man
And dream he dropt from heaven." * * *

The inscrutableness of its origin being thus signified, we see next the recognition of its supremacy, and its first act of knighthood the inspiration of the best and bravest near it with a common enthusiasm for Right. The founding of the Order of the Round Table coincides with the solemn crowning of the Soul. Conscience, acknowledged and throned as King, binds at once all the best of human powers together into one brotherhood, and that brotherhood to itself by vows so straight and high, — "That when they rose knighted from kneeling, some were pale as at the passing of a ghost, some flushed, some dazed," etc. At that supreme coronation moment, the Spirit is surrounded and cheered by all the powers and influences which can ever help it;

earthly servants and allies, and heavenly powers and tokens; the knights, to signify the strength of the body; Merlin, the intellect; the Lady of the Lake, who stands for the Church and gives the soul its sharpest and most splendid earthly weapon; and, above all, three fair and mystic queens, "tall, with bright, sweet faces," robed in the living colors sacred to Love and Faith and Hope, which flow upon them from the image of our Lord above. These surely stand for those immortal virtues which only will abide "when all that seems shall suffer shock," and leaning upon which alone, the Soul, when all else falls from it, shall go towards the golden gates of the new and brighter morning.

As the first idyll seems to indicate the coming and the recognition of the Soul, so the ensuing ones show how its influence waxes or wanes in the great battle of life. Through all of these we see the body and its passions gain continually greater sway, till in the end the Spirit's earthly work is thwarted and defeated by the flesh. Its immortality alone remains to it, and with this, a deathless hope. From the sweet spring breezes of "Gareth" and the story of "Geraint and Enid," where the first gush of poisoning passion bows for a time with base suspicion, yet passes and leaves pure a great and simple heart, we are led through "Merlin and Vivien," where, early in the storm, we see great wit and genius yield; and through "Lancelot and Elaine," where the piteous early death of innocence and hope results from it; to the "Holy Grail," where we see Religion itself, under the stress of it, and despite the earnest efforts of the soul, blown into mere fantastic shapes of superstition. In "Pelleas and Ettare" the storm of corruption culminates, whirling the sweet waters of young love and faith out from their proper channels, sweeping them into mist, and casting them in hail upon the land. Then comes the dismal "autumn-dripping gloom" of the "Last Tournament," with its awful and potent close; and then in "Guinevere" the final lightning

stroke, and all the fabric of the earthly life falls smitten into dust, leaving to the soul a broken heart for company, and a conviction that, if in this world only it had hope, it were of all things most miserable.

Thus ends the "Round Table" and the life-long labor of the Soul.

There remains but the passing of the soul "from the great deep to the great deep," and this is the subject of the closing idyll. Here the "last dim, weird battle," fought out in densest mist, stands for a picture of all human death, and paints its awfulness and confusion. The Soul alone enduring beyond the end wherein all else is swallowed up sees the mist clear at last, and finds those three crowned virtues "abiding" true and fast, and waiting to convey it to its rest. Character, formed and upheld by these, is the immortal outcome of mortal life. They wail with it awhile in sympathy for the failure of its earthly plans; but at the very last of all are heard to change their sorrow into songs of joy, and departing vanish into light."

Looking now at the individual parts of the poem, what strikes us most in the "Coming of Arthur" is the doubt and obscurity that cover the origin of the King, that is, of the soul. No two can agree as to it, and every man's judgment is a standard for determining his own character. Merlin, hearing all their conjectures, laughs at all, and answers in half mocking words that show the impotence of the intellect to trace the origin of the soul;

"Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow in the sky!
A young man will be wiser by and by;
An old man's wit may wander 'ere he die.

Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow on the lea!
And truth is this to me, and that to thee:
And truth or clothed or naked let it be.

Rain, sun, and rain! and the free blossom blows;
Sun, rain, and sun! and where is he who knows!
From the great deep to the great deep he goes."

But almost immediately after we have again Merlin's word, as Bellicent tells it;

" Merlin in our time
Hath spoken also, not in jest, and sworn
Tho' men may wound him that he will not die,
But pass, again to come! and then or now
Utterly smite the heathen underfoot,
Till these and all men hail him for their king."

The intellect may not comprehend the soul; whence it came and whither it goes are beyond the range of the intellect; but its supremacy must be acknowledged, its immortality asserted, and its certain victory soon or late, if not in this earth life, then sometime when it returns again, over all that is beneath it. This belief that Arthur cannot die, but only pass to come again, is repeated again and again in the poem.

In the idyll "The Holy Grail" is a description of the great hall of the knights at Camelot, where the King held his court, which seems to me very suggestive.

All the sacred mount of Camelot,
And all the dim, rich city, roof by roof,
Tower after tower, spire beyond spire,
By grove, and garden-lawn, and rushing brook,
Climbs to the mighty hall that Merlin built.
And four great zones of sculpture, set betwixt
With many a mystic symbol, gird the hall;
And in the lowest beasts are slaying man,
And in the second men are slaying beasts,

And on the third are warriors, perfect men,
And on the fourth are men with growing wings,
And over all one statue in the mould
Of Arthur, made by Merlin, with a crown,
And peak'd wings pointed to the Northern Star,
And eastward fronts the statue, and the crown
And both the wings are made of gold, and flame
At sunrise till the people in far fields.
Wasted so often by the heathen hordes.
Behold it, crying, "We have still a King."

Compare with this what the old man says to Gareth of this same city:

"And as thou sayest, it is enchanted, son,
For there is nothing in it as it seems,
Saving the King; tho' some there be that hold
The King a shadow, and the city real."

The Path

THE TIDE OF LIFE: II — *Charles Johnston*

(Annotated by H. P. Blavatsky.)

(*Concluded.*)

"Where the daisies are rose-scented,
And the rose herself has got
Perfume which on earth is not."

Form exists on an ideal plane, as a purely abstract conception; into this region, and the similar one of Number, pure mathematics have penetrated. (1) Modern speculations, (2) as well as the ancient cabalists, have asserted that every geometrical form, as well as every number, has a definite, innate relation to some particular entity on the other planes, to some colour or tone, for instance; and there is good reason to believe that this holds true of all the planes, that the entities on each of them are bound to the entities on all the others by certain spiritual relations which run like threads of gold through the different planes, binding them all together in one Divine Unity. (3) From the standpoint of the terrestrial Globe, the first modifications of the last emanation, Primordial Earth, is the mineral kingdom, in which the primal earthy matter is modified by the element of Form. There is every reason to believe that, if any existing mineral or metal could be reduced to the condition of "primordial earth," it could be re-formed into any other mineral or metal. The specialization of the minerals, or "formation of the mineral kingdom," is perhaps marked in the Genesis-Cosmogony by the words, —

"The Elohim called the dry land Earth,"

Name and Form being cognate attributes of a specialized entity.

As we have seen the gradual evolution of form in the descent from spirit to matter, so the gradual dissipation of form will be seen in the ascent from matter to spirit. The crystal, for example, retains its form always unchanged, and the form of the tree is more lasting than that of the bird or animal. The second modification of the Earth element, still from the standpoint of the world, is the vegetable kingdom, in which to form and substance is added molecular motion, or vitality, called in Brahman cosmologies *Jiva*.

This vitality, or capacity for molecular change, corresponds, as we have seen, to the water element; one of the elements, in ascending order of spirituality, being picked up by each of the successive kingdoms of ascending evolution. The formation of the vegetable kingdom is marked in the Genesis cosmogony by the words —

"The earth brought forth grass, herb yielding seed, and tree bearing fruit,"

words which point to a perfectly natural evolutionary process under the energizing power of spirit — the physical aspect of which is the "Tendency to Evolution" or the Scientists —, and not that violent and unnatural process termed a "creative act."

We may remark, by the way, that the three divisions of the vegetable kingdom in this cosmogony correspond to three perfectly well defined geological epochs, that of the Cryptogams, of the Phaenogams, and of the Fruit-trees, examples of which are respectively ferns, pines, and orange-trees. (4)

These two changes of matter are looked at, as we have said, from the standpoint of the Earth. The cosmogony now pauses, and, in order to make its account of Evolution complete, inserts here the first change of the same element from a different point of view,

that of astronomy. This first change is the congregation of the primal nebulous matter into suns and planets, marked by the words —

"The Elohim said, Let there be Lights in the firmament," the sun, moon, and stars being subsequently particularised. From our previous views of the Elemental Light we shall be fully prepared to infer that, just as what we call sonant bodies seem not to be real sound-creators, but merely sound-reflectors, so these "Lights in the firmament" may not be real light-creators, but merely light-reflectors; and this view is borne out by the fact that in this cosmogony the formation of Light precedes that of the Light-givers. Leaving the astronomical standpoint, let us consider the next step in upward evolution.

To the shape, substance, and vitality of the plant — drawn respectively from the Elements of Form, Earth, and Water — the animal kingdom adds locomotion, corresponding to Air element, one attribute of which we have seen to be that locomotion, or movement as a whole, which distinguishes the animal from the plant. Thus we see another link of the ascending chain of the elements picked up. The earliest representatives of this kingdom are, as modern science has shewn, the *protozoa*, — water-animalcules. Their formation is correctly placed first in the Genesis cosmogony, marked by the words —

"The Elohim said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature which hath life."

Here we again find words which distinctly mark a perfectly natural process of development. Just as we had the earth "bringing forth grass" — or "sprouting forth sproutage," to translate it more literally, — we now have the waters "bringing forth the moving creature which hath life," as soon as proper

cosmic and elemental conditions were presented. If the proper cosmic and elemental conditions could be artificially produced, we have every reason to believe the "tendency of Evolution," or the "Downward pressure of spirit," might again cause the waters to produce the "moving creature which hath life" — the *monera*, — in fact, that what is unscientifically termed "spontaneous generation" might take place. After this follows the formation of fish, birds, and beasts, — the vertebrates or "back boned" creatures; the invertebrates being grouped under the two general heads of the "moving creatures in the water" and the "creeping things upon the earth." In the account of the production of the animal kingdom and of the birds, we have terms used which could only apply to a natural process of development, and not to a "creative act."

"The Elohim said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after its nature, cattle, and the beasts of the earth."

The Animal Kingdom adds to the plant the quality of locomotion under the stimulus of the instincts, — which corresponds, as we have seen, to the air-element. A slight consideration of the nature of this locomotion under stimulus will shew that we are justified in assigning this quality, with its distinctive element, to the principle of *Kama* in certain Eastern classifications. (5) Could this principle — or, rather, the specialised portion of the air-element embodying it — be isolated from the lower elements, we should have a sort of aeriform vehicle, or ethereal body, depending for its form on the attractions specialising it. Of such an isolated air-body we shall speak when we come to treat of the elements.

Three times has the earth *brought forth*, — plants, fishes, animals. But at this point we perceive a change. Evolution so far, from the mineral, through the vegetable, up to the animal, appears as an ascending arc. In this the cosmogony of Genesis agrees with the

sacred theories of the East, as well as with the views of modern science. But in Man we find a turning point, at which the ancient cosmogonies agree in branching off from modern science. The sacred theories of the East teach that man is the result of two converging curves of evolution, the one curve ascending through the vegetable and animal kingdom and marking the evolution of the physical body, while the other curve descends from a superphysical, spiritual race, called by some the "Progenitors" or "*Pitris*," by others the "Planetary Spirits" or "Descending *Dhyān Chohans*." This curve marks the downward evolution of man's spiritual nature, the development of the soul. (6)

As we should expect from the Oriental character and high antiquity of the cosmogony of Genesis, — dating as it does from a time when the "downward evolution of the soul" had not progressed so far as it now has, and when man had not yet lost his spiritual insight — we find this doctrine of man's divine progenitors clearly visible. In the case of the plants, animals, and marine creatures, we found terms applied which could only be used of a regular, unbroken process. When we reach Man, a new and striking expression is introduced —

"The Elohim created man in their image, in the image of the Elohim created they man."

The pressure of the descending evolution of the Planetary Spirits or Elohim — seeking for objective, physical existence — upon the previously formed animal kingdom, caused the evolution of a fitting physical vehicle from the highest representatives of that kingdom. Hence we get physical man as we know him, descended on the one side from the animal kingdom, and on the other from his divine progenitors, the Planetary Spirits. We have compared this dual evolution to two converging curves. A too great attraction towards the material, physical side of man's nature

keeps the modern materialist from seeing more than one of these curves. The modern Scientist is colour-blind to spirit, to him man is merely —

"A quintessence of dust."

But to intuitional minds at the present day, as to our more spiritual ancestors, both curves are visible; besides the physical man they could see the spiritual man

"In action like an angel; in apprehension like a God."

To return to the standpoint from which we viewed the previous kingdoms, we perceive that the introduction of this new factor in evolution corresponds to the addition from above of a new element in the series of ascending spirituality. With man is added the Fire-Element, in its aspect of the divine light of reason. It corresponds to *manas* in Eastern systems. Another aspect of *manas*, considered idealistically this time, by virtue of which it "creates for itself an external world of delight," (7) would correspond to the quality of colour in the fire element. Of the earliest races of men we learn that they were purely frugivorous and perhaps androgyne.

With the formation of man the cosmogony of Genesis closes. We are justified in supposing that, as the union of form with the elements of Earth, Water, Air, and Fire produced the objective Mineral, Vegetable, Animal, and Human kingdoms, so these elements, divorced from Form, should have their appropriate kingdoms of beings, or forms of life, if we can use this term for something so widely different from all ordinary forms of life. These subjective kingdoms of the four elements would correspond to the Rosicrucian conceptions of "primordial earth" and the "Fire, Air, and Water Elementals."

We may go further than this, and, carrying on our inference,

postulate for the spiritual ether, and even for the divine Logos, their appropriate qualities of being. To a conception somewhat similar to what the last of these would involve, the Gnostics gave the name of Eons; for the first — the ether-beings — we have the Indian titles of *gandharva*, — celestial musician, — or *Deva*. But having gone thus far, we are driven a step further. We have already seen all the links in the chain of elements in ascending spirituality picked up one by one by the ascending tide of Evolution, up to the elemental fire; let us advance a step, and postulate that the other two emanations or planes — the Ether-Spirit and the Logos — should ultimately be picked up by the Evolutionary tide. With the resumption of the first, instead of a human being we should have a "Spiritual Man," and from a re-union with the Logos we should have a "Divine Man, Perfected and Eternal," or, giving to these conceptions the names already appropriated to them in the East, we should have in the first case a *Mahatma*, in the second a perfect *Buddha*.

It is now time to point out that the pure elements of Ether, Fire, Air, Water, and Earth are not these bodies as we know them. The five classes of objects (corresponding to these five elements) known to us, being all on the physical plane, all belong properly to a single category, and may be called for the sake of distinction the Mundane Elements. To make this clearer, let us suppose that Mundane Earth — the mineral kingdom in its various forms — is composed of five parts of the element earth, while Mundane Water (everything cognized by the sense of taste) is composed of four parts of the element of earth added to one part of the element of water. Similarly the Air-element known to us on the physical plane (corresponding, as we have seen, to the sense of touch) is composed of four parts of the earth element, with one part of the pure elemental air added; and the Fire and Ether elements as known to our physical or waking consciousness are

each composed of four parts — with one part of fire and ether respectively added.

These considerations will prepare us to believe that the real elements are purer and more spiritual than their representatives on the physical plane, (8) and that they will be represented by different compounds on each plane (or as it is called in some works, *planet*) on the water plane (or planet): for instance, what we may for convenience term Undine Earth will be represented by four parts of the Water element and one part of the earth-element; Undine water will be five parts elemental water; while Undine air will be composed of four parts elemental water, added to one part elemental air, and so on.

The composition of the elements as present on each plane or planet may similarly be deduced by observing carefully the principle which governs these combinations. We should warn our readers that these examples are given by way of illustration, and not as representing accurately and numerically the combined elements as they actually occur; they are really formed on a much more complex principle. (9)

In our illustrations we have, for convenience sake, confined ourselves to the five objective elements, though of course it must not be forgotten that the energising spirit runs through the whole series on every plane.

The pure spiritual or elemental ether is the macrocosmic counterpart of that principle of the microcosm termed *Buddhi* by eastern mystics. (10)

The Logos corresponds to *Atma* in the same speculations.

We have seen that to the four principles — Form or *Linga*, Vitality or *Jiva*, Substance or *Sthula Sarira*, motion under desire or *Kama* — of the animal, Man has added a fifth, — corresponding to the

macrocosmic elemental Fire, — human reason, or *Manas*.

Our speculations as to the two superhuman Kingdoms are also in harmony with these eastern theories; the element of *Buddhi* being added to form the *Mahatma*; and *Atma* completing the *Buddha*, perfected and divine.

The perfect Buddha, though not possessing a physical body, or, indeed, being united to principles on any of the objective planes, will still retain the spiritual counterparts of these principles, corresponding to groups of experiences gained on each plane. It is by these spiritual principles that the *Buddha* is richer than the *AEon*; it is in virtue of them that the *Ascending* excels the *Descending Planetary Spirit*, or *Dhyan Chohan*. These spiritual principles constitute the end and aim of evolution, and justify the cosmic expansion and involution.

The evolutionary tide, in generating the higher kingdoms, has flowed, as we have seen, from the earth-element towards pure Spirit. In obedience to this tendency, man in achieving his apotheosis must, gradually loosing his hold on the world of Matter, add to his treasure in the worlds divine; until humanity becomes ever freer, stronger, and more perfect, and returns at last, refreshed, to his home in the bosom of the perfect God.

FOOTNOTES:

1. It is through the power to see and use these "abstract" forms that the Adept is able to evolve before our eyes any object desired — a miracle to the Christian, a fraud for the materialist. Countless myriads of forms are in that ideal sphere, and matter exists in the astral light, or even in the atmosphere, that has passed through all forms possible for us to conceive of. All that the Adept has to do is to select the "abstract form" desired, then to hold it before him with a force and intensity unknown to the men of this

hurried age, while he draws into its boundaries the matter required to make it visible. How easy this to state, how difficult to believe; yet quite true, as many a theosophist very well knows. The oftener this is done with any one form, the easier it becomes. And so it is with nature: her ease of production grows like a habit. — [H. P. B.] ([return to text](#))

2. "Geometrical Psychology," Miss Louisa Cook. ([return to text](#))

3. Here is the key so much desired by enterprising indeed all — students. It is by means of these correlations of color, sound, form, number, and substance — that the trained will of the Initiate rules and uses the denizens of the elemental world. Many theosophists have had slight conscious relations with elementals, but always without their will acting, and, upon trying to make elementals see, hear, or act for them, a total indifference on the part of the nature spirit is all they have got in return. These failures are due to the fact that the elemental cannot understand the thought of the person: it can only be reached when the exact scale of being to which it belongs is vibrated whether it be that of color, form, sound, or whatever else. — [H. P. B.] ([return to text](#))

4. For further information on this point readers are referred to "The Color-Sense" by Grant Allen. ([return to text](#))

5. Vide "Esoteric Buddhism," chapter on "The constitution of man." ([return to text](#))

6. There is an important point in the teachings of the Secret Doctrine which has been continually neglected. The above described evolution — the spiritual falling into the physical, or from mineral up to man, takes place only during the 1st of the two subsequent Rounds. At the beginning of the fourth "Round" in the middle of which begins the turning point upward — *i. e.* from the physical up to the spiritual, man is said to appear before

anything else on earth, the vegetation which covered the earth belonging to the 3d Round, and being quite etherial, transparent. The first man (Humanity) is Etherial too, for he is but the shadow (*Chhaya*) "in the image" of his progenitors, because he is the "astral body" or image of his *Pitar* (father). This is why in India gods are said to have no shadows. After which and from this primeval race, evolution supplies man with a "coat of skin" from the terrestrial elements and kingdom — mineral, vegetable, and animal. — [H. P. B.] ([return to text](#))

7. Vide Sankaracharya's "*Viveka Chudamani*." ([return to text](#))

8. This is one reason for calling the objective phenomenal world an "illusion." It is an illusion and ever impermanent because the matter of which the objects are composed continually returns to the primordial condition of matter, where it is invisible to mortal eyes. The earth, water, air, and fire that we think we see are respectively only the effects produced on our senses by the primordial matter held in either of the combinations that bring about the vibration properly belonging to those classes: the moment the combination is entirely broken, the phenomena cease and we see the objects no more. — [H. P. B.] ([return to text](#))

9. Vide Man; Fragments of Forgotten History, p. 13 note. ([return to text](#))

10. Vide "Esoteric Buddhism." ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE THEOSOPHICAL FIELD — *Jasper Niemand*

After more than a dozen years of theosophical activity the question arises: "Where is the best field for Theosophy?" It is coupled with the admission that Theosophy does not recognize the missionary spirit; it does not believe in what are called "converts" to any great extent. Proclaiming the entire freedom of man, the dignity and sacredness of the human soul. it does not run about attacking the Ideals of others, nor yet thrusting Truth upon the crowd as a huckster bawls his wares. In this Theosophy is preeminently well bred; it teaches one to mind his own affairs. In recognition of this liberality the attitude of theosophical workers is that of persons who stand ready at all times to answer or instruct questioners without going out into the highway to drag them in. They know that only those persons are ready for Theosophy who have grown up to it, who have gradually evolved to it through their inner experience. There is no need to importune such persons; they seek us out.

The Theosophical Society has had, of course, to suffer from the advances of those who want to use it as a stalking horse, or those who think that occultism may for a time afford them a piquante pose; also from that elegant condescension which is the thin enamel to innate vulgarity, worn by persons who imagine that they can confer a service or a prestige upon Universal Truth. This is much as a festoon of attitudinizing monkeys may imagine they lend a lustre to some spreading monarch of the forest. A fond conceit, worthy of our puling civilization, leads these immature individuals to imagine that their money, their touting, or their small names are gifts of price to the Religion of the Ages, and should be gratefully recognized. They may do much for themselves through Theosophy, but for *it* they can do nothing

whatever. Universals have their root in Being, and man can only lift himself to them. He must come to need them; he must feel that the Truth is an imperious, an absolute, necessity in his life, before he is ready to make sacrifices for it. He is inevitably called to sacrifice, in some form or other, as the world uses the word.

When the ploughman rends the wild soil: when the pruner uses the hook or the sculptor smites the redundancy of marble into dust as the fair form emerges, they do not use the word sacrifice at all; neither does the theosophist when he endeavors to break the clay mould and find within it the Magnum Opus. Theosophy is "blind to all the prizes of the world; it has nothing to offer men but the Truth and a search for the Truth, and they must be well out of the nursery and leading strings before they can participate in either; they must be wholly able to stand alone. In the same way the Theosophical Society welcomes all well-intentioned persons, but, whether consciously or not, every member gains more than he or she gives. They share in the magnetic life of a powerful organization, using the word powerful in the sense of real, essential power. If they do not understand the force and value of this privilege they are out of place in the Society: the more they give in sympathy, harmony, or any kind of encouragement, the higher the blessings they receive.

It was supposed, and perhaps naturally, that the best field for theosophical teachings would be found among the cultured classes. The world was to be convinced of error, and an appeal to the intellect seemed in order. Moreover, their influence and example would react upon classes less favored (apparently) by karmic circumstance, and would induce these to follow the lead of their more educated contemporaries. It seemed to some that the leaven would work best from above downward.

Events have not justified this conclusion. Many persons of the highest intelligence and culture have accepted Theosophy. Some

of them are our most valued workers, and he can do the most work who has the most ability to make himself heard by his fellow men. For the worldly plane this holds good incontestably. All that such members have done for Humanity and for themselves cannot be overstated. The heroic and revered Madame Blavatsky stands at their head, but beyond and above our arguments because of her attainments and leadership. Yet the fact that we have found able champions in this class does not controvert that other fact that such members are numerically rare. They are outnumbered by others of their order who content themselves with intellectual appreciation and a watch for flotsam and jetsam in the way of knowledge, ready in a moment to desert.

Theosophy is not a creed, but a new life to be lived, and the question is; "Where shall we find the most persons who are ready to live it?" In the opinion of the writer they are to be found among the working class, so far as the United States is concerned. This belief is based upon radical differences inherent in these classes themselves. The term "working class" may be used for the purposes of this article, and includes all wage earners, especially artizans, mechanics, clerks, and various employees of both sexes. In itself the term is a misnomer, because in the United States we are nearly all workers.

The very first condition of Theosophical progress is the abandonment of the personality. This includes the ability to discard all our preconceptions and ideals for the Truth, for that stands above all human ideals. While searching for the Truth, "the processes of preparation go silently on till the individual, all unconscious, reaches the moment when the one needed force touches him, and then every prepared constituent falls instantly into place and the being is — as it were — reconstructed at once. Conceptions, relations, aims are revolutionized." Until this moment comes, the individual must possess the power of

standing uninfluenced by all external conditions. He must be able to think from and for himself; there must be no attraction for any other aim; he must hold himself fluidic and free.

Apart from educational advantages and a quickened intelligence, the cultured classes have the additional ones of worldly experience, observation, and comparison. But they are like the microscopist who loses the ensemble in the ramification of detail; it is a very transient and small world that they know so well. They eat the fruit, but of the orchard they know less than nothing in their mistaken conceptions of life. They are to some extent cosmopolitan, but only in a surface sense and in limited degree as compared with your occultist, the cosmopolitan *pur sang* who must be equally at home, not only in all lands and spheres, but in all elements. They have reached an infinite perfection of detail; they have an extensive and varied knowledge of effects — such effects as art, science, statecraft, literature, and less noble interests —, but they are too far dazzled by these to think of looking behind them for causes. Their advantages weight them enormously by what the French call "the defects of their qualities." They have so much that they fear to lose! They are bound by the million cobwebs of social prejudice, of public opinion, of their family or personal record. There is nothing so confining as cobwebs. Chains may be broken by native strength, but of cobwebs we are scarcely aware; we think to brush them away, but they cling and obstruct the clear sight. In the very nature of circumstances the position of the cultured man or woman is largely based upon suffrage a la mode. Wealth may command it, but this also traps us with innumerable enticements; the more refined our nature, the more subtle, the more enchanting these pleasures may be made. The intellectual have formed mental habits which they cannot break, or, if they can, they will not. These processes have made them what they are, and

they value what they are. They are encrusted with a growth which seems to them precisely the most desirable in the world. They are the aloe flower of an elaborate although shallow civilization; they have forced themselves with exceeding great care. They have exquisite ideals; their creeds are pure, their code of honor subtle; whether they carry them out or not, there is nothing finer to be found outside of Theosophy. Their personalities are thus their gods; they cannot become self-iconoclasts. They are ready to seek Truth, even, upon accepted lines, but they dare not trust themselves outside of those lines in transgression of that social code by virtue of which they are pre-eminent. They do not see that this pre-eminence is that of a weather cock upon a steeple; their position depends upon prompt subserviency to self-imposed tyrants. It is impossible for them to look at facts in their own light; it is not done; what would people say? You who demand it, you Truth, you are *impractical*: this is the final anathema of the 19th Century, and a great bugbear for conservative souls. If Truth clashes with our present institutions, let us have Truth and build up a better civilization. They demur: no doubt they suspect they would have but little hand in it. The cultured classes are thus prevented by all the tendencies and surroundings of their lives from thinking independently. They have given too many hostages to fortune. Numbers have an intellectual appreciation of Theosophy, but that does not carry one far; they become disheartened for want of personal progress. Like the Prince of fairy tales who climbed the hill of Difficulty for the golden water, they hear the voices of the stones behind them flouting, jeering, calling them back: they falter, turn, and become stones like their predecessors. Others feel an emotional attraction, but heart alone may lead to hysteria quite as well as to sympathy. Their vivid charm, their intelligence, and their virtues are beside the question. They are too preoccupied to have any intuitions of an underlying current of real life. What is needed is

interior conviction, freedom, imagination, elasticity, a superb audacity, perfect fearlessness of all results, confidence in one's own soul as the arbiter of destiny, an entire independence, even of one's own mind: we must be swift to seize the floating clues which drift by us in the darkness; we must have a prescience of the unseen. All this the cultured classes cannot have while they lean upon personages and an arbitrary social system like houses of cards. They would ask what Theosophy has to offer in return for so much effort, and when we answer "The Truth," they would reply courteously that they are satisfied as it is. This is not true; they are not satisfied, but they are epicurean; they dread knowing anything less delightful than themselves. I would not be misunderstood, I who feel their peculiar charm so keenly. When from this hotbed arises a nature capable of freeing itself, capable of self reliance, of accepting Truth without counting any cost, that nature makes itself respected everywhere; it is a centre of energy, and Theosophy has a priceless co-adjutor. The combination is rare because the conditions are unfavorable. We have the statement of Christ for believing that "it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of an needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God," — the mystical region which He said is "within us."

With the working classes the case stands otherwise. In the social order they have no traditions, no Molochs they fear to offend. They are not the slaves of their ideals, but with the first dawn of leisure they look about for an ideal, and they test those of other men. They have come into contact with a more brutal phase of error. Materiality has exhibited itself to them in its grossest aspect; they have not seen it sensuously apparelled, or mounted upon a pedestal of Intellectuality with crowds of fame-worshippers at the base. Illusion wears for them a mask of iron instead of an alluring veil. They have been blinded by sorrow

rather than joy. They feel an instant need of Truth. She is within their grasp, who can reach so little else. When she comes to them she is welcomed as Deliverer; their love penetrates her meaning better than the unaided intellect does. They have a more eager gratitude, a sleepless desire to pass the benefit along to others. It seems as if this leaven works best from below upward in American life, where the substratum soon works to the surface and manifests then in power.

The working class are untrammelled by the subtleties of modern thought. They may be tricked, but they take no delight in tricking themselves. Like Alexander, they sever Gordian Knots bluntly: they are able to look squarely at a proposition on its own merits without a sidelong glance at Mrs. Grundy. They have no received and duly-approved yardstick by which they feel bound to measure all things at the risk of the lowered barometer of public opinion. There is not here, as there is in England, an ironclad code of opinions and customs which constitutes the "respectability" of the worker, and which he owes to all the neighbors "in the block." They are moral because they choose to be so, and each feels free to think as he pleases. In fact, next to education they value independence of thought. To them, thinking is a luxury where to the cultured it is often a bore; this because the latter think more tortuously. They are influenced by knowledge; they know that it is power. But they discriminate; they value only that which seems to them to be vital and true; for them there is no fashion in knowledge which changes with the seasons. They are not influenced by the cultured classes, for these are largely recruited every year from their own. They are intensely conscious of their own possibilities. They know that they are the bone and sinews of the country; it has been demonstrated to them by so many of their fellows, now at the head of affairs in all departments, even those of cultured wealth.

A future of power is not a far cry to their ambition. While the other class is occupied in maintaining its consolidation, this one is occupied with becoming, and knows that men raise themselves by independent thought, by qualities fostered within themselves. They yield quickly to the flux of change, and their mental activities remain unstratified. These are conditions eminently favorable to Theosophy.

If Theosophy were a creed with churches, clergy, and charities to support and a prestige to maintain, the patronage of culture per se might be necessary to it. Instead of this, it is, as we said, a life to live. It is the water of life for those who thirst, and for water, not for wine, for strength, not for excitement. It teaches man to look within and beyond himself while relying upon himself: this lesson the worker already comprehends. The greater simplicity of his life is free from the involved complexities, the manifold interests of modern social existence, where these things are forever stifling the natural instincts of men. The majority have an intuitive belief in the reality of the unseen; it arises from the greater impersonality of their life, their identification with popular currents. Many have had occult experiences of various kinds: this will not surprise students who know that such would be far more common if our lives were not passed in a continual whirl of external excitement. The case of Jacob Boehme, the poor shoemaker, illustrates these arguments; indeed it would seem that almost all the great mystics came from the poorer order.

Again, what Theosophy has to offer is more needed by the working class. They feel the inequality of Fortune most; it is they who need that explanation of fate which is found in Karma, that consolation which the law of reaction (or compensation) affords. It is even the poor, the wretched, the sinful who have found the hard side of the professor of religion, found that it is his sense of isolation, of separation, which makes the bread of his charity so

bitter. They have found that the gentlest philanthropist of them all does not believe or follow his Christ in this, — he does not recognize the brotherhood of man. They have found that the deed of love alone relieves. Sorrow has taught them many truths unsoftened by a sympathizing circle of friends. Life is better known to them than to those who only look upon it after it has been upholstered and well aired. They have learned concentration, patience, endurance; they have mastered the body in many ways. They have everything to gain by Theosophy and little to lose. They are too sturdy, too ingenious, too argumentative for worn-out creeds to hold them in their exoteric forms: the esoteric might, — but who hopes soon for that apotheosis? The cultured classes make little impression upon American life at large; it is everywhere the worker who rises and holds his own.

Just as we believe that America is the great field for Theosophy because the momentum of progress is so great here, so we believe that among the laboring classes the largest harvest is to be reaped. I doubt not this holds good in other countries, notwithstanding the weight of the aristocratic classes, because I see everywhere a tendency to Unity, I see the on coming surge of the People and the working of that Principle which determines the Brotherhood of Man.

The Path

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM: II

ELEMENTALS AND ELEMENTARIES.

Student. — "If I understand you, an elemental is a centre of force, without intelligence, without moral character or tendencies, but capable of being directed in its movements by human thoughts, which may, consciously or not, give it any form, and to a certain extent intelligence; in its simplest form it is visible as a disturbance in a transparent medium, such as would be produced by 'a glass fish, so transparent as to be invisible, swimming through the air of the room,' and leaving behind him a shimmer, such as hot air makes when rising from a stove. Also, elementals, attracted and vitalized by certain thoughts, may effect a lodgment in the human system (of which they then share the government with the ego), and are very hard to get out."

Sage. — "Correct, in general, except as to their 'effecting a lodgment.' Some classes of elementals, however, have an intelligence of their own and a character, but they are far beyond our comprehension and ought perhaps to have some other name.

"That class which has most to do with us answers the above description. They are centres of force or energy which are acted on by us while thinking and in other bodily motions. We also act on them and give them form by a species of thought which we have no register of. As, one person might shape an elemental so as to seem like an insect, and not be able to tell whether he had thought of such a thing or not. For there is a vast unknown country in each human being which he does not himself understand until he has tried, and then only after many initiations.

"That 'elementals may effect a lodgment in the human system, of which they then share the government, and are very hard to get out' is, as a whole, incorrect. It is only in certain cases that any one or more elementals are attracted to and 'find lodgment in the human system.' In such cases special rules apply. We are not considering such cases. The elemental world interpenetrates this, and is therefore eternally present in the human system.

"As it (the elemental world) is automatic and like a photographic plate, all atoms continually arriving at and departing from the 'human system' are constantly assuming the impression conveyed by the acts and thoughts of that person, and therefore, if he sets up a strong current of thought, he attracts elementals in greater numbers, and they all take on one prevailing tendency or color, so that all new arrivals find a homogeneous color or image which they instantly assume. On the other hand, a man who has many diversities of thought and meditation is not homogeneous, but, so to say, parti-colored, and so the elementals may lodge in that part which is different from the rest and go away in like condition. In the first case it is one mass of elementals similarly vibrating or electrified and colored, and in that sense may be called one elemental, in just the same way that we know one man as Jones, although for years he has been giving off and taking on new atoms of gross matter."

Student. — "If they are attracted and repelled by thoughts, do they move with the velocity of thought, say from here to the planet Neptune?"

Sage. — "They move with the velocity of thought. In their world there is no space or time as we understand those terms. If Neptune be within the astral sphere of this world, then they go there with that velocity, otherwise not; but that 'if' need not be solved now."

Student. — "What determines their movements besides thought, — e.g. when they are floating about the room?"

Sage. — "Those other classes of thoughts above referred to; certain exhalations of beings; different rates and ratios of vibration among beings; different changes of magnetism caused by present causes or by the moon and the year; different polarities; changes of sound; changes of influences from other minds at a distance."

Student. — "When so floating, can they be seen by any one, or only by those persons who are clairvoyant?"

Sage. — "Clairvoyance is a poor word. They can be seen by partly clairvoyant people. By all those who can see thus; by more people, perhaps, than are aware of the fact."

Student. — "Can they be photographed, as the rising air from the hot stove can?"

Sage. — "Not to my knowledge yet. It is not impossible, however."

Student. — "Are they the lights, seen floating about a dark seance room by clairvoyant people?"

Sage. — "In the majority of cases those lights are produced by them."

Student. — "Exactly what is their relation to light, that makes it necessary to hold seances in the dark?"

Sage. — "It is not *their* relation to light that makes darkness necessary, but the fact that light causes constant agitation and alteration in the magnetism of the room. All these things can be done just as well in the light of day.

"If should be able to make clear to you 'exactly what is their relation to light,' then you would know what has long been kept

secret, the key to the elemental world. This is kept guarded because it is a dangerous secret. No matter how virtuous you are, you could not — once you knew the secret — prevent the knowledge getting out into the minds of others who would not hesitate to use it for bad purposes."

Student. — "I have noticed that attention often interferes with certain phenomena; thus a pencil will not write when watched, but writes at once when covered; or a mental question cannot be answered till the mind has left it and gone to something else. Why is this?"

Sage. — "This kind of attention creates confusion. In these things we use desire, will, and knowledge. The desire is present, but knowledge is absent. When the desire is well formed and attention withdrawn, the thing is often done; but when our attention is continued we only interrupt, because we possess only half attention. In order to use attention, it must be of that sort which can hold itself to the point of a needle for an indefinite period of time."

Student. — "I have been told that but few people can go to a seance without danger to themselves, either of some spiritual or astral contamination, or of having their vitality depleted for the benefit of the spooks, who suck the vital force out of the circle through the medium, as if the former were a glass of lemonade and the latter a straw. How is this?"

Sage. — "Quite generally this happens. It is called Bhut worship by the Hindus."

Student. — "Why are visitors at a seance often extremely and unaccountably tired next day?"

Sage. — "Among other reasons, because mediums absorb the vitality for the use of the 'spooks,' and often vile vampire

elementaries are present."

Student. — "What are some of the dangers at seances?"

Sage. — "The scenes visible — in the Astral — at seances are horrible, inasmuch as these 'spirits' — bhuts — precipitate themselves upon sitters and mediums alike; and as there is no seance without having present some or many bad elementaries — half dead human beings, — there is much vampirising going on. These things fall upon the people like a cloud or a big octopus, and disappear within them as if sucked in by a sponge. That is one reason why it is not well to attend them in general.

"Elementaries are not all bad, but, in a general sense, they are not good. They are shells, no doubt of that. Well, they have much automatic and seemingly intelligent action left if they are those of strongly material people who died attached to the things of life. If of people of an opposite character, they are not so strong. Then there is a class which are really not dead, such as suicides, and sudden deaths, and highly wicked people. They are powerful. Elementals enter into all of them, and thus get a fictitious personality and intelligence wholly the property of the shell. They galvanize the shell into action, and by its means can see and hear as if beings themselves, like us. The shells are, in this case, just like a sleepwalking human body. They will through habit exhibit the advancement they got while in the flesh. Some people, you know, do not impart to their bodily molecules the habit of their minds to as great extent as others. We thus see why the utterances of these so-called 'spirits' are never ahead of the highest point of progress attained by living human beings, and why they take up the ideas elaborated day-by-day by their votaries. This seance worship is what was called in Old India the worship of the Pretas and Bhuts and Pisachas and Gandharvas.

"I do not think any elementary capable of motive had ever any

other than a bad one; the rest are nothing, they have no motive and are only the shades refused passage by Charon."

Student. — "What is the relation between sexual force and phenomena?"

Sage. — "It is at the bottom. This force is vital, creative, and a sort of reservoir. It may be lost by mental action as well as by physical. In fact its finer part is dissipated by mental imaginings, while physical acts only draw off the gross part, that which is the "carrier" (upadhi) for the finer."

Student. — "Why do so many mediums cheat, even when they can produce real phenomena?"

Sage. — "It is the effect of the use of that which in itself is sublimated cheating, which, acting on an irresponsible mind, causes the lower form of cheat, of which the higher is any illusionary form whatever. Besides, a medium is of necessity unbalanced somewhere.

"They deal with these forces for pay, and that is enough to call to them all the wickedness of time. They use the really gross sorts of matter, which causes inflammation in corresponding portions of the moral character, and hence divagations from the path of honesty. It is a great temptation. You do not know, either, what fierceness there is in those who 'have paid' for a sitting and wish 'for the worth of their money.'"

Student. — "When a clairvoyant, as a man did here a year ago, tells me that 'he sees a strong band of spirits about me,' and among them an old man who says he is a certain eminent character, what does he really see? Empty and senseless shells? If so, what brought them there? Or elementals which have got their form from my mind or his?"

Sage. — "Shells, I think, and thoughts, and old astral pictures. If, for instance, you once saw that eminent person and conceived great respect or fear for him, so that his image was graven in your astral sphere in deeper lines than other images, it would be seen for your whole life by seers, who, if untrained, — as they all are here —, could not tell whether it was an image or reality; and then each sight of it is a revivification of the image.

"Besides, not all would see the same thing. Fall down, for instance, and hurt your body, and that will bring up all similar events and old forgotten things before any seer's eye.

"The whole astral world is a mass of illusion; people see into it, and then, through the novelty of the thing and the exclusiveness of the power, they are bewildered into thinking they actually see true things, whereas they have only removed one thin crust of dirt."

Student. — "Accept my thanks for your instruction."

Sage. — "May you reach the terrace of enlightenment."

The Path

THE BHAGAVAD GITA:VIII — *William Brehon*

(Continued from May number.)

We have seen that Devotion must be attained by that student who desires to reach enlightenment. This is what is meant by Krishna's reply to Arjuna, at the conclusion of the second chapter.

"When he has put away all desires which enter the heart, and is satisfied by the Self in himself, he is then said to be confirmed in spiritual knowledge."

It is not possible to be wholly given up to the dictates of the Spirit while any desires that come into the heart are permitted to engross the attention.

Of course the person described here is one who has gone much higher in development than most of us have been able to. But we ought to set up a high ideal at which to aim, for a low one gives a lower result at the expense of the same effort. We should not put before us an aim less than the highest merely because it seems that our success will not be as great as we think it ought to be. It is not so much the clearly perceived outward result that counts, as the motive, effort, and aim, for judgment is not passed upon us among the things of sense where human time exists, but in that larger sphere of being where time ceases, and where we are confronted by what *we are* and not by what we have done. That which we have done touches us only in mortal life among the delusions of material existence; but the motives with which we live our lives go to make up our greater being, our larger life, our truer self. Do actions we must, for no mortal can live without performing actions: those bring us back to earth for many weary incarnations, perhaps to final failure, unless the lesson is learned

that they must be done with the right motive and the true aim. That stage reached, they affect us no more, for, like Krishna, we become the perfect performers of all action. And in so far as we purify and elevate the motive and the aim, we become spiritually enlightened, reaching in time the power to see what should be done and what refrained from.

Many would-be occultists, as well as some theosophists, leave out of sight this chapter's teaching. Devotion has no charms for them; they leave it to those who would be good men, no matter what their creed or philosophy, and attention is paid to reading books, either new or old, upon magic, upon ceremonial, or any other of the manifold delusions. Nor is this erroneous practice newly risen. It was common among the alchemists, and the result in some cases is that students now waste valuable years in mastering ceremonial, Rosicrucianism, talismanic lore, and what not, as laid down in the books, while all of it is either useless mental lumber or positively dangerous.

I do not mean it to be understood that there never was real Rosicrucianism, or that ceremonial magic yields no results, or that there is no science of talismans. There are realities of which these, as now known, are shadows. But we might as well expect to find the soul by attentively studying the body, as to know the truths behind the influence of talismans or ceremonial magic by studying the books now extant upon those subjects. The mediaeval so-called magicians have left a mass of writings that are now a delusion and a snare for students, theosophical and non-theosophical. In these are minute directions for various sorts of practices, but they are all the attempts of men to enable mortals, by methods altogether outward, to control the astral or natural world. Success did not come to these practitioners, nor will much else save failure be the portion of those of our own day who follow their directions. In most cases of the old European so-

called sorcerers and writers on magic, their published lucubrations are only salves to disappointed vanity; in the rest, mere reduplications of formulae left by their predecessors. Paracelsus positively declares that true magic is within the man — a part of his inner nature, potential at first, active after development, and that ceremonies or formulae are the veriest rubbish unless the person using them is himself a magician.

In the practice of ceremonial magic, where certain geometrical and other figures are to be used with the aid of prayers and invocations, there lies positive danger. This danger is increased if the student follows the practice for the sake of gain or glory or power or mere wonder seeking, — all of these being selfish. In this ceremonial the operator, or self-styled magus, surrounds himself with a circle or an arrangement of triangles, the use and purpose of which are to protect him from whatever sprites he may arouse. Mark that well! It is for *protection*. Protection of this sort would not be needed or thought of unless a fear lurked inside that the shades or demons had power to hurt. So at the outset, fear, the product of ignorance, is fully present. The next important thing to be noted is that a sword has to enter into the conjuration. This is advised because the demons are said to fear sharp steel. Now Jesus said that he who lived by the sword should perish by the sword. By this he meant just what we are talking about. Ceremonial magic involves at almost every step the use of a sword. After the invocator or magus has used the ceremonial, say with success, for some time, he at last creates within his aura, or what Swedenborg called his sphere, a duplicate of what he had previously used and pictured on the floor or walls. In this he is no longer master, for, it being placed in that part of his nature of which he is ignorant, the sword of metal becomes an astral sword with the handle held by the demons or influences he unwisely raised. They then attack him where no defence can be interposed

— on the astral and mental planes, and, just as surely as the wise man's words were uttered, he at last perishes by the weapon he himself used. This danger, thus roughly outlined, is no mere figment of the brain. It is positive, actual, immanent in the practice. No book study will give a man the power to make the constitutional changes, as well as psychical alterations, needed before he is commander of immaterial forces. But these latter may be temporarily evoked and made acquainted with us by pursuing certain methods. That is the beginning. Their turn is sure to come, and, obeying a law of their nature, they take what has sometimes been called their "revenge." For all such practices call only upon the lower, unspiritual part of our nature, and that clothes such beings with corresponding attributes. Their "revenge" consists in bringing on inflammations in the moral character which will eventuate in a development of evil passions, atrophy of concentration, destruction of memory, ending at last in a miserable conclusion to life, an almost total failure to use the opportunities for progress presented by that incarnation. Therefore I said, it is all either useless mental lumber or positively dangerous.

In history and in our own experience there is abundant evidence that the Bhagavad-Gita is right in saying "spiritual knowledge includes every action without exception," and that it is to be attained by means of devotion. Ignorant men who had no access to books have by their inward sense perceived the real truth of things, not only those round about them, but relating to the larger concerns of nature. Jacob Boehme was wholly unlettered, but he knew the truth. His writings show an acquaintance, not to be then gained from books, with the true doctrines found in the Hindu scriptures and secret books. In Germany today are men known to me, who, more unlearned yet than Jacob Boehme was, know many things still mysteries for our learned theosophists who can

boast of college education. The reason is that these men have attained to devotion, and thereby cleared away from before the eye of the soul the clouds of sense whose shadows obscure our view of truth. I do not decry or despise learning: it is a great possession: but if the learned man were also a devoted one in the sense of the Bhagavad-Gita, how much wider would be the sweep of his intellection no one could calculate.

Learning of the human sort is not despised among the highest occultists, even among the Adepts. They use it and acquire it. They accumulate *the record* of the experiences of seers and devoted men of small learning for long periods of time, until a great master of both learning and devotion arises who, by reason of his profound knowledge joined to devotion, can make the wonderful deductions in the possession of The Lodge respecting matters so far beyond us that they can with difficulty be imagined. But this again proves that devotion is the first and best, for these extraordinary Masters would not appear unless devotion had been the aim of their existence.

Without devotion a vast confusion arises within us that has been likened by some to a whirling motion, by others to the inrushing, overpowering flow of turbid waters. Boehme calls it in some aspects "The Turba." It is the delusion produced by the senses. And so Krishna, in closing the second lecture, say:

"Let a man, restraining all these, remain in devotion when at rest, and intent on me alone. For he whose senses are under his control possesses spiritual knowledge.

Attachment to objects of sense arises in a man who meditates upon them; from attachment arises desire; from desire passion springs up; from passion comes bewilderment; from bewilderment, confusion of the memory; from confusion of the memory, destruction of the

intellect; from destruction of the intellect he perishes.

But he who approaches the objects of sense with senses free from love and hate and beneath his own control, having his soul well-disposed, attains to tranquility of thought. In this tranquillity there springs up in him a separation from all troubles. For the mind of him whose thoughts are tranquil soon becomes perfect in concentration."

A very beautiful portion of the Sanatsujativa maybe read with profit here. (1)

"Some say that freedom from death results from action; and others that death exists not. Hear me explain this, O King! have no misgivings about it.

"Both truths, O Kshatriva, have been current from the beginning. The wise maintain what is called delusion to be death. I verily call heedlessness death: and likewise I call freedom from heedlessness immortality. Through heedlessness verily were the demons vanquished; and through freedom from it the gods attained to the Brahman. Death, verily, does not devour living creatures like a tiger; for, indeed, his form is not to be perceived. Heedlessness develops in men as desire, and afterwards as wrath, and in the shape of delusion. And then traveling in devious paths, through egoism, one does not attain to union with the Self. Those who are deluded by it, and who remain under its influence, depart from this world and then again fall down into generation. Then the senses gather round them. And then they undergo death after death. Being attached to the fruit of action, on action presenting itself, they follow after it and do not cross beyond death. And the embodied self, in consequence of not understanding union with the real

entity, proceeds on all hands with attachments to enjoyments. That, verily, is the great source of delusion to the senses: for, by contact with unreal entities, his migrations are rendered inevitable; because, having his inner self contaminated by contact with unreal entities, he devotes himself to objects of sense on all sides, pondering on them only. That pondering first confuses him, and soon afterwards desire and wrath attack him. These lead children to death. But sensible men cross beyond death by their good sense. He who, pondering on the Self, destroys the fugitive objects of sense, not even thinking of them through contempt for them, and who, being possessed of knowledge, destroys desires in this way, becomes, as it were, the death of Death itself, and swallows it up."

The second chapter ends with a declaration of what is the sort of death that results in union with the Divine, preventing absolutely any return to incarnations upon earth. It is found in the sentences:

"That man who, casting off all desires, acts without attachment to results, free from egotism and selfishness, attains to tranquility. This is the condition of the Supreme Being, O Son of Pritha! Having obtained this, one is not troubled; and remaining in it, even at the time of death, he passes on to extinction (or union with) the Supreme Spirit."

Those are the last words of the second chapter.

Any other mental attitude at the time of passing away will surely cause us to acquire a mortal body again.

Krishna's declaration brings up before us, not only the practices previously inculcated, but also the whole subject of death. For, in order to know how to "think of Him at the moment of death," or

to have that tranquility which only perfection of devotion confers, we must find out what death is, and whether it is solely what we see going on at the decease of a human being, or more than can be gauged with the eye. A little reflection shows that what is seen and noted by physicians and spectators is but the withdrawal of the soul and energy from the outer envelope called "body." While that is going on, the person may accept rites of the church or profess adherence to any sort of doctrine whatever, even with his last outward sigh speak of heaven with its bliss awaiting him. But that is only the first step. It leaves his visible features calm and happy, perhaps, in expression; his relatives close his eyes, — they call it death. He, however, has only begun to die. The soul has yet to pass through other envelopes beyond the ken of friends, beyond even the dying man's present control. All now depends upon the whole course and kind of thought in which he indulged during the life of the body. For the soul has to pass along the road by which it came, and that way is lined with the memories of a life-time; as these memories rise up they affect the departing entity, causing it to be either disturbed from concentration on the Supreme Being, or assisting to a greater perfection. If, then, some few years only near the close of life were devoted to the sort of practice inculcated by Krishna, the memories of the years previously spent in following after desires will throw a cloud over the soul and absolutely prevent it from attaining that state from which return to earth is impossible without our consent. It is more perfectly illustrated by considering life as a grand musical movement that is brought to a close by using at once all the tones sounded throughout the whole preceding portion. The result will be a combined sound, expressing neither the highest nor lowest notes, or the sweetest or less sweet, but the resultant of all. And this last sound is the fixed vibration that governs the entity, sounding all through him, and throwing him into the state to which it corresponds or of

which it is the key. Thus it is easily seen that in each thought lie the possibilities of a harmony or a discord for life' conclusion.

"Guided by the clear light of the soul, we have considered thy teachings, O holy sage! They have been efficacious for the removal of the obscurities surrounding Ishwara's abiding place in us; we are delighted and refreshed; may thy words remain with us, and, as a spring refreshes the earth, may we be refreshed by them!"

FOOTNOTES:

1. Sanatsujativa, ch. 2. ([return to text](#))

The Path

**THEOSOPHY IN TENNYSON'S "IDYLL OF THE KING": II — F. S.
Collins**

(A PAPER READ BEFORE THE MALLEN THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.)

In Two Parts.

PART II.

While as a whole the poem may perhaps be best held to represent the struggle between the highest in a man and the lower elements of his self, yet it may also indicate the fate of a higher spirit come to earth to help humanity, and whose work is constantly marred and his plans thwarted by the opposition of enemies and the misunderstandings of friends, and who needs must stand alone, none even of those who love him best being able to rise to his level.

In the "Holy Grail" especially, we seem to see the sad results, of undertaking to do another's work, a work for which one is not fitted. At a banquet of the knights in the great hall there suddenly appears a glorious light, breaking through the roof and flashing over them all; the light is so blinding that they cannot see what it is that makes it, but all know that it must be the Holy Grail. And each knight swears a solemn vow that he will ride a twelvemonth and a day, searching for it until he can clearly see it. The King is not with them at the time, but with some of his knights is away, ridding the country of a band of robbers that have been devastating it. On his return he is told of the event and of the vow, and is saddened at hearing it; and as Percivale tells the story: —

"Woe is me, my knights," he cried,
"Had I been here, ye had not sworn the vow."
Bold was mine answer, "Had thyself been here,

My King, thou would'st have sworn." "Yea, yea," said he,
"Art thou so bold and hast not seen the Grail?"
"Nay, lord, I heard the sound, I saw the light,
But since I did not see the Holy Thing,
I swore a vow to follow it till I saw."
Then when he asked us, knight by knight, if any
Had seen it, all their answers were as one:
"Nay, lord, and therefore have we sworn our vows.'
"Lo now," said Arthur, "have ye seen a cloud?
What go ye into the wilderness to see?"
Then Galahad on the sudden, and in a voice
Shrilling along the halls to Arthur, call'd,
"But I, Sir Arthur, saw the Holy Grail,
I saw the Holy Grail and heard a cry —
O Galahad, and O Galahad, follow me.' "
"Ah, Galahad, Galahad," said the King, "for such
As thou art is the vision, not for these.
Thy holy nun and thou have seen a sign —
Holier is none, my Percivale, than she —
A sign to maim this Order which I made.
But ye, that follow but the leader's bill"
(Brother, the King was hard upon his knights)
"Taliessin is our fullest throat of song,
And one hath sung and all the dumb will sing.
Lancelot is Lancelot, and hath overborne
Five knights at once, and every younger knight,
Unproven, holds himself as Lancelot,
Till overborne by one, he learns — and ye,
What are ye? Galahads? — no, nor Percivales"
(For thus it pleased the King to range me close
After Sir Galahad): "nay," said he, "but men
With strength and will to right the wronged, of power
To lay the sudden heads of violence flat,

Knights that in twelve great battles splash'd and dyed
The strong White Horse in his own heathen blood —
But one hath seen, and all the blind will see.
Go, since your vows are sacred, being made:
Yet — for ye know the cries of all my realm
Pass thro' this hall — how often, O my knights,
Your places being vacant at my side,
This chance of noble deeds will come and go
Unchallenged, while ye follow wandering fires,
Lost in the quagmire! Many of you, yea most,
Return no more."

And indeed few return at the end of the year. Galahad, already fit for it, sees the Grail, and after riding far and in its strength fighting bravely for the right, is carried with it to the spiritual city, to return no more to earth. Percivale sees it only at a distance; he sets out on the quest, first glorying in his strength and sure of success, then at the thought of his sins overwhelmed with despair and feeling that this quest is not for him; and in this is the cause of his partial failure, for as the hermit tells him: —

What is this
Thou thoughtest of thy prowess and thy sins?
Thou hast not lost thyself to save thyself
As Galahad."

But even this distant view makes him renounce his knightly career and spend the rest of his days in a convent.

Lancelot, great and noble soul, has yet in him a sin from which he cannot free himself; as he tells the king: —

"in me lived a sin
So strange, of such a kind, that all of pure,
Noble, and knightly in me twined and clung

Round that one sin, until the wholesome flower
And poisonous grew together, each as each,
Not to be pluck'd asunder."

When he makes his vow to seek the Grail, it is with the hope that it will help him to so pluck them asunder; through terrible trials and ordeals he reaches at last to where the Grail is; but the door is closed: madly breaking it open,

"thro a strong glare, a heat
As from a seven-times heated furnace, I,
Blasted and burnt, and blinded as I was,
With such a fierceness that I swoon'd away —
O, yet methought I saw the Holy Grail,
All pall'd in crimson samite, and around
Great angels, awful shapes, and wings and eyes,
And but for all my madness and my sin,
And then my swooning, I had sworn I saw
That which I saw; but what I saw was veil'd
And cover'd; and this Quest was not for me."

Sir Bors alone, good and true knight, has clearly seen the Grail, when, bound and imprisoned by the heathen, he is only thinking of dying like a brave man. All unexpectedly the vision is given him; he returns to his work as a true knight, but, though the glory of the vision is in his heart ever after, he cannot tell it to any one else. Only these four see it at all; the rest have followed vain phantoms, or have early given up the Quest; and only one in ten of those who took the vow returns at all. The closing lines of this Idyll, Arthur's words to the few returning knights, are but an amplification of Krishna's words to Arjuna; —

"Finally this is better that one do
His own task as he may, even though he fail,
Than take tasks not his own, though they seem good."

"And spake I not too truly, O my knights?
Was I too dark a prophet when I said
To those who went upon the Holy Quest,
That most of them would follow wandering fires,
Lost in the quagmire? — lost to me and gone,
And left me gazing at a barren board,
And a lean Order — scarce return'd a tithe —
And out of those to whom the vision came
My greatest hardly will believe he saw;
Another hath beheld it afar off,
And leaving human wrongs to right themselves,
Cares but to pass into the silent life.
And one hath had the vision face to face,
And now his chair desires him here in vain,
However they may crown him elsewhere."

"And some among you hold that, if the King
Had seen the sight, he would have sworn the vow:
Not easily, seeing that the King must guard
That which he rules, and is but as the hind
To whom a space of land is given to plow.
Who may not wander from the allotted held
Before his work be done; but being done,
Let visions of the night or of the day
Come, as they will; and many a time they come.
Until this earth he walks on seems not earth,
This light that strikes his eyeball is not light,
This air that smites his forehead is not air
But vision -yea his very hand and foot-
In moments when he feels he cannot die,
And knows himself no vision to himself,
Nor the high God a vision, nor that One
Who rose again: ye have seen what ye have seen."

After this loss of the knights in the vain quest, all grows worse.
The King himself remains pure and lofty in all his aims, but all the
rest changes His knights no longer keep their vows,

"Such vows, as is a shame
A man should not be bound by, yet the which
No man can keep."

His queen Guinevere, whom he loves wholly and purely, is false
to him, and that with his noblest knight and dearest friend,
Lancelot: even the King, slow to believe evil, must see it, and he
parts from her forever in this life; in his farewell the only hope he
can give her is —

"Perchance, and so thou purify thy soul,
And so thou lean on our fair father Christ,
Hereafter in that world where all are pure
We two may meet before high God, and thou
Wilt spring to me, and claim me thine and know
I am thy husband, — not a smaller soul,
Nor Lancelot, nor another. Leave me that.
I charge thee, my last hope. * * *
* * * Now must I hence.

Thro' the thick night I hear the trumpet blow;
They summon me their King to lead mine hosts
Far down to that great battle in the west,
Where I must strike against the man they call
My sister's son — no kin of mine, who leagues
With Lords of the White Horse, heathen, and knights,
Traitors — and strike him dead, and meet myself
Death, or I know not what mysterious doom."

This battle is told in "The Passing of Arthur," which begins, —

"That story which the bold Sir Bedivere,

First made and latest left of all the knights,
Told, when the man was no more than a voice
In the white winter of his age, to those
With whom he dwelt, new faces, other minds."

This battle is not like those that have been fought before, but is rather the last great struggle through which every man must pass, when all the mortal powers fail one by one until nothing is left but the immortal soul. Every line of this part of the poem, and especially of the part added in the final completion, is full of meaning, so that it is very hard to select for quotation.

"Then rose the King and moved his host by night,
And ever pushed Sir Mordred, league by league,
Back to the sunset bound of Lyonesse —
A land of old upheaven from the abyss
By fire, to sink into the abyss again;
Where fragments of forgotten peoples dwelt,
And the long mountains ended in a coast
Of ever-shifting sand, and far away
The phantom circle of a moaning sea.
There the pursuer could pursue no more,
And he that fled no further fly the King;
And there, that day when the great light of heaven
Burn'd at his lowest in the rolling year,
On the waste sand by the waste sea they closed.
Nor ever yet had Arthur fought a fight
Like this last, dim, wierd battle of the west.

A death white mist slept over sand and sea:
Whereof the chill to him who breathed it, drew
Down with his blood, till all his heart was cold
With formless fear; and ev'n on Arthur fell
Confusion, since he saw not whom he fought.

For friend and foe were shadows in the mist,
And friend slew friend not knowing whom he slew;
And some had visions out of golden youth,
And some beheld the faces of old ghosts
Look in upon the battle; and in the mist
Was many a noble deed, many a base,
And chance and craft and strength in single fight,
And ever and anon with host to host
Shocks, and the splintering spear, the hard mail hewn,
Shield-breakings, and the clash of brands, the crash
Of battleaxes on shattered helms, and shrieks
After the Christ, of those who falling down
Looked up for heaven, and only saw the mist;
And shouts of heathen and the traitor knights,
Oaths, insult, filth, and monstrous blasphemies,
Sweat, writhings, anguish, laboring of the lungs
In that close mist, and cryings for the light,
Moans of the dying, and voices of the dead.

Last as by some one deathbed after wail
Of suffering, silence follows, or thro' death
Or deathlike swoon, thus over all that shore,
Save for some whisper of the seething seas,
A dead hush fell; but when the dolorous day
Grew drearier toward twilight falling, came
A bitter wind, clear from the North, and blew
The mist aside, and with that wind the tide
Rose, and the pale King glanced across the field
Of battle: but no man was moving there,
Nor any cry of Christian heard thereon,
Nor yet of heathen; only the wan wave
Brake in among dead faces, to and fro
Swaying the helpless hands, and up and down

Tumbling the hollow helmets of the fallen,
And shivered brands that once had fought with Rome,
And rolling far along the gloomy shores
The voice of days of old and days to be.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere,
And whiter than the mist that all day long
Had held the field of battle was the King:

"Hearest thou this great voice that shakes the world,
And wastes the narrow realm whereon we move,
And beats upon the faces of the dead,
My dead, as tho' they had not died for me?
O Bedivere, for on my heart hath fall'n
Confusion, till I know not what I am,
Nor whence I am, nor whether I be King.
Behold, I seem but King among the dead."

Now at the very last, when only Bedivere is left of all his knights, Arthur sees Mordred, the traitor knight, who has brought back the heathen into the realm, standing unharmed; with the last blow of his sword Excalibur the King strikes him dead, but falls himself grievously wounded by Mordred's stroke. But though all his knights have fallen, though all that was dear to him is gone, though everything on which he leaned has failed him, he cannot die; yet in the mist and uncertainty of the battlefield he knows not where he is to go. His sword Excalibur must be given back to the hand from which it came; the sword which had

"on one side,
Graven in the oldest tongue of all this world,
'Take me;' but turn the blade and ye shall see,
And written in the speech ye speak yourself
'Cast me away!' And sad was Arthur's face
Taking it, but old Merlin counsell'd him,

"Take them and strike! the time to cast away
Is yet far off."

This was at Arthur's Coronation: and now at his command Sir
Bedivere casts the sword far out over the lake, from the water of
which rises

"an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere."

Then Sir Bedivere carries the King to the margin of the lake,
whence the three Queens bear him in a funeral barge far off from
sight: his last words to Bedivere, —

"But now farewell, I am going a long way
With these thou seest. * * *
To the inland-valley of Avilion;
Where falls not hail or rain, or any snow,
Nor even wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep meadowed, happy, fair with orchard lawns
And bowery hollows crowned with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."

As Sir Bedivere sees the black hull moving far off, he cries

"He passes to be King among the dead,
And after healing of his grievous wound
He comes again."

And I think the glory of the return from this world to the true life
of the higher self has seldom been better shown than this: —

"Then from the dawn it seem'd there came, but faint
As from beyond the limit of the world,
Like the last echo born of a great cry,

Sounds, as if some fair city were one voice
Around a king returning from his wars."

Throughout the whole of the poem we feel, even when we cannot distinctly see, deep meanings for the inner consciousness. We cannot make any definite formulas, that this character represents this, and that, that; but everywhere we see that the King represents the highest; fealty to him is the chief duty.

"Strike for the King and live! his knights have heard
That God hath told the King a secret word.
Fall battleaxe and flash brand! Let the King reign.

Blow Trumpet! he will lift us from the dust.
Blow trumpet! live the strength and die the lust!
Clang battleaxe, and clash brand! Let the King reign.

Strike for the King and die! and if thou diest
The King is King, and ever wills the highest.
Clang battleaxe, and clash brand! Let the King reign."

The King is immortal; the lower self may, it must, die, and if it die in obedience to the King's command, it is an honor and glory to it; again and again in the poem, in speaking of the bravery and honor of a good knight, the end is

"and fell at last
In the great battle fighting for the King,"

or like Geraint,

"he crown'd
A happy life with a fair death, and fell
Against the heathen of the Northern Sea
In battle, fighting for the blameless King."

In this sense the King may be considered as the true spiritual self,

of which we various lower selves are but fragments, which can only win unity by giving up the fragmentary personality.

Guinevere, too late for this life, sees how she has been false to her duty and honor;

"Ah, my God,
What might I not have made of thy fair world
Had I but loved thy highest creature here?
It was my duty to have loved the highest;
It surely was my profit had I known;
It would have been my pleasure had I seen.
We needs must love the highest when we see it,
Not Lancelot, nor another."

In the last battle, Bedivere speaks thus plainly: —

"My King,
King everywhere! and so the dead have kings,
There also will I worship thee as King."

And Arthur replies,

"And well for thee, saying in my dark hour,
When all the purport of my throne hath failed,
That quick or dead thou holdest me for King.
King am I, whatsoever be their cry."

At first sight it seems as if, in the failure of the high hopes with which the Round Table was founded, all is lost, that the King's passage "from the great deep to the great deep" has been fruitless. But though earthly plans have failed, the soul bears to its higher realm of rest and joy a strengthened character, which, when he returns once more, will fight a stronger fight, and

"then or now
Utterly smite the heathen underfoot.

Till these and all men hail him for their king."

His knights have fallen, but many, like Sir Bedivere, living or dead, will hold him for their King. Guinevere and Lancelot wronged him worst of all: but Guinevere, deeply repentant, after a holy life,

"past

To where beyond these voices there is peace."

And Lancelot, tearing the poisonous from the wholesome flower, died at last a holy man. The good in Arthur has stirred up the evil around him to sharper, fiercer opposition; but the world is the better for his reign.

"The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world."

The Path

THINKING VERSUS READING — *Jasper Niemand*

The opinion of theosophical students is divided in respect to reading. There are those who consider that the chief source of learning is study, while others deprecate much reading and urge us to confine our efforts to "living the life." The truth of course is that both methods are to be combined. They serve different departments of the same end. By study — especially of scriptures — we are enabled to form more just ideas of what "the life" may be, and in what way we shall live it. By living it, we correct all mistaken ideas; we shave and prune the excrescences of the mind. The application of spiritual (impersonal) ideas in daily life; the study of how we may hold to them amid the practical routine; the endeavor to discover them within all material conditions and things; the effort to develop them; broaden the nature and enable us, through the spiritual will, to alchemize it into spiritual essences and powers. Nothing is wholly material; if it were it could not exist, it could not cohere for an instant. That mysterious force which is within all things and enables them to "live," or to advance through successive changes, is what we call Spirit. In Bhagavad-Gita we find that Purush and Prakriti, or Spirit (energy) and Nature, are forever conjoined. All the powers existing in the macrocosm having also their various specific seats in man, it follows plainly that, if we wish to evolve more rapidly by means of these powers, as the universe also evolves by them, we must think and think within ourselves. These forces are under the guidance of will, thought, and knowledge; (1) reading will never enable us to reach them; thinking may put us on their track. To examine this question of reading. What is it that we do when we read? It is not reading to repeat, parrot like, words which we instantly forget, like the infant class over its primer. The eye

encounters certain words and an idea is conveyed to the brain. Is this all? For certain persons it is all. They accept this idea as a form, a crystallization representing a certain state of things. If it attracts them, they retain and quote it; otherwise they dismiss it. In either case it is to them a finality. Such persons have their brains stored with such formulas; they have never lived them out, even in the mind; they do not really know the idea represented by this form of words at all. The fancy or the prejudice has been tickled by mere sound. All this is so much useless lumber. Show them what some of their favorite ideas really involve if carried out, and they cast them aside in disgust or dismay. This is the sort of reading which is much to be deprecated, along with that other kind undertaken to "pass time." That an idea is a seed which, once planted, should sprout and grow, they do not see. That all ideas have a specific, energetic life of their own, and that this life is directly proportionate to the vitality (or truth) of the idea, they do not see. That thoughts have a power of self reproduction, bearing a thousandfold for use or misuse, that they have an insidious and tremendous power, none but occultists know. That a part of the vital energy and real being of a writer is diffused throughout every page even of his printed works and more or less affects the reader as a psycho-magnetic entity, is rarely thought of at all. Every thought modifies the mind: it energizes according to the nature of those thoughts, diffusing a pernicious, weak, or beneficent force about us. If they are too rapidly forced upon it, the mind becomes gorged; we have mental dyspepsia and an unhealthy condition, not only in the internal organ called mind, but also in the physical organs which quickly respond to its condition. A habit of the mind is soon formed, and, like the dyspeptic, it craves abnormal quantities of food, alternated with periods of sluggish inertia: moreover, it becomes habituated to certain kinds of stimulus: if we feed it long upon novels or excitement, it will reject more healthy food. A greater reason for

careful choice of reading than all these is found in the fact that something within us, that thing which knows and strives to make us know, takes advantage of the vibration set up in the mental (and through that to the outer) man to transfuse his understanding with more light. This something, this soul, leaps up within us, touched by the current flowing from those thoughts, and asserts of them, "They are true!" or, "They are false!" Thus books may help us to remember, to recall what we have lost. And no man to whom life is sacred will wish to expend those energies of which life consists in any idle fashion, or to develop their lower forms when the higher are equally at his command.

How then shall we read? When we have reason to believe that the writer knows somewhat of his subject, we may assume a receptive attitude. Where such is not the case we cannot usefully read at all. We may not judge our author. He may have found truths unsuited to us now, or teach them in ways which we are unfitted to pursue; this being so, we shall do well to avoid what is at present unhealthy nourishment. Where we feel attracted and do read, we should receive the idea into our minds and, submitting ourselves passively to its influence, note what impression is stamped upon the sensitized plate within. The true character of the idea is *felt* rather than intellectually cognized, and by such a study of the interior impression we receive the verdict of the hidden judge. We need dread no *Vehmgericht* but this; by it all stands or falls. (2) To attain this end we must hold ourselves still. The outer self must maintain an attitude of suspended judgment, or up comes our mere personality with quips, cranks, whims, opinions, and loves, drowning the inner voice with its racket and hubbub.

Another way of utilizing ideas is to assume their merit and to study wherein that merit may possibly consist, what line ray has escaped our grosser sight. For example: I quoted to a comrade

this line; "We must be ready to say at any moment, in whatever circumstances, whether expected or unexpected: 'It is just what I in fact desired'." (3) My comrade replied that this appeared to him hypocritical. If he lost an arm, for instance, he could cheerfully submit, but he could not in truth say that he desired precisely that accident. This objection has a surface correctness. Had he read with an assumption that the line must have some truth in it, and had he examined it in that belief, he would doubtless have found its true bearing, while such personal exertion opens up a mind and nourishes it as no artificial injection can do. That true bearing is that the re-incarnating soul has chosen those circumstances most needed for its evolution; to work out that evolution we must work through our Karma; there is no other way. Hence my Higher Self, my real self, did in fact desire just that body and all its Karmic circumstances and life as a necessary experience for my soul at this juncture, the soul having to pass through all experiences, and though *i* may not desire them, *I* do. No true statements can be based upon the assumption that the personality, or even the lower principles of the soul, is the real ego at all.

There is again another point to be guarded against in reading books other than sacred writings, whose inner meaning we strive to assimilate. It is the reverse of the one above stated, and cautions us against too great mental hospitality. It is the danger of basing our faith upon the personality of the writer. If we do this, were he the Jove of Theosophy himself we may receive injury rather than benefit. We may have good reason to believe him possessed of more or less knowledge. Whether he has himself assimilated that knowledge is again another question. An initiate will have done so, and the real value of his writings for us will consist in the fact of his being himself those truths which he gives out: he is himself the word and the sign of his degree. Only in so

far as he has lived out his knowledge and *become it*, can he impart it beneficially to its readers in turn. Otherwise he runs the risk of presenting partial Truths through the medium of his own personality and tinging them thereby. In this way, with the best will in the world perhaps, he gives to students himself and not the Truth, gives his warped edition of it. As an occult fact, we can only give ourselves and no more; hence to give Truth we must be It. Herein lies the value of the writings of initiates, ending with those of our beloved Madame Blavatsky, who alone has dared to speak plainly to her era. The movement she inaugurated and the well-spring of teachings she opened for us to draw upon have been the means of renown for many writers who, without her initial courage, had never won an audience or a name. Even as one of the very least of these, I say; "May we never forget the debt."

Were all readers forewarned and ready to discount the personality, this danger would be lessened. Such discrimination in these matters is a spiritual quality not as yet generally found among men: it is a power of the soul, a more or less direct perception of Truth. It behooves the writer desirous of serving mankind to look well to his words, to the form in which he imprisons so much of the Truth as he has found, and to strive earnestly only to give forth so much of it as he himself embodies in life, so much as he has become. Great harm is constantly done by the spread of brain and lip knowledge, to be proven false supports by suffering men. And we do better to take the tone of suggestion rather than that of authority. We may have touched upon our higher powers without having fully raised the nature to them. While we are but man we only see by glimpses; then the veil falls again. So I would preface all writings with the request that the reader be guided by his own natural selection to a very great extent.

Many writers, too, have come into this life with a special task to

perform. They have something to say or to give, and when it is done, their usefulness to humanity is over; they seem then to have outlived themselves; long before their bodies pass into the ranks of the unseen, their virility and life-giving power have departed. We often see this fatal high-water mark in the life of the poet, the painter, the leader we followed and loved; see that he can never surpass it, that he has touched his highest state for this incarnation. To remain there is impossible. A law of nature decrees that he must advance or recede; in nature there is no standing still. We ask ourselves who has set this fatal limit, and we see clearly that the man alone has done himself this wrong. It is Karma, but a Karma of his own making. Some there are who pass, indeed, beyond that limit to intellectual greatness, but in doing so they have passed beyond our ordinary sight and have joined the silent workers in the Lodge of Truth. The only indication left us of their progress is the fact that they have never fallen to a lower level than that great one where we saw them standing. They have never followed up their words of power by the impotent babble of senility. Few indeed are these men, for "many are called, but few are chosen." They are those who have a Karmic stock of spiritual energy sufficient to flood them over the crisis, and they use their highest intellectuality as a stepping stone to that which lies beyond intellect and above thought. The lesser men suffer. They have done so much, sacrificed so much, they do not understand why their words are no longer snatched from their lips and passed eagerly along the expectant throng. It is because those words are vain repetitions: they are no longer living, winged things. The speaker has not renewed his thought; he has fallen to worshipping his own methods; he makes an apotheosis of his present knowledge instead of reaching up to the realms of real life for new, vital essences. Thought, however broad, follows a circle at last, and in it he runs like a squirrel turning a wheel with puerile activity.

The mere fact that a man thinks he has done something or sacrificed something should show him his mistake. Deeds have been done through him, not by him. His so-called sacrifice was his opportunity to rise to real greatness, and only his half methods have limited it to a sacrifice. Some cry out in despair that it had been better to do nothing at all. I would not say that. The irresistible waves surge onward and bear us to a certain point: we may lie there long; still this is so much progress which we can never lose. The pity is that we should not arise ourselves and go further without waiting for the next tide.

These considerations show us that disagreements between theosophical writers are often unavoidable, the writers being but men and women. It is to our advantage to use our discriminative powers, to strengthen them by use. So we are not injured by these differences. We are more injured if we stake our faith upon any one or several writers, just because when our idols crumble,—and crumble they must, we are so often found in the dust beneath them, found stunned and wounded by their fall. "Let a man learn to bear the disappearance of the things he was wont to reverence without losing his reverence." A truer word than that Emerson never wrote. We are instruments in mighty hands: if we turn our edge, we must expect to be laid aside. We must then refrain from solidifying our thoughts into a system, our reports of Truth into dogmas. We may not be dazzled even by the highest heavens, but must worship Truth alone.

Thus the whole problem for both writer and reader consists in eschewing mere forms, in looking beyond words to the principles which they represent faintly. A man represents one or more universals; his thought should do the same. He will never mislead while he only gives us these; we shall never misunderstand him while we look for nothing less. All reading is useless, so far as

spiritual progress is concerned, which cannot be conducted upon the above lines. If they limit your reading, they will extend your thinking. So much the better, for thinking is the path toward becoming. "What a man thinks, that he is; this is the old secret," say the Upanishads. There is a way of taking a thought and brooding over it as a bird broods on the nest; by this method the true thought hatches out and itself manifests to us. We must apply these thoughts to the touchstone of our own souls. Reading and thinking are not to be divorced. They should be one act; then each would correct and equilibrate the other.

My last word upon this subject would be this, and I would say it emphatically. Never receive and pass onward a thought which you do not feel and understand. On this point accept no authority other than your own soul. It is better that you seem to lose a ray of Truth than to accept and deflect it by a want of understanding, a want of assimilation of it. If it be yours in the Law, you cannot lose it. It will be sent to you again and again until you do receive it. Take then what your nature selects until you reach a point where you can rise above nature. When this is reached you will not need to read any longer, except from the wonderful book of life and from those blessed Scriptures wherein the Divine has spoken to the ages through men who had attained to some share in His being.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Itchasakti, Kriyasakti, Gnanasakti. See "Five Years of Theosophy," Page 110. ([return to text](#))

2. Vehmgericht. A secret tribunal of old. ([return to text](#))

3. See PATH for Feb., 1888, page 328. ([return to text](#))

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM: III

ELEMENTALS — KARMA.

Student. — Permit me to ask you again, Are elementals beings?

Sage. — It is not easy to convey to you an idea of the constitution of elementals; strictly speaking, they are not, because the word *elementals* has been used in reference to a class of them that have no being such as mortals have. It would be better to adopt the terms used in Indian books, such as Gandharvas, Bhuts, Pisachas, Devas, and so on. Many things well known about them cannot be put into ordinary language.

Student. — Do you refer to their being able to act in the fourth dimension of space?

Sage. — Yes, in a measure. Take the tying in an endless cord of many knots, — a thing often done at spiritist seances. That is possible to him who knows more dimensions of space than three. No three-dimensional being can do this; and as you understand "matter," it is impossible for you to conceive how such a knot can be tied or how a solid ring can be passed through the matter of another solid one. These things can be done by elementals.

Student. — Are they not all of one class?

Sage. — No. There are different classes for each plane, and division of plane, of nature. Many can never be recognized by men. And those pertaining to one plane do not act in another. You must remember, too, that these "planes" of which we are speaking interpenetrate each other.

Student. — Am I to understand that a clairvoyant or clairaudient has to do with or is effected by a certain special class or classes of

elementals?

Sage. — Yes. A clairvoyant can only see the sights properly belonging to the planes his development reaches to or has opened. And the elementals in those planes show to the clairvoyant only such pictures as belong to their plane. Other parts of the idea or thing pictured may be retained in planes not yet open to the seer. For this reason few clairvoyants know the whole truth.

Student. — Is there not some connection between the Karma of man and elementals?

Sage. — A very important one. The elemental world has become a strong factor in the Karma of the human race. Being unconscious, automatic, and photographic, it assumes the complexion of the human family itself. In the earlier ages, when we may postulate that man had not yet begun to make bad Karma, the elemental world was more friendly to man because it had not received unfriendly impressions. But so soon as man began to become ignorant, unfriendly to himself and the rest of creation, the elemental world began to take on exactly the same complexion and return to humanity the exact pay, so to speak, due for the actions of humanity. Or, like a donkey, which, when he is pushed against, will push against you. Or, as a human being, when anger or insult is offered, feels inclined to return the same. So the elemental world, being unconscious force, returns or reacts upon humanity exactly as humanity acted towards it, whether the actions of men were done with the knowledge of these laws or not. So in these times it has come to be that the elemental world has the complexion and action which is the exact result of all the actions and thoughts and desires of men from the earliest times. And, being unconscious and only acting according to the natural laws of its being, the elemental world is a powerful factor in the

workings of Karma. And so long as mankind does not cultivate brotherly feeling and charity towards the whole of creation, just so long will the elementals be without the impulse to act for our benefit. But so soon and wherever man or men begin to cultivate brotherly feeling and love for the whole of creation, there and then the elementals begin to take on the new condition.

Student. — How then about the doing of phenomena by adepts?

Sage. — The production of phenomena is not possible without either the aid or disturbance of elementals. Each phenomenon entails the expenditure of great force, and also brings on a correspondingly great disturbance in the elemental world, which disturbance is beyond the limit natural to ordinary human life. It then follows that, as soon as the phenomenon is completed, the disturbance occasioned begins to be compensated for. The elementals are in greatly excited motion, and precipitate themselves in various directions. They are not able to affect those who are protected. But they are able, or rather it is possible for them, to enter into the sphere of unprotected persons, and especially those persons who are engaged in the study of occultism. And then they become agents in concentrating the karma of those persons, producing troubles and disasters often, or other difficulties which otherwise might have been so spread over a period of time as to be not counted more than the ordinary vicissitudes of life. This will go to explain the meaning of the statement that an Adept will not do a phenomenon unless he sees the desire in the mind of another lower or higher Adept or student; for then there is a sympathetic relation established, and also a tacit acceptance of the consequences which may ensue. It will also help to understand the peculiar reluctance often of some persons, who can perform phenomena, to produce them in cases where we may think their production would be beneficial; and also why they are never done in order to compass worldly ends,

as is natural for worldly people to suppose might be done, — such as procuring money, transferring objects, influencing minds, and so on.

Student. — Accept my thanks for your instruction.

Sage. — May you reach the terrace of enlightenment!"

The Path

TO ASPIRANTS FOR CHELASHIP — *William Q. Judge*

Sincere interest in Theosophic truth is often followed by sincere aspiration after Theosophic life, and the question continually recurs, What are the conditions and the steps to chelaship (1); to whom should application be made; how is the aspirant to know that it has been granted?

As to the conditions and the discipline of chelaship, not a little has been disclosed in *The Theosophist*, *Man*, *Esoteric Buddhism*, and other works upon Theosophy; and some of the qualifications, difficulties, and dangers have been very explicitly set forth by Madame Blavatsky in her article upon "Theosophical Mahatmas" in the *PATH* of Dec., 1886. To every one cherishing even a vague desire for closer relations to the system of development through which Masters are produced, the thoughtful study of this article is earnestly commended. It will clear the ground of several misconceptions, deepen the sense of the seriousness of such an effort, and excite a healthy self-distrust which is better before than after the gate has been passed.

It is entirely possible, however, that the searching of desire and strength incited by that article may only convince more strongly of sincerity, and that not a few readers may emerge from it with a richer purpose and a deeper resolve. Even where there is not a distinct intention to reach chelaship, there may be an eager yearning for greater nearness to the Masters, for some definite assurance of guidance and of help. In either of these cases the question at once arises before the aspirant, Who is to receive the application, and how is its acceptance to be signified?

The very natural, indeed the instinctive, step of such an aspirant is to write to an officer of the Theosophical Society. None the less

is this a mistake. For the Theosophical Society is an *exoteric* body, the Lodge of Masters wholly *esoteric*. The former is a voluntary group of inquirers and philanthropists, with avowed aims, a printed Constitution, and published officers, and, moreover, expressly disavowing any power, as a Society, to communicate with Masters; the latter is an Occult Lodge, of whose address, members, processes, functions, nothing is known. It follows, therefore, that there is no person, no place, no address, to which an aspirant may appeal.

Let it be supposed, however, that such an inquiry is preferred to a person advanced in Occult study, versed in its methods and tests and qualifications. Assuredly his reply would be directly to this effect: —

"If you were now fitted to be an accepted chela, you would of yourself know how, where, and to whom to apply. For the becoming a chela *in reality* consists in the evolution or development of certain spiritual principles latent in every man, and in great measure unknown to your present consciousness. Until these principles are to some degree consciously evolved by you, you are not in practical possession of the means of acquiring the first rudiments of that knowledge which now seems to you so desirable. Whether it is desired by your mind or by your heart is still another important question, not to be solved by any one who has not yet the clew to Self.

It is true that these qualities can be developed (or forced) by the aid of an Adept. And most applicants for chelaship are actuated by a desire to receive instructions directly from the Masters. They do not ask themselves what they have done to merit a privilege so rare. Nor do they consider that, all Adepts being servants of the Law of Karma, it must follow that, did the applicant now merit their visible aid, he would already possess it and could not be in

search of it. The indications of the fulfilment of the Law are, in fact, the partial unfolding of those faculties above referred to.

You must, then, reach a point other than that where you now stand, before you can even ask to be taken as a chela on probation. All candidates enter the unseen Lodge in this manner, and it is governed by Laws containing within themselves their own fulfilment and not requiring any officers whatever. Nor must you imagine that such a probationer is one who works under constant and known direction of either an Adept or another chela. On the contrary, he is tried and tested for at least 7 years, and perhaps many more, before the point is reached when he is either accepted (and prepared for the first of a series of initiations often covering several incarnations), or rejected. And this rejection is not by any body of men just as they incline, but is the natural rejection by Nature. The probationer may or may not hear from his Teacher during this preliminary period; more often he does not hear. He may be finally rejected and not know it, just as some men have been on probation and have not known it until they suddenly found themselves accepted. Such men are those self-developed persons who have reached that point in the natural order after many incarnations, where their expanded faculties have entitled them to an entrance into the Hall of Learning or the spiritual Lodge beyond. And all I say of men applies equally to women.

When any one is regularly accepted as a chela on probation, the first and only order he receives (for the present) is to work unselfishly for humanity — sometimes aiding and aided by some older chela — *while striving to get rid of the strength of the personal idea*. The ways of doing this are left to his own intuition entirely, inasmuch as the object is to develop that *intuition* and to bring him to *self-knowledge*. It is his having these powers in some degree that leads to his acceptance as a probationer, so that it is

more than probable that you have them not yet save as latent possibilities. In order to have in his turn any title to help, he must work for others, but that must not be his motive for working. He who does not feel irresistibly impelled to serve the Race, whether he himself fails or not, is bound fast by his own personality and cannot progress until he has learned that *the race is himself and not that body which he now occupies*. The ground of this necessity for a pure motive was recently stated in *Lucifer* to be that 'unless the intention is entirely unalloyed, the spiritual will transform itself into the psychic, act on the astral plane, and dire results may be produced by it. The powers and forces of animal nature can be equally used by the selfish and revengeful as by the unselfish and all-forgiving; the powers and forces of spirit lend themselves only to the perfectly pure in heart.'

It may be stated, however, that even those natural forces cannot be discovered by any man who has not obtained the power of getting rid of his personality in some degree. That an emotional desire to help others does not imply this freedom from personality may be seen by the fact that if you were now perfected in unselfishness in the *real* sense, you would have a conscious existence separate from that of the body and would be able to quit the body at will: in other words, to be free from all sense of self is to be an Adept, for the limitations of self inhibit progress.

Hear also the words of the Master, taken from Sinnett's *The Occult World*. 'Perhaps you will better appreciate our meaning when told that in our view the highest aspirations for the welfare of humanity become tainted with selfishness if, in the mind of the philanthropist, there lurks the shadow of a desire for self-benefit or a tendency to do injustice, even when these exist unconsciously to himself.'

While setting forth these facts, as well as the dangers and difficulties — both those set ones appointed by the laws of the Lodge and the more innumerable ones adjudged by Karma and hastened by the efforts of the neophyte, it should also be stated that the Masters desire to deter no man from entering the path. They are well aware, however, from the repeated trials and records of centuries, and from their knowledge of our racial difficulties, how few are the persons who have any clue to their own real nature, which is the foe they attempt to conquer the moment they become pupils of the occult. Hence They endeavor, so far as Karma permits, to hold unfit individuals back from rash ventures the results of which would recoil upon their unbalanced lives and drive them to despair. The powers of evil, inadequately defied by the ignorant man, revenge themselves upon him as well as upon his friends, and not upon those who are above their reach. Although these powers are not hideous objective shapes coming in tangible ways, they are none the less real and dangerous. Their descent in such instances cannot be prevented; *it is Karma.*

To lose all sense of self, then, implies the loss of all that ordinary men most value in themselves. It therefore behooves you to seriously consider these points: —

1st. What is your motive in desiring to be a chela? You think that motive is well known to you, whereas it is hidden deep within you, and by that hidden motive you will be judged. It has flared up from unseen regions upon men sure of themselves, has belched out in some lurid thought or deed of which they esteemed themselves incapable, and has overthrown their life or reason. Therefore test yourself ere Karma tests you.

2nd. What the place and duties of a true neophyte are.

When you have seriously considered both for 21 days, you may, if

your desire remains firm, take a certain course open to you. It is this. Although you do not now know where you can offer yourself to Masters themselves as a chela on probation, yet, in forming that desire in your heart and in re-affirming it (if you do) after due consideration of these points, you have then to some extent called upon the Law, and it is within your power to constitute yourself a disciple, so far as in you lies, through the purity of your motive and effort *if both are sufficiently sustained*. No one can fix a period when this effort will bear fruit, and, if your patience and faith are not strong enough to bear you through an *unlimited* (so far as you know) period of unselfish work for humanity, you had better resign your present fancy, for it is then no more than that. But if otherwise, you are to work for the spiritual enlightenment of Humanity in and through the Theosophical Society (which much needs such laborers), and in all other modes and planes as you best can, remembering the word of Masters; 'He who does what he can and all that he can, and all that he knows how to do, does enough for us.' This task includes that of divesting yourself of all personality through interior effort, because that work, if done in the right spirit, is even more important to the race than any outward work we can do. Living as you now are, on the outward plane chiefly, your work is due there and is to be done there until your growth shall fit you to pass away from it altogether.

In following this course you work towards a fixed point under observation, — as is, indeed, the whole Theosophic body, which is now, *as a body*, a chela of Masters —, but specialized from other members in the sense that your definite aim and trust are understood and taken into consideration by the unseen Founders and the Law. The Theosophical Society then stands to you, for the time being, as any older chela might who was appointed for you to aid and to work under. *You are not*, understand, a chela on

probation, since no one without authority can confer or announce such a privilege. But if you succeed in lifting yourself and others spiritually, it will be known, *no matter what the external silence may seem to be*, and you will receive your full dues from Those who are honest debtors and ministers of the Just and Perfect Law. You must be ready to work, to wait, and to aspire in *silence*, just as all do who have fixed their eyes on this goal. Remember that your truest adviser is to be found, and constantly sought, *within yourself*. Only by experience can you learn to know its voice from that of natural instinct or mere logic, and strengthen this power, by virtue of which the Masters have become what They are.

Your choice or rejection of this course is the first test of yourself. Others will follow, whether you are aware of them or not, for the first and only right of the neophyte is — *to be tried*. Hence silence and sorrow follow his acceptance instead of the offer of prompt aid for which he looks. Yet even that shall not be wanting; those trials and reverses will come only from the Law to which you have appealed."

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Chelaship* means *Discipleship*. ([return to text](#))

The Path

CULTURE OF CONCENTRATION: I — *Ramatirtha*

(A PAPER READ BEFORE THE ARYAN THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF NEW YORK)

PART I.

The term most generally in use to express what is included under the above title is SELF CULTURE. Now it seems to well enough express, for a time at least, the practice referred to by those who desire to know the truth. But, in fact, it is inaccurate from a theosophic standpoint. For the self is held to be that designated in the Indian books as Ishwara, which is a portion of the eternal spirit enshrined in each human body. That this is the Indian view there is no doubt. The Bhagavad-Gita in Ch. 15 says that an eternal portion of this spirit, "having assumed life in this world of life, attracts the heart and the five senses which belong to nature. Whatever body Ishwara enters or quits, it is connected with it by snatching those senses from nature, even as the breeze snatches perfumes from their very bed. This spirit approaches the objects of sense by presiding over the ear, the eye, the touch, the taste, and the smell, and also over the heart"; and in an earlier chapter, "the Supreme spirit within this body is called the Spectator and admonisher, sustainer, enjoyer, great Lord, and also highest soul"; and again, "the Supreme eternal soul, even when existing within — or connected with — the body, is not polluted by the actions of the body."

Elsewhere in these books this same spirit is called the self, as in a celebrated sentence which in Sanskrit is "Atmanam atmana, pashya," meaning, "Raise the self by the self," and all through the Upanishads, where the self is constantly spoken of as the same as the Ishwara of Bhagavad-Gita. Max Muller thinks the word "self" expresses best in English the ideas of the Upanishads on this

head.

It therefore follows that such a thing as culture of this self, which in its very nature is eternal, unchangeable, and unpollutable by any action, cannot be. It is only from inadequacy of terms that students and writers using the English tongue are compelled to say "self culture," while, when they say it, they admit that they know the self cannot be cultured.

What they wish to express is, "such culture or practice to be pursued by us as shall enable us, while on earth, to mirror forth the wisdom and fulfil the behests of the self within, which is allwise and all good."

As the use of this term "self culture" demands a constant explanation either outwardly declared or inwardly assented to, it is wise to discard it altogether and substitute that which will express the practice aimed at without raising a contradiction. For another reason also the term should be discarded. That is, that it assumes a certain degree of selfishness, for, if we use it as referring to something that we do only for ourself, we separate at once between us and the rest of the human brotherhood. Only in one way can we use it without contradiction or without explanation, and that is by admitting we selfishly desire to cultivate ourselves, thus at once running against a prime rule in theosophic life and one so often and so strenuously insisted on, that the idea of personal self must be uprooted. Of course, as we will not negative this rule, we thus again have brought before us the necessity for a term that does not arouse contradictions. That new term should, as nearly as possible, shadow forth the three essential things in the action, that is, the instrument, the act, and the agent, as well as the incitement to action; or, knowledge itself, the thing to be known or done, and the person who knows.

This term is CONCENTRATION. In the Indian books it is called

Yoga. This is translated also as Union, meaning a union with the Supreme Being, or, as it is otherwise put, "the object of spiritual knowledge is the Supreme Being."

There are two great divisions of Yoga found in the ancient books, and they are called Hatha-Yoga and Raj-Yoga.

Hatha-Yoga is a practical mortification of the body by means of which certain powers are developed. It consists in the assumption of certain postures that aid the work, and certain kinds of breathing that bring on changes in the system, together with other devices. It is referred to in the 4th chapter of the Bhagavad-Gita thus: "Some devotees sacrifice the sense of hearing and the other senses in the fires of restraint; some offer objects of sense, such as sound, in the fires of the senses. Some also sacrifice inspiration of breath in expiration, and expiration in inspiration, by blocking up the channels of inspiration and expiration, desirous of retaining their breath. Others, by abstaining from food, sacrifice life in their life."

In various treatises these methods are set forth in detail, and there is no doubt at all that by pursuing them one can gain possession of sundry abnormal powers. There is risk, however, especially in the case of people in the West where experienced gurus or teachers of these things are not found. These risks consist in this, that while an undirected person is doing according to the rules of Hatha-Yoga, he arouses about him influences that do him harm, and he also carries his natural functions to certain states now and then when he ought to stop for a while, but, having no knowledge of the matter, may go on beyond that and produce injurious effects. Then, again, Hatha-Yoga is a difficult thing to pursue, and one that must be pushed to the point of mastery and success. Few of our Western people are by nature fitted for such continuous and difficult labor on the mental and

astral planes. Thus, being attracted to Hatha-Yoga by the novelty of it, and by the apparent pay that it offers in visible physical results, they begin without knowledge of the difficulty, and stopping after a period of trial they bring down upon themselves consequences that are wholly undesirable.

The greatest objection to it, however, is that it pertains to the material and semi-material man, — roughly speaking, to the body, and what is gained through it is lost at death.

The Bhagavad-Gita refers to this and describes what happens in these words: "All of these, indeed, being versed in sacrifice, have their sins destroyed by these sacrifices. But he alone reaches union with the Supreme being who eats of the ambrosia left from a sacrifice." This means that the Hatha-Yoga practice represents the mere sacrifice itself, whereas the other kind is the ambrosia arising from the sacrifice, or "the perfection of spiritual cultivation," and that leads to Nirvana. The means for attaining "the perfection of spiritual cultivation" are found in Raj-Yoga, or, as we shall term it for the present, Culture of Concentration.

When concentration is perfected, we are in a position to use the knowledge that is ever within reach but which ordinarily eludes us continually. That which is usually called knowledge is only an intellectual comprehension of the outside, visible forms assumed by certain realities. Take what is called scientific knowledge of minerals and metals. This is merely a classification of material phenomena and an empirical acquisition. It knows what certain minerals and metals are useful for, and what some of their properties are. Gold is known to be pure, soft, yellow, and extremely ductile, and by a series of accidents it has been discovered to be useful in medicine and the arts. But even to this day there is a controversy, not wholly settled, as to whether gold is held mechanically or chemically in crude ore. Similarly with

minerals. The crystalline forms are known and classified.

And yet a new theory has arisen, coming very near to the truth, that we do not know matter in reality in this way, but only apprehend certain phenomena presented to us by matter, and variously called, as the phenomena alter, gold, wood, iron, stone, and so on. But whether the minerals, metals, and vegetables have further properties that are only to be apprehended by still other and undeveloped senses, science will not admit. Passing from inanimate objects to the men and women about us, this ordinary intellectual knowledge aids us no more than before. We see bodies with different names and of different races, but below the outer phenomena our everyday intellect will not carry us. This man we suppose to have a certain character assigned to him after experience of his conduct, but it is still only provisional, for none of us is ready to say that we know him either in his good or his bad qualities. We know there is more to him than we can see or reason about, but what, we cannot tell. It eludes us continually. And when we turn to contemplate ourselves, we are just as ignorant as we are about our fellow man. Out of this has arisen an old saying: "Every man knows what he is, but no one knows what he will be."

There must be in us a power of discernment, the cultivation of which will enable us to know whatever is desired to be known. That there is such a power is affirmed by teachers of occultism, and the way to acquire it is by cultivating concentration.

It is generally overlooked, or not believed, that the inner man who is the one to have these powers has to grow up to maturity, just as the body has to mature before its organs fulfil their functions fully. By *inner man* I do not mean the higher self — the Ishwara before spoken of, but that part of us which is called soul, or astral man, or vehicle, and so on. All these terms are subject to

correction, and should not be held rigidly to the meanings given by various writers. Let us premise, first, the body now visible; second, the inner man — not the spirit; and third, the spirit itself.

Now while it is quite true that the second — or inner man — has latent all the powers and peculiarities ascribed to the astral body, it is equally true that those powers are, in the generality of persons, still latent or only very partially developed.

This inner being is, so to say, inextricably entangled in the body, cell for cell and fibre for fibre. He exists in the body somewhat in the way the fibre of the mango fruit exists in the mango. In that fruit we have the inside nut with thousands of fine fibres spreading out from it through the yellow pulp around. And as you eat it, there is great difficulty in distinguishing the pulp from the fibre. So that the inner being of which we are speaking cannot do much when away from his body, and is always influenced by it. It is not therefore easy to leave the body at will and roam about in the double. The stories we hear of this as being so easily done may be put down to strong imagination, vanity, or other causes. One great cause for error in respect to these doubles is that a clairvoyant is quite likely to mistake a mere picture of the person's thought for the person himself. In fact, among occultists who know the truth, the stepping out of the body at will and moving about the world is regarded as a most difficult feat, and for the reasons above hinted at. Inasmuch as the person is so interwoven with his body, it is absolutely necessary, before he can take his astral form about the country, for him to first carefully extract it, fibre by fibre, from the surrounding pulp of blood, bones, mucous, bile, skin, and flesh. Is this easy? It is neither easy nor quick of accomplishment, nor all done at one operation. It has to be the result of years of careful training and numerous experiments. And it *cannot* be consciously done until the inner man has developed and cohered into something more

than irresponsible and quivering jelly. This development and coherence are gained by perfecting the power of concentration.

Nor is it true, as the matter has been presented to me by experiment and teaching, that even in our sleep we go rushing about the country seeing our friends and enemies or tasting earthly joys at distant points. In all cases where the man has acquired some amount of concentration, it is quite possible that the sleeping body is deserted altogether, but such cases are as yet not in the majority.

Most of us remain quite close to our slumbering forms. It is not necessary for us to go away in order to experience the different states of consciousness which is the privilege of every man, but we do not go away over miles of country until we are able, and we cannot be able until the necessary ethereal body has been acquired and has learned how to use its powers.

Now, this ethereal body has its own organs which are the essence or real basis of the senses described by men. The outer eye is only the instrument by which the real power of sight experiences that which relates to sight; the ear has its inner master — the power of hearing, and so on with every organ. These real powers within flow from the spirit to which we referred at the beginning of this paper. That spirit approaches the objects of sense by presiding over the different organs of sense. And whenever it withdraws itself the organs cannot be used. As when a sleep-walker moves about with open eyes which do not see anything, although objects are there and the different parts of the eye are perfectly normal and uninjured.

Ordinarily there is no demarcation to be observed between these inner organs and the outer; the inner ear is found to be too closely interknit with the outer to be distinguished apart. But when concentration has begun, the different inner organs begin

to awake, as it were, and to separate themselves from the chains of their bodily counterparts. Thus the man begins to duplicate his powers. His bodily organs are not injured, but remain for use upon the plane to which they belong, and he is acquiring another set which he can use apart from the others in the plane of nature peculiarly theirs.

We find here and there cases where certain parts of this inner body have been by some means developed beyond the rest. Sometimes the inner head alone is developed, and we have one who can see or hear clairvoyantly or clairaudiently; again, only a hand is developed apart from the rest, all the other being nebulous and wavering. It may be a right hand, and it will enable the owner to have certain experiences that belong to the plane of nature to which the right hand belongs, say the positive side of touch and feeling.

But in these abnormal cases there are always wanting the results of concentration. They have merely protruded one portion, just as a lobster extrudes his eye on the end of the structure which carries it. Or take one who has thus curiously developed one of the inner eyes, say the left. This has a relation to a plane of nature quite different from that appertaining to the hand, and the results in experience are just as diverse. He will be a clairvoyant of a certain order, only able to recognize that which relates to his one-sided development, and completely ignorant of many other qualities inherent in the thing seen or felt, because the proper organs needed to perceive them have had no development. He will be like a two-dimensional being who cannot possibly know that which three-dimensional beings know, or like ourselves as compared with four-dimensional entities.

In the course of the growth of this ethereal body several things are to be observed.

It begins by having a cloudy, wavering appearance, with certain centres of energy caused by the incipency of organs that correspond to the brain, heart, lungs, spleen, liver, and so on. It follows the same course of development as a solar system, and is, in fact, *governed and influenced by the very solar system to which the world belongs on which the being may be incarnate*. With us it is governed by our own solar orb.

If the practice of concentration be kept up, this cloudy mass begins to gain coherence and to shape itself into a body with different organs. As they grow they must be used. Essays are to be made with them, trials, experiments. In fact, just as a child must creep before it can walk, and must learn walking before it can run, so this ethereal man must do the same. But as the child can see and hear much farther than it can creep or walk, so this being usually begins to see and to hear before it can leave the vicinity of the body on any lengthy journey.

Certain hindrances then begin to manifest themselves which, when properly understood by us, will give us good substantial reasons for the practicing of the several virtues enjoined in holy books and naturally included under the term of Universal Brotherhood.

One is that sometimes it is seen that this nebulous forming body is violently shaken, or pulled apart, or burst into fragments that at once have a tendency to fly back into the body and take on the same entanglement that we spoke of at first. *This is caused by anger*, and this is why the sages all dwell upon the need of calmness. When the student allows anger to arise, the influence of it is at once felt by the ethereal body, and manifests itself in an uncontrollable trembling which begins at the centre and violently pulls apart the hitherto coherent particles. If allowed to go on it will disintegrate the whole mass, which will then re-assume its

natural place in the body. The effect following this is, that a long time has to elapse before the ethereal body can be again created. And each time this happens the result is the same. Nor does it make any difference what the cause for the anger may be. There is no such thing as having what is called "righteous anger" in this study and escaping these inevitable consequences. Whether your "rights" have been unjustly and flagrantly invaded or not does not matter. The anger is a force that will work itself out in its appointed way. Therefore anger must be strictly avoided, and it cannot be avoided unless charity and love — absolute toleration — are cultivated.

But anger may be absent and yet still another thing happen. The ethereal form may have assumed quite a coherence and definiteness. But it is observed that, instead of being pure and clear, and fresh, it begins to take on a cloudy and disagreeable color, the precursor of putrefaction, which invades every part and by its effects precludes any further progress, and at last reacts upon the student so that anger again manifests itself. This is the effect of envy. Envy is not a mere trifle that produces no physical result. It has a powerful action, as strong in its own field as that of anger. It not only hinders the further development, but attracts to the student's vicinity thousands of malevolent beings of all classes that precipitate themselves upon him and wake up or bring on every evil passion. Envy, therefore, must be extirpated, and it cannot be got rid of as long as the personal idea is allowed to remain in us.

Another effect is produced on this ethereal body by vanity. Vanity represents the great illusion of nature. It brings up before the soul all sorts of erroneous or evil pictures, or both, and drags the judgment so away that once more anger or envy will enter, or such course be pursued that violent destruction by outside causes falls upon the being. As in one case related to me. The man had

made considerable progress, but at last allowed vanity to rule. This was followed by the presentation to his inner sight of most extraordinary images and ideas, which in their turn so affected him that he attracted to his sphere hordes of elementals seldom known to students and quite indescribable in English. These at last, as is their nature, laid siege to him, and one day produced all about the plane of his astral body an effect similar in some respects to that which follows an explosion of the most powerful explosive known to science. The consequence was, his ethereal form was so suddenly fractured that by repercussion the whole nature of the man was altered, and he soon died in a madhouse after having committed the most awful excesses.

And vanity cannot be avoided except by studiously cultivating that selflessness and poverty of heart advised as well by Jesus of Nazareth as by Buddha.

Another hindrance is fear. This is not, however, the worst of all, and is one that will disappear by means of knowledge, for fear is always the son of ignorance. Its effect on the ethereal form is to shrivel it up, or coagulate and contract it. But as knowledge increases, that contraction abates, permitting the person to expand. Fear is the same thing as frigidity on the earth, and always proceeds by the process of freezing.

In my next the subject will be further developed.

The Path

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM: IV

Student. — Is there any reason why you do not give me a more detailed explanation of the constitution of elementals and the modes by which they work?

Sage. — Yes. There are many reasons. Among others is your inability, shared by most of the people of the present day, to comprehend a description of things that pertain to a world with which you are not familiar and for which you do not yet possess terms of expression. Were I to put forth these descriptions, the greater part would seem vague and incomprehensible on one hand, while on the other many of them would mislead you because of the interpretation put on them by yourself. Another reason is that, if the constitution, field of action, and method of action of elementals were given out, there are some minds of a very inquiring and peculiar bent who soon could find out how to come into communication with these extraordinary beings, with results disadvantageous to the community as well as the individuals.

Student. — Why so? Is it not well to increase the sum of human knowledge, even respecting most recondite parts of nature; or can it be that the elementals are bad?

Sage. — It is wise to increase the knowledge of nature's laws, but always with proper limitations. All things will become known some day. Nothing can be kept back when men have reached the point where they can understand. But at this time it would not be wise to give them, for the asking, certain knowledge that would not be good for them. That knowledge relates to elementals, and it can for the present be kept back from the scientists of today. So long as it can be retained from them, it will be, until they and

their followers are of a different stamp.

As to the moral character of elementals, they have none: they are colorless in themselves — except some classes — and merely assume the tint, so to speak, of the person using them.

Student. — Will our scientific men one day, then, be able to use these beings, and, if so, what will be the manner of it? Will their use be confined to only the good men of the earth?

Sage. — The hour is approaching when all this will be done. But the scientists of today are not the men to get this knowledge. They are only pigmy forerunners who sow seed and delve blindly in no thoroughfares. They are too small to be able to grasp these mighty powers, but they are not wise enough to see that their methods will eventually lead to Black Magic in centuries to come when they shall be forgotten.

When elemental forces are used similarly as we now see electricity and other natural energies adapted to various purposes, there will be "war in heaven." Good men will not alone possess the ability to use them. Indeed, the sort of man you now call "good" will not be the most able. The wicked will, however, pay liberally for the power of those who can wield such forces, and at last the Supreme Masters, who now guard this knowledge from children, will have to come forth. Then will ensue a dreadful war, in which, as has ever happened, the Masters will succeed and the evil doers be destroyed by the very engines, principalities, and powers prostituted to their own purposes during years of intense selfish living. But why dilate on this: in these days it is only a prophecy.

Student. — Could you give me some hints as to how the secrets of the elemental plane are preserved and prevented from being known? Do these guardians of whom you speak occupy

themselves in checking elementals, or how? Do they see much danger of divulgement likely in those instances where elemental action is patent to the observer?

Sage. — As to whether they check elementals or not need not be enquired into, because, while that may be probable, it does not appear very necessary where men are unsuspecting of the agency causing the phenomena. It is much easier to throw a cloud over the investigator's mind and lead him off to other results of often material advantage to himself and men, while at the same time acting as a complete preventive or switch which turns his energies and application into different departments.

It might be illustrated thus: Suppose that a number of trained occultists are set apart to watch the various sections of the world where the mental energies are in fervid operation. It is quite easy for them to see in a moment any mind that is about reaching a clue into the elemental world: and, besides, imagine that trained elementals themselves constantly carry information of such events. Then, by superior knowledge and command over this peculiar world, influences presenting various pictures are sent out to that enquiring mind. In one case it may be a new moral reform, in another a great invention is revealed, and such is the effect that the man's whole time and mind are taken up by this new thing which he fondly imagines is his own. Or, again, it would be easy to turn his thoughts into a certain rut leading far from the dangerous clue. In fact, the methods are endless.

Student. — Would it be wise to put into the hands of truly good, conscientious men who now use aright what gifts they have, knowledge of and control over elementals, to be used on the side of right?

Sage. — The Masters are the judges of what good men are to have this power and control. You must not forget that you cannot be

sure of the character at bottom of those whom you call "truly good and conscientious men." Place them in the fire of the tremendous temptation which such power and control would furnish, and most of them would fail. But the Masters already know the characters of all who in any way approach to a knowledge of these forces, and They always judge whether such a man is to be aided or prevented. They are not working to make these laws and forces known, but to establish right doctrine, speech, and action, so that the characters and motives of men shall undergo such radical changes as to fit them for wielding power in the elemental world. And that power is not now lying idle, as you infer, but is being always used by those who will never fail to rightly use it.

Student. — Is there any illustration at hand showing what the people of the present day would do with these extraordinary energies?

Sage. — A cursory glance at men in these western worlds engaged in the mad rush after money, many of them willing to do anything to get it, and at the strain, almost to warfare, existing between laborers and users of labor, must show you that, were either class in possession of power over the elemental world, they would direct it to the furtherance of the aims now before them. Then look at Spiritualism. It is recorded in the Lodge — photographed, you may say, by the doers of the acts themselves — that an enormous number of persons daily seek the aid of mediums and their "spooks" merely on questions of business. Whether to buy stocks, or engage in mining for gold and silver, to deal in lotteries, or to make new mercantile contracts. Here on one side is a picture of a coterie of men who obtained at a low figure some mining property on the advice of elemental spirits with fictitious names masquerading behind mediums; these mines were then to be put upon the public at a high profit,

inasmuch as the "spirits" promised metal. Unhappily for the investors, it failed. But such a record is repeated in many cases.

Then here is another where in a great American city — the Karma being favorable — a certain man speculated in stocks upon similar advice, succeeded, and, after giving the medium liberal pay, retired to what is called enjoyment of life. Neither party devoted either himself or the money to the benefiting of humanity.

There is no question of honor involved, nor any as to whether money ought or ought not to be made. It is solely one as to the propriety, expediency, and results of giving suddenly into the hands of a community unprepared and without an altruistic aim, such abnormal power. Take hidden treasure, for instance. There is much of it in hidden places, and many men wish to get it. For what purpose? For the sake of ministering to their luxurious wants and leaving it to their equally unworthy descendants. Could they know the mantram controlling the elementals that guard such treasure, they would use it at once, motive or no motive, the sole object being the money in the case.

Student. — Do some sorts of elementals have guard over hidden treasure?

Sage. — Yes, in every instance, whether never found or soon discovered. The causes for the hiding and the thoughts of the hider or loser have much to do with the permanent concealment or subsequent finding.

Student. — What happens when a large sum of money, say, such as Captain Kidd's mythical treasure, is concealed, or when a quantity of coin is lost?

Sage. — Elementals gather about it. They have many and curious modes of causing further concealment. They even influence

animals to that end. This class of elementals seldom, if ever, report at your spiritualistic seances. As time goes on the forces of air and water still further aid them, and sometimes they are able even to prevent the hider from recovering it. Thus in course of years, even when they may have altogether lost their hold on it, the whole thing becomes shrouded in mist, and it is impossible to find anything.

Student. — This in part explains why so many failures are recorded in the search for hidden treasure. But how about the Masters; are they prevented thus by these weird guardians?

Sage. — They are not. The vast quantities of gold hidden in the earth and under the sea are at their disposal always. They can, when necessary for their purposes, obtain such sums of money on whom no living being or descendants of any have the slightest claim, as would appall the senses of your greatest money getter. They have but to command the very elementals controlling it, and they have it. This is the basis for the story of Aladdin's wonderful lamp, more true than you believe.

Student. — Of what use then is it to try, like the alchemists, to make gold? With the immense amount of buried treasure thus easily found when you control its guardian, it would seem a waste of time and money to learn transmutation of metals.

Sage. — The transmutation spoken of by the real alchemists was the alteration of the base alloy in man's nature. At the same time, actual transmutation of lead into gold is possible. And many followers of the alchemists, as well as of the pure-souled Jacob Boehme, eagerly sought to accomplish the material transmuting, being led away by the glitter of wealth. But an Adept has no need for transmutation, as I have shown you. The stories told of various men who are said to have produced gold from base metals for different kings in Europe are wrong explanations. Here

and there Adepts have appeared, assuming different names, and in certain emergencies they supplied or used large sums of money. But instead of its being the product of alchemical art, it was simply ancient treasure brought to them by elementals in their service and that of the Lodge. Raymond Lully or Robert Flood might have been of that sort, but I forbear to say, since I cannot claim acquaintance with those men.

Student. — I thank you for your instruction.

Sage. — May you reach the terrace of enlightenment!

The Path

THE BHAGAVAD GITA: IX — *William Brehon*

CHAPTER THIRD.

The first two verses of this chapter express a doubt arising in Arjuna's mind, and contain a request for its solution and for a method by which he may attain perfect knowledge — salvation. They are:

"If, according to thy opinion, O thou who givest all that men ask! the use of the understanding be superior to the practise of deeds, why then dost thou urge me to engage in an undertaking so dreadful as this?

Thou, as it were, confoundest my reason with a mixture of sentiments; with certainty declare one method by which I may obtain happiness, and explain it unto me."

The doubt arose because the Blessed Lord had declared that Arjuna must reach salvation by the right use of his understanding, and yet also must perform the dreaded act of opposing, perhaps slaying, his friends, tutors, and relatives. The request is the same as is repeated nearly every day in the Theosophical Society, and for which an answer is demanded. (1) It is for *one* single method, *one* practise, *one* doctrine, by means of which the student may obtain that for which he seeks, whether he has formulated it as happiness or only as a thirst for wonderful knowledge and power.

Arjuna's doubt is the one which naturally arises in one who for the first time is brought face to face with the great duality of nature — or of God. This duality may be expressed metaphysically by the words *thought* and *action*, for these mean in this the same as *ideation* and *expression*. Brahma, as the

unmanifested God, conceives the idea of the Universe, and it at once expresses itself in what is called Creation by the Christian and by the Scientist Evolution. This Creation or Evolution is the action of God. With Him there is no difference in time between the arising of the idea and its expression in manifested objects. Coming down to consider the "created" objects, or the planes on which the thought of God has its expression through its own laws, we find the duality expressed by action and reaction, attraction and repulsion, day and night, outbreathing and inbreathing, and so on. When face to face with these, one is first confused by the multiplicity of objects, and we strive to find one simple thing, some law or doctrine, practice, dogma, or philosophy, which being known, happiness can be secured.

Although there *is* one single vehicle, to use a Buddhist term, yet it cannot be grasped in the beginning by the student. He must pass through sufficient experience to give him a greater consciousness before he can understand this one *Vehicle*. Could that unique law be understood by the beginner, could it be possible to lift us by one word to the shining heights of power and usefulness, it is certain that Those who do know would gladly utter the word and give us the sole method, but as the only possible way in which we can get true happiness is by *becoming* and not by intellectually grasping any single system or dogma, the guardians of the lamp of truth have to raise men gradually from stage to stage. It was in such an attitude Arjuna stood when he uttered the verses with which this chapter opens. (2)

Krishna then proceeds to tell Arjuna that, it being impossible for one to remain in the world without performing actions, the right practice is to do those actions (duties of life whether in war or peace) which must be done, with a heart unattached to the result, being satisfied to do what is deemed the will of the Lord within, for no other reason than that it ought to be done. He sums it up in

the words:

"But he who, restraining his senses by his heart, and being free from attachment to the results of action, undertakes active devotion through the organs of action, is worthy of praise."

This he illustrates by referring to those whom he calls "false pietists of bewildered soul" who remain inert with their bodies, restraining the organs of action, while at the same time they ponder on objects of sense which they have merely quitted in form. He thus shows the false position that it is useless to abandon the outer field of action while the mind remains attached to it, for such mental attachment will cause the ego to incarnate again and again upon earth. A little further on in the chapter he refers to a great yogee, one Janaka, who, even while a saint possessed of perfect knowledge which he had obtained while engaged in affairs of state, still performed actions.

These peculiar verses next occur:

"The creator, when of old he had created mortals and appointed sacrifice, said to them, "By means of this sacrifice ye shall be propagated. It shall be to you a cow of plenty. By means of it do ye support the gods, and let these gods support you. Supporting one another mutually, ye shall obtain the highest felicity. For, being nourished by sacrifices, the gods will give you the desired food. He who eats the food given by them without first offering some to them, is a thief indeed."

At the outset I confess that these and succeeding verses do not appear easy to explain to Western minds. Although I have had some acquaintance with Occidental reasoning based on Occidental knowledge, it seems hopeless in the present century to

elucidate much that is in this chapter. There are numerous points touched on by Krishna for which I find no response in Western thought. Among these are the verses on sacrifice. To say all I think about sacrifice would only expose me to a charge of madness, superstition, or ignorance; it certainly would on every hand be received with, incredulity. And while sneers or disbelief have no terrors, it is needless to advert to certain points in the chapter. Yet in passing them by, some sadness is felt that a high civilization should on these subjects be so dense and dark. Although Moses established sacrifices for the Jews, the Christian successors have abolished it both in spirit and letter, with a curious inconsistency which permits them to ignore the words of Jesus that "not one jot or tittle of the law should pass until all these things were fulfilled." With the culmination of the dark age (3) it was, however, natural that the last vestige of sacrifice should disappear. On the ruins of the altar has arisen the temple of the lower self, the shrine of the personal idea. In Europe individualism is somewhat tempered by various monarchical forms of government which do not by any means cure the evil; and in America, being totally unrestrained and forming in fact the basis of independence here, it has culminated. Its bad effects — vaguely as yet shadowing the horizon — might have been avoided if the doctrines of the Wisdom-Religion had been also believed in by the founders of the republic. And so, after the sweeping away of the fetters forged by priestly dogma and kingly rule, we find springing up a superstition far worse than that which we have been used to call by the name. It is the superstition of materialism that bows down to a science which leads only to a negation.

There are, however, many willing minds here who have some intuition that after all there can be extracted from these ancient Hindu books more than is to be found if they are merely studied

as a part of the lisplings of infant humanity, — the excuse given by Prof. Max Muller for translating them at all. It is to such natural theosophists I speak, for, they will see that, even while advancing so rapidly in material civilization, we need the pure philosophical and religious teachings found in the Upanishads.

The peculiar explanation of the Mosaic sacrifices advanced by the mystic, Count St. Martin, (4) needs only a passing allusion.

Students can think upon it and work out for themselves what truth it contains. He holds that the efficacy of the sacrifices rested in magnetic laws, for the priest, according to him, collected the bad effects of the sins of the people into his own person and then, by laying his hands upon the scapegoat (as in one sacrifice), communicated those deleterious influences to the poor animal who in the wilderness exhaled them so far away as not to affect the people. It is suggested that Moses knew something of occult laws, since he was educated by the Egyptians and initiated by them. But St. Martin goes on to say that

"the Jews were directed to kill even the animals in the land because the death of animals infected with the impure influences of those nations preserved the Jews from the poison; whereas in sacrifices the death of clean animals attracted wholesome preservative influences, [and that] pure and regular influences attached to certain classes and individuals of animals, and that *by breaking the bases in which they are fixed* they may become useful to man, and we should thus read Lev. xvii, 2: 'It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul.'"

He then says that the virtue of sacrifices comes through the rapport that man has with animals and nature; and,

"if the Jews had observed the sacrifices faithfully, they would never have been abandoned, but would have drawn

upon themselves every good thing they were capable of receiving. The extraordinary holocausts at the three great festivals were to bring down upon the people such active influences as corresponded to the epochs, for we see bulls, rams, and lambs always added to the burnt sacrifices. Some substances, mineral, vegetable, and animal, retain a greater proportion of the living and powerful properties of their first estate."

In these views St. Martin had some of the truth. But Moses ordained some sacrifices as a religious duty from sanitary reasons of his own, since the unthinking tribes would perform devotional acts willingly which, if imposed only as hygienic measures, they might omit. (5) The burnt offerings were, however, founded upon different views, very like those at the bottom of Hindu sacrifices, and the law of which is stated in these words from our chapter:

"Beings are nourished by food. Food has its origin from rain. *Rain is the fruit of sacrifice.* Sacrifice is performed by action."

It is not contended by either Brahmins or their followers that food will not be produced except from sacrifice performed according to Vedic ritual, but that *right food*, productive in the physical organism of the proper conditions enabling man to live up to his highest possibilities, alone is produced in that age where the real sacrifices are properly performed. In other places and ages food is produced, but it does not in everything come up to the required standard. In this age we have to submit to these difficulties, and can overcome them by following Krishna's instructions as given in this book. In a verse just quoted the distinction is made between food naturally produced without, and that due to, sacrifice, for he says, "For, being nourished by

sacrifices, the gods will give you the *desired* food." Carrying out the argument, we find as a conclusion that if the sacrifices which thus nourish the gods are omitted, these "gods" must die or go to other spheres. And as we know that sacrifices are totally disused now, the "gods" spoken of must have long ago left this sphere. It is necessary to ask what and who they are. They are not the mere idols and imaginary beings so constantly mentioned in the indictments brought against India by missionaries, but are certain powers and properties of nature which leave the world when the Kali Yuga or dark age, as this is called, has fully set in. Sacrifices therefore among us would be useless just at present.

There is, however, another meaning to the "revolution of the wheel" spoken of by Krishna. He makes it very clear that he refers to the principle of reciprocity or Brotherhood. And this he declares must be kept revolving; that is, each being must live according to that rule, or else he lives a life of sin to no purpose. And we can easily believe that in these days this principle, while admired as a fine theory, is not that which moves the people. They are, on the contrary, spurred by the personal selfish idea of each one becoming better, greater, richer than his neighbor. If continued unchecked it would make this nation one entirely of Black Magicians. And it was to counteract this that the Theosophical Society was founded, with the object of inducing men to once more revolve this wheel of Brotherly Love first set in motion by the "Creator when of old he had created mortals."

Krishna then proceeds to exhort Arjuna again to perform the duties appointed to him, and urges him to do it on the ground that he being a great man should set a good example that the lower orders would follow: saying,

"He who understands the whole universe should not cause these people, slow and ignorant of the universe, to relapse

from their duty."

Knowing that, under the great cyclic laws which govern us, periods arrive even in the worst of ages when good examples of living imprinted on the astral light cause effects ever increasing in intensity until at last the "gods" before referred to begin in distant spheres to feel the force of these good actions and to return again to help mankind on the recurrence of a better age, he implores Arjuna to be the very first to set the good example.

In such an age as this, the ritualistic sacrifice of a different age which has indeed a magical effect becomes a sacrifice to be performed by each man in his own nature upon the altar of his own heart. And especially is this so with theosophists of sincerity and aspiration. Being born as we are in these days, among families with but small heritage in the way of descent from unsullied ancestors, we are without the advantage of great natural spiritual leanings, and without certain peculiar powers and tendencies that belong to another cycle. But the very force and rapidity of the age we live in give us the power to do more now in fewer incarnations. Let us then recognize this, and learn what is our duty and do it. This portion of the chapter ends with a famous verse:

"It is better to do one's own duty, even though it be devoid of excellence, than to perform another's duty well. Death is better in the performance of one's own duty. Another's duty is productive of danger."

(To be continued.)

FOOTNOTES:

1. See *Lucifer* of April and May, 1888, in *Articles Practical Occultism and Occultism and the Occult Arts*. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

2. It is to be noticed that Arjuna and Krishna constantly change the names by which they address each other. When Krishna is dwelling on one subject or upon something that has to do with a particular phase of Arjuna's nature, he gives him some name that has reference to the quality, subject, or other matter referred to, and Arjuna changes the name of Krishna whenever he has need. As in these first verses, the name used for the Blessed Lord is *Janardana*, which means "giver of all that men ask," — meaning thereby to refer to Krishna's potency in the bringing to fulfilment all wishes. — B. ([return to text](#))

3. My readers may not agree with me that this is the Dark Age, inasmuch as that is the term applied to a period now past. That time, however, was a part of this; and this is even darker than that, as we think. — B. ([return to text](#))

4. See *Man: His Nature and Destiny* (1802). — B. ([return to text](#))

5. In India there are numerous religious observances having in view sanitary effects. For instance the cholera dance — a religious matter — in which, while disinfecting camphor is burned in heaps, a curious flower-umbrella-dance is engaged in with religious chants and music. — B. ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE THREE PLANES OF HUMAN LIFE — *Eusebio Urban*

JAGRATA, SWAPNA, SUSHUPTI: WAKING, DREAMING,
DREAMLESS SLEEP.

I speak of ordinary men. The Adept, the Master, the Yogi, the Mahatma, the Buddha, each lives in more than three states while incarnated upon this world, and they are fully conscious of them all, while the ordinary man is only conscious of the first — the waking-life, as the word conscious is now understood.

Every theosophist who is in earnest ought to know the importance of these three states, and especially how essential it is that one should not lose in Swapna the memory of experiences in Sushupti, nor in Jagrata those of Swapna, and *vice versa*.

Jagrata, our waking state, is the one in which we must be regenerated; where we must come to a full consciousness of the Self within, for in no other is salvation possible.

When a man dies he goes either to the Supreme Condition from which no return against his will is possible, or to other states — heaven, hell, avitchi, devachan, what not — from which return to incarnation is inevitable. But he cannot go to the Supreme State unless he has perfected and regenerated himself; unless the wonderful and shining heights on which the Masters stand have been reached while he is in a body. This consummation, so devoutly desired, cannot be secured unless at some period in his evolution the being takes the steps that lead to the final attainment. These steps can and must be taken. In the very first is contained the possibility of the last, for causes once put in motion eternally produce their natural results.

Among those steps are an acquaintance with and understanding

of the three states first spoken of. Jagrata acts on Swapna, producing dreams and suggestions, and either disturbs the instructions that come down from the higher state or aids the person through waking calmness and concentration which tend to lessen the distortions of the mental experiences of dream life. Swapna again in its turn acts on the waking state (Jagrata) by the good or bad suggestions made to him in dreams. All experience and all religions are full of proofs of this. In the fabled Garden of Eden the wily serpent whispered in the ear of the sleeping mortal to the end that when awake he should violate the command. In Job it is said that God instructeth man in sleep, in dreams, and in visions of the night. And the common introspective and dream life of the most ordinary people needs no proof. Many cases are within my knowledge where the man was led to commit acts against which his better nature rebelled, the suggestion for the act coming to him in dream. It was because the unholy state of his waking thoughts infected his dreams, and laid him open to evil influences. By natural action and reaction he poisoned both Jagrata and Swapna.

It is therefore our duty to purify and keep clear these two planes.

The third state common to all is *Sushupti*, which has been translated "*dreamless sleep*." The translation is inadequate, for, while it is dreamless, it is also a state in which even criminals commune through the higher nature with spiritual beings and enter into the spiritual plane. It is the great spiritual reservoir by means of which the tremendous momentum toward evil living is held in check. And because it is involuntary with them, it is constantly salutary in its effect.

In order to understand the subject better, it is well to consider a little in detail what happens when one falls asleep, has dreams, and then enters *Sushupti*. As his outer senses are dulled the brain

begins to throw up images, the reproductions of waking acts and thoughts, and soon he is asleep. He has then entered a plane of experience which is as real as that just quitted, only that it is of a different sort. We may roughly divide this from the waking life by an imaginary partition on the one side, and from Sushupti by another partition on the other. In this region he wanders until he begins to rise beyond it into the higher. There no disturbances come from the brain action, and the being is a partaker to the extent his nature permits of the "banquet of the gods." But he has to return to waking state, and he can get back by no other road than the one he came upon, for, as Sushupti extends in every direction and Swapna under it also in every direction, there is no possibility of emerging at once from Sushupti into Jagrata. And this is true even though on returning: no memory of any dream is retained.

Now the ordinary non-concentrated man, by reason of the want of focus due to multitudinous and confused thought, has put his Swapna field or state into confusion, and in passing through it the useful and elevating experiences of Sushupti become mixed up and distorted, not resulting in the benefit to him as a waking person which is his right as well as his duty to have. Here again is seen the lasting effect, either prejudicial or the opposite, of the conduct and thoughts when awake.

So it appears, then, that what he should try to accomplish is such a clearing up any vivification of Swapna state as shall result in removing the confusion and distortion existing there, in order that upon emerging into waking life he may retain a wider and brighter memory of what occurred in Sushupti. This is done by an increase of concentration upon high thoughts, upon noble purposes, upon all that is best and most spiritual in him while awake. The best result cannot be accomplished in a week or a year, perhaps not in a life, but, once begun, it will lead to the

perfection of spiritual cultivation in some incarnation hereafter.

By this course a centre of attraction is set up in him while awake, and to that all his energies flow, so that it may be figured to ourselves as a focus in the waking man. To this focal point — looking at it from that plane — converge the rays from the whole waking man toward Swapna, earning him into dream-state with greater clearness. By reaction this creates another focus in Swapna, through which he can emerge into Sushupti in a collected condition. Returning he goes by means of these points through Swapna, and there, the confusion being lessened, he enters into his usual waking state the possessor, to some extent at least, of the benefits and knowledge of Sushupti. The difference between the man who is not concentrated and the one who is, consists in this, that the first passes from one state to the other through the imaginary partitions postulated above, just as sand does through a sieve, while the concentrated man passes from one to the other similarly to water through a pipe or the rays of the sun through a lens. In the first case each stream of sand is a different experience, a different set of confused and irregular thoughts, whereas the collected man goes and returns the owner of regular and clear experience.

These thoughts are not intended to be exhaustive, but so far as they go it is believed they are correct. The subject is one of enormous extent as well as great importance, and theosophists are urged to purify, elevate, and concentrate the thoughts and acts of their waking hours so that they shall not continually and aimlessly, night after night and day succeeding day, go into and return from these natural and wisely appointed states, no wiser, no better able to help their fellow men. For by this way, as by the spider's small thread, we may gain the free space of spiritual life.

ESCAPE OR ACHIEVEMENT — *B. N. Acle*

"They change their skies, but not their natures, who cross the seas," — so runs the proverb; and doubtless many of us can bear witness that it is as true today as when it fell from the lips of the wise Roman of old.

"What must I do to be saved?" was the cry, when tossed on the stormy and uncharted ocean of orthodoxy: "Where shall I find a pilot?" signals the vessel, hove-to off the entrance to the fair-haven of Theosophy.

One who, while serving his country gallantly on many a hard-fought field, yet strove according to his lights to be loyal to Him whom he regarded as his Heavenly Master, was wont to say that if he "could just squeeze inside of the Golden Gate," he would be entirely content. Before indulging in the smile of superiority at this honest, if lowly, confession, it might be well to examine whether this is not our own real, though possibly unconscious, attitude; whether, when we say "*Must* I give up this?", or, "Is it *necessary* to do that?", we do not really mean "How much of this world's pleasures may I venture to indulge in? how close can I point to windward without being taken aback?" in other words. "Can I do this, or enjoy that, and yet 'just squeeze inside?'"

Assuming, however, that the inquiry is made in sincerity and good faith, it is evident that the answer must depend upon the reply that the seeker makes to the question addressed to him in turn, "What is your object in life — to avoid an imaginary punishment, to obtain in the future a definite and limited reward? or to enter, now and here, upon a path of ever-increasing wisdom, knowledge, and peace, of inconceivable splendour and limitless extent? is your aim negative or positive?"

in a word, is it Escape or Achievement?"

Now from the standpoint of official Christianity, the attitude of the simple-hearted soldier is not only entirely logical, but thoroughly satisfactory: and if we also are of this way of thinking — if, as the Bhagavad Gita says, we prefer "a transient enjoyment of heaven to eternal absorption" — doubtless in Devachan we shall find fulness of joy: "Those who worship the Devatas go unto the Devatas."

But to those strong souls whose passionate longing is to find "the small, old path;" who disdain the gentler slopes which the feeble must needs follow; whose eyes seek the snowy pinnacle rather than the smiling valley, though it were the Land of Beulah itself; who, far from desiring the enjoyment of Devachan, regard it rather as a halt in their progress, a loss of time, so to speak, and would gladly forego its delights in order to re-incarnate at once and continue without interruption in their work for the good of the race; — what answer shall be returned them? Obviously none; since, for them, such questions never arise. They ask not, What *shall* I give up? but, What *can* I?; not, What indulgence *must* I deny myself? but, What encumbrance can I cast aside, that I may the more swiftly and easily mount.

It was said by One of old time, "Ye cannot serve two masters." God and Mammon were the instances cited by the Teacher, but the saying holds true of any given opposite or conflicting aims. And the great trouble is that, although we may be unwilling to admit it even to ourselves, very few of us are really single-hearted: whether from physical infirmity, so-called hereditary tendency, or Karmic environment matters not so far as regards the fact and the inevitable consequences resulting therefrom. Possibly all that many of us can accomplish in this incarnation will be in the nature of a species of compromise, or perhaps, more correctly, a

net result, — a sort of moral diagonal of forces, so to speak, the resultant of the opposing tendencies of our earthly attractions and spiritual aspirations.

But he whose aim is single, whose eye never loses sight of the end, acts on his plane as the successful man of business on his: do we ever hear the latter ask, "*Must* I stay in my office eight hours a day? is it absolutely necessary to miss this race, or forego that dinner, in order to close this contract or elaborate that plan?" Does he not rather work fourteen, or sixteen, hours, give up recreation, literary, artistic, social, even to a great extent the joys of the home circle, tax his ingenuity to the uttermost to devise new openings, find fresh fields for enterprise? and this day after day, year in and year out, until either fortune is won, or health and, perhaps, life itself are sacrificed in the determined effort?

Perhaps it might be laid down broadly that any question prefaced by "must" should be answered in the negative; for the fact of its being put in that form proclaims, louder than any words, that not yet is the seeker able to free himself from attachment; and until he can do this — until, as is said in *Through the Gates of Gold*, he can place the object before him, and clearly, coolly, and dispassionately examine it from all points of view, fully admitting its attractions as well as recognizing its drawbacks, and then calmly, deliberately, without a trace of regret or a sigh of longing, dismiss the very idea from his heart, — until he can do all this, forcible repression by mere strength of will avails nothing: the desire, coerced at one point, returns with accumulated strength at another; if not on the physical plane, then on the mental; if not in this incarnation, then in another. This is the teaching of all the ages, from the Upanishads to *Light on the Path*, of the Bhagavad Gita and the Bible, of Buddha and Jesus alike. Nothing that is done as a penance, as a so-called "mortification of the flesh," or merely out of deference to the feelings, or opinions, or prejudices of

others, can be of any real value to the man himself.

One who makes a virtue of refusing to play cards in the social circle, while still having the desire in his heart, may yet lose money and reputation in Wall street; he who, against his own judgment, is persuaded to deprive himself of the comfort resulting from the rational use of tobacco, may wreck his nerves by inordinate indulgence in strong tea, — and this without incurring the censure of clergymen, reformers, or old women of either sex. In this, as in all things, we may learn from the working of Nature. The tree yields fruit not only after its kind, but in its own due time. There is neither haste nor delay in her evolutionary methods, — first the blossom and then the fruit, is her unvarying rule: and, knowing this, we do not expect to pluck the matured ear of July from the tender shoot of April: we rejoice in the budding sweetness of the vineyard in the joyous Springtide, untroubled by any anxiety lest the golden glory of September should fail to ripen the purple clusters.

So in our daily round and occupation, everything comes in its appointed time and refuses to be hurried: sculptured granite is not more immovable than the Express, a second before its flying wheels begin to turn; as the hand on the dial points to the hour, the ingenious mechanism of the time-lock swings back the massive doors of the vault which, a moment before, would have defied the strength of a hundred men to open.

"And what shall I do with my sword?" asked the brilliant young courtier of George Fox, by whose teachings he had become converted to Quakerism. "Friend;" replied the wise and courteous man of Peace, "wear it, — *as long as thou canst!*" but full soon William Penn counted it all joy to exchange jewelled sword and velvet coat for the simple garb of the people with whom he had cast in his lot. And when the day comes — as come it must, in the

fulness of times — when we are ready, in this spirit, to lay everything on the altar — whether choice possessions or valued opinions, favorite habits or cherished beliefs, our so-called virtues not less than what are termed our vices; when we can do all this, not as a sacrifice, but with joy and gladness, when our songs of deliverance are borne upon the upwreathing incense; then we, likewise, shall be no longer perplexed by the "must" or the "shall", for we shall then be treading the King's Highway of Achievement, and not scuffling along the back alleys of Escape.

Let us then be ever on guard lest aught tempt us from that "Middle Road" which the Lord Buddha pointed out to us, and in which we know our feet to be set; and by following it in all patience and loyalty, with dauntless will and unswerving devotion, we shall in His own time — which is always the best time — come to realize the portion which He has assured us shall be that of all who truly love and serve Him.

"Who wins

To such commencement hath the *First Stage* touched:

He knows the Noble Truths, the Eight-fold Road:

By few or many steps such shall attain

NIRVANA'S blest abode."

The Path

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM: V

MANTRAMS.

Student. — You spoke of mantrams by which we could control elements on guard over hidden treasure. What is a mantram?

Sage. — A mantram is a collection of words which, when sounded in speech, induce certain vibrations not only in the air, but also in the finer ether, thereby producing certain effects.

Student. — Are the words taken at haphazard?

Sage. — Only by those who, knowing nothing of mantrams, yet use them.

Student. — May they, then, be used according to rule and also irregularly? Can it be possible that people who know absolutely nothing of their existence or field of operations should at the same time make use of them? Or is it something like digestion, of which so many people know nothing whatever, while they in fact are dependent upon its proper use for their existence? I crave your indulgence because I know nothing of the subject.

Sage. — The "common people" in almost every country make use of them continually, but even in that case the principle at the bottom is the same as in the other. In a new country where folklore has not yet had time to spring up, the people do not have as many as in such a land as India or in long settled parts of Europe. The aboriginies, however, in any country will be possessed of them.

Student. — You do not now infer that they are used by Europeans for the controlling of elementals?

Sage. — No. I refer to their effect in ordinary intercourse between human beings. And yet there are many men in Europe, as well as in Asia, who can thus control animals, but those are nearly always special cases. There are men in Germany, Austria, Italy, and Ireland who can bring about extraordinary effects on horses, cattle, and the like, by peculiar sounds uttered in a certain way. In those instances the sound used is a mantram of only one member, and will act only on the particular animal that the user knows it can rule.

Student. — Do these men know the rules governing the matter? Are they able to convey it to another?

Sage. — Generally not. It is a gift self-found or inherited, and they only know that it can be done by them, just as a mesmeriser knows he can do a certain thing with a wave of his hand, but is totally ignorant of the principle. They are as ignorant of the base of this strange effect as your modern physiologists are of the function and cause of such a common thing as yawning.

Student. — Under what head should we put this unconscious exercise of power?

Sage. — Under the head of natural magic, that materialistic science can never crush out. It is a touch with nature and her laws always are served by the masses, who, while they form the majority of the population, are yet ignored by the "cultured classes." And so it will be discovered by you that it is not in London or Paris or New York drawing-rooms that you will find mantrams, whether regular or irregular, used by the people. "Society," too cultured to be natural, has adopted methods of speech intended to conceal and to deceive, so that natural mantrams can not be studied within its borders.

Single, natural mantrams are such words as "wife." When it is

spoken it brings up in the mind all that is implied by the word. And if in another language, the word would be that corresponding to the same basic idea. And so with expressions of greater length, such as many slang sentences: thus, "I want to see the color of his money." There are also sentences applicable to certain individuals, the use of which involves a knowledge of the character of those to whom we speak. When these are used, a peculiar and lasting vibration is set up in the mind of the person affected, leading to a realization in action of the idea involved, or to a total change of life due to the appositeness of the subjects brought up and to the peculiar mental antithesis induced in the hearer. As soon as the effect begins to appear the mantram may be forgotten, since the *law of habit* then has sway in the brain.

Again, bodies of men are acted on by expressions having the mantramic quality; this is observed in great social or other disturbances. The reason is the same as before. A dominant idea is aroused that touches upon a want of the people or on an abuse which oppresses them, and the change and interchange in their brains between the idea and the form of words go on until the result is accomplished. To the occultist of powerful sight this is seen to be a "ringing" of the words coupled with the whole chain of feelings, interests, aspirations, and so forth, that grows faster and deeper as the time for the relief or change draws near. And the greater number of persons affected by the idea involved, the larger, deeper, and wider the result. A mild illustration may be found in Lord Beaconsfield of England. He knew about mantrams, and continually invented phrases of that quality. "Peace with honor" was one; "a scientific frontier" was another; and his last, intended to have a wider reach, but which death prevented his supplementing, was "Empress of India." King Henry of England also tried it without himself knowing why, when he added to his titles, "Defender of the Faith." With these hints

numerous illustrations will occur to you.

Student. — These mantrams have only to do with human beings as between each other. They do not affect elementals, as I judge from what you say. And they are not dependent upon the *sound* so much as upon words bringing up ideas. Am I right in this; and is it the case that there is a field in which certain vocalizations produce effects in the *Akasa* by means of which men, animals, and elementals alike can be influenced, without regard to their knowledge of any known language?

Sage. — You are right. We have only spoken of natural, unconsciously-used mantrams. The scientific mantrams belong to the class you last referred to. It is to be doubted whether they can be found in modern Western languages, — especially among English speaking people who are continually changing and adding to their spoken words to such an extent that the English of today could hardly be understood by Chaucer's predecessors. It is in the ancient Sanskrit and the language which preceded it that mantrams are hidden. The laws governing their use are also to be found in those languages, and not in any modern philological store.

Student. — Suppose, though, that one acquires a knowledge of ancient and correct mantrams, could he affect a person speaking English, and by the use of English words?

Sage. — He could: and all adepts have the power to translate a strictly regular mantram into any form of language, so that a single sentence thus uttered by them will have an immense effect on the person addressed, whether it be by letter or word of mouth.

Student. — Is there no way in which we might, as it were, imitate those adepts in this?

Sage. — Yes, you should study simple forms of mantramic quality, for the purpose of thus reaching the hidden mind of all the people who need spiritual help. You will find now and then some expression that has resounded in the brain, at last producing such a result that he who heard it turns his mind to spiritual things.

Student. — I thank you for your instruction.

Sage. — May the Brahmamantram guide you to the everlasting truth. — OM.

The Path

RESPECTING REINCARNATION

Objections frequently raised against "Reincarnation," and that appear to those who make them to be strong, are some growing out of the emotional part of our nature. They say, "We do not wish to be some one else in another life; how can we recognize our friends and loved ones if they and we thus change our personality? The absorbing attachments we form here are such that happiness would seem impossible without those we love."

It is useless to say in reply that, if Reincarnation be the law, it can and will make no difference what we would like or dislike. So long as one is governed by his likes and dislikes, logical arguments will not dissipate objections, and, if it is coldly asserted that the beloved objects of our affection pass at death forever beyond us, no relief is afforded to the mind nor is a strictly accurate statement made. In fact, one of the miseries of conditioned existence is the apparent liability of forever losing those upon whom we place our hearts. So to meet this difficulty raised by ever present death, the Christian churches have invented their heaven in which reunion is possible under a condition, the acceptance of the dogma of the Redeemer. None of their believers seem to consider that, inasmuch as constantly many of those most closely bound to us by every tie do not and never will meet the prerequisite condition, happiness in that heaven cannot be possible when we constantly are aware that those unbelievers are suffering in hell, for, enough memory being left to permit us to recognize believing friends, we cannot forget the others. Greater than ever, then, that difficulty becomes.

What are these loves? must be asked. They are either (*a*) a love for the mere physical body, or (*b*) one for the soul within. Of

course in the first case, the body being disintegrated at death, it is not possible for us, nor need we wish — unless we are grossly materialistic — to see that in the other life. And *personality* belongs only to the body. Hence, if the soul that we do love inhabits another physical frame, it is the law — a part of the law of Reincarnation not often stated or dwelt on — that we will again, when incarnated, meet that same soul in the new tenement. We cannot, however, always recognize it. But that, the recognition or memory of those whom we knew before, is one of the very objects of our study and practice. Not only is this the law as found in ancient books, but it has been positively stated, in the history of the Theosophical Society, in a letter from an Adept addressed not many years ago to some London theosophists. In it he asked them if they imagined that they were together as incarnated beings for the first time, stated that they were not, and laid down the rule that the real affinities of soul life drew them together on earth.

To be associated against our will with those who lay upon us the claim of mother, father, brother, son, or wife from a previous life would neither be just nor necessary. Those relations, as such, grew out of physical ties alone, and souls that are alike, who really love each other, as well as those who harbor hate, are brought together in mortal bodies as now father and now son —, or otherwise.

So, then, with the doctrine of Devachan we have the answer. In that state we have with us, for all practical purposes and to suit our desire, every one whom we loved on earth: upon being reincarnated we are again with those whose souls we are naturally attracted to.

By living up to the highest and best of our convictions, for humanity and not for *self*, we make it possible that we shall at last

recognize in some earth-life those persons whom we love, and to lose whom forever seems such a dreary and uninviting prospect.

The Path

THE BHAGAVAD GITA: X — *William Brehon*

CHAPTER THIRD.

Krishna having said to Arjuna that a certain class of men, being without faith, revile the true doctrine and perish at last, bewildered even by all their knowledge, Arjuna sees at once a difficulty growing out of a consideration of what, if anything, induces these men to sin as it were against their will. He sees in this the operation of an unknown force that moulds men in a manner that they would not allow if conscious of it, and he says:

"Instigated by what does this man incur sin, even against his will. O descendant of Vrishni, impelled, as it were, by force?"

To this Krishna replies:

"It is desire; it is passion springing from the quality of Tamas (darkness), voracious, all-sinful. Know that it is hostile to man in this world. As fire is surrounded by smoke, and a mirror by rust, (1) as the foetus is involved in the womb, so is this universe surrounded by this quality. Knowledge is surrounded by this, and it is the constant enemy of the wise man — a fire which assumes any form it will, O son of Kunti! and is insatiable. Its empire is said to be the senses, the heart, and the intellect. By means of these it surrounds knowledge and bewilders the soul. Therefore do thou, O best of Bharatas! in the first place, restraining thy senses, cast off this sinful impetus which devours spiritual knowledge and spiritual discernment.

"They say that the senses are great. The heart is greater than the senses. But intellect is greater than the heart, and

that which is greater than intellect is this passion. Knowing that it is thus greater than the mind, strengthening thyself by thyself, do thou O great-armed one! slay this foe, which assumes any form it will and is intractable."

Deep reflection upon this reply by the Great Lord of Men shows us that the realm over which the influence of passion extends is much wider than we at first supposed. It is thought by many students that freedom can be quickly obtained as soon as they begin the study of Occultism or the investigation of their inner being of which the outer is only a partial revealment. They enter upon the study full of hope, and, finding great relief and buoyancy, think that the victory is almost won. But the enemy spoken of, the obstruction, the taint, is present among a greater number of the factors that compose a being than is apparent.

Krishna has reference to the three qualities of *Satwa*, *Rajah*, and *Tamo*. The first is of the nature of truth, pure and bright; the second partakes of truth in a lesser degree, is of the nature of action, and has also in it the quality of badness; the third, *Tamas*, is wholly bad, and its essential peculiarity is *indifference*, corresponding to darkness, in which no action of a pure quality is possible.

These three great divisions — or as it is in the Sanskrit, *gunas* — comprehend all the combinations of what we call "qualities," whether they be moral, mental, or physical.

This passion, or desire, spoken of in the chapter is composed of the two last qualities, *Rajah* and *Tamas*. As Krishna says, it is intractable. It is not possible, as some teach, to bring desire of this sort into our service. It must be slain. It is useless to try to use it as a helper, because its tendency is more towards *Tamas*, that is, downward, than towards the other.

It is shown to surround even knowledge. It is present, to a greater or lesser degree, in every action. Hence the difficulty encountered by all men who set out to cultivate the highest that is in them.

We are at first inclined to suppose that the field of action of this quality is the senses alone; but Krishna teaches that its empire reaches beyond those and includes the heart and the intellect also. The incarnated soul desiring knowledge and freedom finds itself snared continually by *Tamas*, which, ruling also in the heart and mind, is able to taint knowledge and thus bewilder the struggler.

Among the senses particularly, this force has sway. And the senses include all the psychical powers so much desired by those who study occultism. It does not at all follow that a man is spiritual or knows truth because he is able to see through vast distances, to perceive the denizens of the astral world, or to hear with the inner ear. In this part of the human economy the dark quality is peculiarly powerful. Error is more likely to be present there than elsewhere, and unless the seer is self governed he gets no valuable knowledge, but is quite likely to fall at last, not only into far more grievous error, but into great wickedness.

We must therefore begin, as advised by Krishna, with that which is nearest to us, that is, with our senses. We cannot slay the foe there at first, because it is resident also in the heart and mind. By proceeding from the near to the more remote, we go forward with regularity and with certainty of conquest at last. Therefore He said, "In the first place, restrain thy senses." If we neglect those and devote ourselves wholly to the mind and heart, we really gain nothing, for the foe still remains undisturbed in the senses. By means of those, when we have devoted much time and care to the heart and mind, it may throw such obscurations and difficulties in the way that all the work done with the heart and mind is

rendered useless.

It is by means of the outward senses and their inner counterparts that a great turmoil is set up in the whole system, which spreads to the heart and from there to the mind, and, as it is elsewhere said, "The restless heart then snatches away the mind from its steady place."

We thus have to carry on the cultivation of the soul by regular stages, never neglecting one part at the expense of another. Krishna advises his friend to restrain the senses, and then to "strengthen himself by himself." The meaning here is that he is to rely upon the One Consciousness which, as differentiated in a man, is his Higher Self. By means of this higher self he is to strengthen the lower, or that which he is accustomed to call "myself."

It will not be amiss here to quote from some notes of conversation with a friend of mine.

"Our consciousness is *one* and not many, nor different from other consciousnesses. It is not *waking consciousness* or *sleeping consciousness*, or any other but *consciousness itself*.

"Now that which I have called consciousness is *Being*. The ancient division was:

"*Sat*, or Being;

"*Chit*, or Consciousness, Mind;

"*Ananda*, or Bliss.

"These together are called *Satchitananda*.

"But *Sat* — or Being — the first of the three, is itself both *Chit* and *Ananda*. The appearing together in full harmony of Being and Consciousness is Bliss or *Ananda*. Hence that

harmony is called *Satchitananda*.

"But the one consciousness of each person is the Witness or Spectator of the actions and experiences of every state we are in or pass through. It therefore follows that the waking condition of the mind is not separate consciousness.

"The one consciousness pierces up and down through all the states or planes of Being, and serves to uphold the memory — whether complete or incomplete — of each state's experiences.

"Thus in waking life, *Sat* experiences fully and knows. In dream state, *Sat* again knows and sees what goes on there, while there may not be in the brain a complete memory of the waking state just quitted. In Sushupti — beyond dream and yet on indefinitely, *Sat* still knows all that is done or heard or seen.

"The way to salvation must be entered. To take the first step raises the possibility of success. Hence it is said, 'When the first attainment has been won, *Moksha* (salvation) has been won.'

"The first step is giving up bad associations and getting a longing for knowledge of God; the second is joining good company, listening to their teachings and practising them; the third is strengthening the first two attainments, having faith and continuing in it. Whoever dies thus, lays the sure foundation for ascent to adeptship, or salvation."

We have come to the end of the third chapter, which is that upon *Devotion through Action*, or in Sanskrit, *Karma Yoga*. It has in these three chapters been distinctly taught that devotion must be

obtained, sought after, desired, cultivated. The disciple must learn to do every act with the Divine in view, and the Divine in everything. As it is said in the *Brihad Nundekeshwar Purana*: "While taking medicine one should think of Vishnu or the all-pervading; while eating, of Janardana, the All-Giver; while lying down, of Padmanabha; while marrying, of Prajapati, the Lord of Creatures; while fighting, of Chakradhara; while traveling in a foreign land, of Trivikrama; at the time of death, of Narayana; at the time of reunion with friends, of Sridhara; after dreaming bad dreams, of Govinda; at the time of danger, of Madhusudana; in the midst of a forest, of Narsingha; in the midst of fire, of Jalasai, or the one lying on the water; in the midst of water, of Varaha; on the mountain, of Raghunundana; while going, of Vaurana; and in all acts, of Madhava." All these names are the names of Vishnu in his various powers and appearances. It is seeing Krishna in everything, and everything in him. This at last we must do, for Ishwara, the spirit in each of us, is none other than Krishna; therefore let us think of Him and fight: while entangled in this dense forest of existence, let us think of Him, the Lion our guard, the Sage our guide, the Warrior our sure defense and shield.

FOOTNOTES:

1. The ancient form of mirror is here referred to. It was made of metal and highly burnished. Of course it was constantly liable to get rusty. And our own silvered mirror is liable also to cloud, owing to the oxidizing of the coating. — B. ([return to text](#))

A BUDDHIST DOCTRINE — *Eusebio Urban*

英文眞宗教旨

There are twelve principal Buddhist sects in Japan. These are: Ku-Sha-Shiu, Jo-Jitsu-Shiu, Ris-Shiu, Ho-so-Shiu, San-Ron-Shiu, Ke-Gon-Shiu, Ten-Dai-Shiu, Shin-Gon-Shiu, Jo-Do-Shiu, Zen-Shiu, Shin-Shiu, and Nichi-Ren-Shiu. It is of a tenet of the Shin-Shiu that I propose to speak. The student can learn much of the others by consulting the works of Mr. Bunyiu Nanjio, M. A., and other authorities.

The last four of those mentioned may be called the modern ones. Gen-Ku founded the Jo-Do in 1174 A. D.; the Zen-Shiu was started by Ei-Sai in 1191 A. D.; the Shin-Shiu was founded in 1224 A. D. by Shin-Ran; and in 1253 A. D., Nichi-Ren established that one named for him. This last is more frequently called by the founder's name because, although he adopted what is called the Saddharmapundarika as the principal Sutra of it, he altered the substance of the doctrine. For that reason it is called, paraphrastically, "Nichi-Ren's Saddharmapundarika sect."

The essential difference between the Shin-Shiu and the others may be seen by placing its doctrine and that of the Zen-Shu side by side. In the latter the disciple is to see the nature of Buddha by his own thought, free from the influence of the eighty-four thousand different doctrines, while the Shin-Shiu teaches that we attain salvation "*by the power of another*" who is Amita Buddha.

The Zen-Shiu is said to have originated from the incident, well known to Buddhists, of Gotama Buddha's taking from the heavenly king a flower of golden color and holding it in his hand in silence. The disciples could not understand the meaning of this,

except Mahakasyapa, who, although he knew, only smiled and remained also silent. Thereupon Buddha said to him, "I have the wonderful thought of Nirvana." This was called "the doctrine of thought transmitted by thought." Ananda received it from Kasyapa, and so on down a long list of patriarchs in the church. The twenty-eighth patriarch, Bodhidharma, a king's son, crossed over into China. In that country he attempted to teach the Emperor the secret of the doctrine, but the pupil could not understand it, and Bodhidharma entered a monastery where he pursued the practice of sitting in meditation gazing at a wall for nine years, after which he gained disciples. He was called "the wall-gazing Brahmana." A later devotee in 729 A. D, came from China to Japan and established a form of the doctrine of Zen-Shiu. In this school, as distinguished from the Shin-Shiu, the disciple exercises his own thought independent of doctrine, while in the latter a doctrine is relied upon. The words of the Indian poem Bhagavad-Gita may be profitably remembered here, where it says that "he who pursues the unmanifested path has a more difficult task [than any other] to perform." (1)

The other sects, except the Shin-Shiu, have various doctrines for the attainment of the end in view, but the followers of the Shin-Shiu declare that all these are "expedients." They do not exclude the Zen-Shiu, although it would appear perhaps to the aggressive mind of the Englishman or American that to tell a man he can attain Nirvana by his own power is not laying a mere expedient before him.

It is because of these doctrines of expediency in other sects that the Shin-shiu call themselves "the True Sect of Buddhists."

The doctrine of the sect is also called by them "the Doctrine of the Pure Land." The pure land referred to is the Land of Amida Buddha [Amitabha]: the object is to be born into that land, that is,

to obtain salvation. It has been otherwise stated in this manner:

"Among those who follow the doctrine of the Pure Land, there are several different systems of teaching, which are as follows: — 'Some say that we should practise various good works, bring our stock of merits to maturity, and be born in the Pure Land. Others say that we should repeat only the name of Amitabha Buddha in order to be born in his Pure Land, by the merit produced from such repetition.' These doctrines are all considered as yet the temporary expedients. To rely upon the power of the original prayer of Amitabha Buddha with the whole heart and give up all idea of Ji-Riki or 'self-power' is called the truth. This truth is the doctrine of this sect." (2)

The eighteenth of the forty-eight prayers of Amita Buddha is the prayer referred to. It is: "If any of living beings of the ten regions who have believed in me with true thoughts and desire to be born in my country, and have even to ten times repeated the thought of my name, should not be born there, then may I not obtain the perfect knowledge." This prayer was made by him because of his great desire to deliver all beings from suffering. It was a prayer which he first uttered long before he himself obtained salvation, but he continued for ages after that to work to the end that he might be able to make the prayer of force and value to any one who should use it. It follows, of course, that he accomplished his desire, and the Shin-Shin sect accordingly claims that this prayer or vow has a peculiar effect of its own, and has strength to enable whoever uses it to reach salvation.

The claims made for this prayer are in accordance with certain views that are held in the East about the force that resides in the vows of a wise or great saint. They are said to have an actual dynamic effect upon the minds and hearts of all persons who

shall use them, even after the saint has died. It is claimed that the power has to do with magnetism. And it is said by the followers of Shin-Shiu that, when one begins to repeat and rely upon the prayer of Amita Buddha, he at once connects himself with the whole body of real believers, and as well with the power of Amita himself.

In its essence the doctrine is one of salvation by faith, but at the same time the sect does not claim — as the Christian does for his dogma — that there is no other way to be saved. They admit that a person may be saved "by his own power" — if he has the requisite strength to hold out —, but they think that in general men have not the power to resist evil for a time sufficient to permit the accomplishment of the result; and they assert that besides the lack of strength there will be doubt, for, "Faith by one's own power cannot afford rest to the heart. It is said, 'Shall I surely attain salvation or shall I not?' and thus what is called faith is in reality doubt," but "Faith by the power of another affords rest to the heart. It is said —: 'I am born by the power of that vow; I shall certainly attain salvation.' There is not the smallest doubt in the heart." Another Sutra says: "Those who follow the method of 'self power' believe in many other Buddhas; those who follow the method of 'another's power' believe only in the one Buddha, as a faithful servant does not serve two masters."

In a compilation made by direction of the Eastern Hongwanji of Japan it is said

"The appellations 'true' and 'popular' are an important matter. Our sect terms the attaining of the rest of the heart the True System; the observation of the relations of life the Popular System. Our sect has granted the permission to marry. Hence the five relations of life necessarily exist. Where the five relations of life exist, the duties involved in

them must be observed. This is termed 'the popular system.'

"It is said in the Sutra: '*The living beings in the ten regions, be they householders or houseless.*' * * * Shall the holy path be different for them? Although the sins of the unenlightened be many, if these are contrasted with the power of the vow they are not as the millet seed to the ocean. * * * The sins of the unenlightened are heavy; if you precipitate them on the three worlds they inevitably sink; but if you place them on the ship of the vow they assuredly become light. The merit of living beings is full of leaks. Mida's land of reward has no leaks. With the merit which is full of leaks you cannot be born into the land where there are no leaks."

From a later part of the same compilation:

"Our Founder said: '*brothers within the four seas.*' Faith by the power of another proceeds from Mida. Thus Mida is father and mother; all within the four seas are brothers. The Chinese call foreigners barbarians; foreigners call China uncivilized. Both, we consider, are wrong. Those who do not observe the relations of life are the barbarians, without distinction of 'home' or 'foreign.' Throughout all that the heaven covers, wherever sun and moon shine, what is there that we shall call barbarian or uncivilized? When the heart is wide as heaven and earth, the discourse clear as sun and moon, then first is attained the equitable and just. Between heaven and earth there is no one to be disassociated, no spot not to be reached. The kindly relations of intercourse make the friend; two persons the same mind; their spirit is as disseparated gold. One country the same mind; as a golden bowl without defect. All

countries the same mind; then first is attained the perfect equitability. The foundation of the same mind is the calling to remembrance of the one Buddha." * * *

"Zendo has said: 'We are truly like this: unenlightened we are subject to the evil of birth and death; for long Kalpas we revolve, sinking and floating in the sea of existence; there seems no cause of escape' * * * But He, Amida Buddha, long kalpas ago putting forth a heart of great compassion, planning through five kalpas, having accomplished the long kalpas, *perfected his vow.*"

Hence we find the sect without spells or supplications for the avoiding of trouble. They hold that the trouble and misery of our life are due to causes originated either in long past existence or in the present incarnation. These last are to be carefully avoided, and the "popular system" gives the various rules to follow. But the causes that lie rooted in prior incarnations cannot be provided for in any way. This stored-up Karma it is useless to regret or try to avoid. It will have its course. But we must submit cheerfully, knowing that, by relying on the power of Buddha's sublime vow and by joining right practice to it, in time all Karma, good and bad, will be exhausted. Hence there are no spells, talismans, or supplications used by the Shin-Shiu. All its followers must follow and imitate the Buddha in his great love and compassion, and they hold that, if this were the practice in every part of the world, harmony would prevail and prosperity come to all with peace and joy.

FOOTNOTES:

1. See Bhagavad-Gita. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

2. *12 Japanese Buddhist Sects*, by Bunyiu Nanjio. ([return to text](#))

The Path

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM: VI

Student. — A materialist stated to me as his opinion that all that is said about mantrams is mere sentimental theorizing, and while it may be true that certain words affect people, the sole reason is that they embody ideas distasteful or pleasant to the hearers, but that the mere sounds, as such, have no effect whatever, and as to either words or sounds affecting animals he denied it altogether. Of course he would not take elementals into account at all, as their existence is impossible for him.

Sage. — This position is quite natural in these days. There has been so much materialization of thought, and the real scientific attitude of leading minds in different branches of investigation has been so greatly misunderstood by those who think they follow the example of the scientific men, that most people in the West are afraid to admit anything beyond what may be apprehended by the five senses. The man you speak of is one of that always numerous class who adopt as fixed and unalterable general laws laid down from time to time by well known *savants*, forgetting that the latter constantly change and advance from point to point.

Student. — Do you think, then, that the scientific world will one day admit much that is known to Occultists?

Sage. — Yes, it will. The genuine Scientist is always in that attitude which permits him to admit things proven. He may seem to you often to be obstinate and blind, but in fact he is proceeding slowly to the truth — too slowly, perhaps, for you, yet not in the position of knowing all. It is the veneered scientist who swears by the published results of the work of leading men as being the last word, while, at the very moment he is doing so, his authority may

have made notes or prepared new theories tending to greatly broaden and advance the last utterance. It is only when the dogmatism of a priest backed up by law declares that a discovery is opposed to the revealed word of his god, that we may fear. That day is gone for a long time to come, and we need expect no more scenes like that in which Galileo took part. But among the materialistic minds to whom you referred, there is a good deal of that old spirit left, only that the "revealed word of God" has become the utterances of our scientific leaders.

Student. — I have observed that within even the last quarter of a century. About ten years ago many well-known men laughed to scorn any one who admitted the facts within the experience of every mesmeriser, while now, under the term "hypnotism," they are nearly all admitted. And when these lights of our time were denying it all, the French doctors were collating the results of a long series of experiments. It seems as if the invention of a new term for an old and much abused one furnished an excuse for granting all that had been previously denied. But have you anything to say about those materialistic investigators? Are they not governed by some powerful, though unperceived, law?

Sage. — They are. They are in the forefront of the mental, but not of the spiritual, progress of the time, and are driven forward by forces they know nothing of. Help is very often given to them by the Masters, who, neglecting nothing, constantly see to it that these men make progress upon the fittest lines for them, just as you are assisted not only in your spiritual life but in your mental also. These, men, therefore, will go on admitting facts and finding new laws or new names for old laws, to explain them. They cannot help it.

Student. — What should be our duty, then, as students of truth? Should we go out as reformers of science, or what?

Sage. — You ought not to take up the role of reformers of the schools and their masters, because success would not attend the effort. Science is competent to take care of itself, and you would only be throwing pearls before them to be trampled under foot. Rest content that all within their comprehension will be discovered and admitted from time to time. The endeavor to force them into admitting what you believe to be so plain would be due almost solely to your vanity and love of praise. It is not possible to force them, any more than it is for me to force you, to admit certain incomprehensible laws, and you would not think me wise or fair to first open before you things, to understand which you have not the necessary development, and then to force you into admitting their truth. Or if, out of reverence, you should say "These things are true," while you comprehended nothing and were not progressing, you would have bowed to superior force.

Student. — But you do not mean that we should remain ignorant of science and devote ourselves only to ethics?

Sage. — Not at all. Know all that you can. Become conversant with and sift all that the schools have declared, and as much more on your own account as is possible, but at the same time teach, preach, and practice a life based on a true understanding of brotherhood. This is the true way. The common people, those who know no science, are the greatest number. They must be so taught that the discoveries of science which are unilluminated by spirit may not be turned into Black Magic.

Student. — In our last conversation you touched upon the guarding of buried treasure by elementals. I should like very much to hear a little more about that. Not about how to control them or to procure the treasure, but upon the subject generally.

Sage. — The laws governing the hiding of buried treasure are the same as those that relate to lost objects. Every person has about

him a fluid, or plane, or sphere, or energy, whichever you please to call it, in which are constantly found elementals that partake of his nature. That is, they are tinted with his color and impressed by his character. There are numerous classes of these. Some men have many of one class or of all, or many of some and few of others. And anything worn upon your person is connected with your elementals. For instance, you wear cloth made of wool or linen, and little objects made of wood, bone, brass, gold, silver, and other substances. Each one of these has certain magnetic relations peculiar to itself, and all of them are soaked, to a greater or less extent, with your magnetism as well as nervous fluid. Some of them, because of their substance, do not long retain this fluid, while others do. The elementals are connected, each class according to its substance, with those objects by means of the magnetic fluid. And they are acted upon by the mind and desires to a greater extent than you know, and in a way that cannot be formulated in English. Your desires have a powerful grasp, so to say, upon certain things, and upon others a weaker hold. When one of these objects is suddenly dropped, it is invariably followed by elementals. They are drawn after it, and may be said to go with the object by attraction rather than by sight. In many cases they completely envelop the thing, so that, although it is near at hand, it cannot be seen by the eye. But after awhile the magnetism wears off and their power to envelop the article weakens, whereupon it appears in sight. This does not happen in every case. But it is a daily occurrence, and is sufficiently obvious to many persons to be quite removed from the realm of fable. I think, indeed, that one of your literary persons has written an essay upon this very experience, in which, although treated in a comic vein, many truths are unconsciously told; the title of this was, if I mistake not, "Upon the Innate Perversity of Inanimate Objects." There is such a nice balancing of forces in these cases that you must be careful in your generalizations. You may justly

ask, for instance, Why, when a coat is dropped, it seldom disappears from sight? Well, there are cases in which even such a large object is hidden, but they are not very common. The coat is full of your magnetism, and the elementals may feel in it just as much of you as when it is on your back. There may be, for them, no disturbance of the relations, magnetic and otherwise. And often in the case of a small object not invisible, the balancing of forces, due to many causes that have to do with your condition at the time, prevents the hiding. To decide in any particular case, one would have to see into the realm where the operation of these laws is hidden, and calculate all the forces, so as to say why it happened in one way and not in another.

Student. — But take the case of a man who, being in possession of treasure, hides it in the earth and goes away and dies, and it is not found. In that instance the elementals did not hide it. Or when a miser buries his gold or jewels. How about those?

Sage. — In all cases where a man buries gold, or jewels, or money, or precious things, his desires are fastened to that which he hides. Many of his elementals attach themselves to it, and other classes of them also, who had nothing to do with him, gather round and keep it hidden. In the case of the captain of a ship containing treasure the influences are very powerful, because there the elementals are gathered from all the persons connected with the treasure, and the officer himself is full of solicitude for what is committed to his charge. You should also remember that gold and silver — or metals — have relations with elementals that are of a strong and peculiar character. They do not work for human law, and natural law does not assign any property in metals to man, nor recognize in him any peculiar and transcendent right to retain what he has dug from the earth or acquired to himself. Hence we do not find the elementals anxious to restore to him the gold or silver which he had lost. If we were to assume that they

occupied themselves in catering to the desires of men or in establishing what we call our rights over property, we might as well at once grant the existence of a capricious and irresponsible Providence. They proceed solely according to the law of their being, and, as they are without the power of making a judgment, they commit no blunders and are not to be moved by considerations based upon our vested rights or our unsatisfied wishes. Therefore, the spirits that appertain to metals invariably act as the laws of their nature prescribe, and one way of doing so is to obscure the metals from our sight.

Student. — Can you make any application of all this in the realm of ethics?

Sage. — There is a very important thing you should not overlook. Every time you harshly and unmercifully criticise the faults of another, you produce an attraction to yourself of certain quantities of elementals from that person. They fasten themselves upon you and endeavor to find in you a similar state or spot or fault that they have left in the other person. It is as if they left him to serve you at higher wages, so to say.

Then there is that which I referred to in a preceding conversation, about the effect of our acts and thoughts upon, not only the portion of the astral light belonging to each of us with its elementals, but upon the whole astral world. If men saw the dreadful pictures imprinted there and constantly throwing down upon us their suggestions to repeat the same acts or thoughts, a millenium might soon draw near. The astral light is, in this sense, the same as a photographer's negative plate, and we are the sensitive paper underneath, on which is being printed the picture. We can see two sorts of pictures for each act. One is the act itself, and the other is the picture of the thoughts and feelings animating those engaged in it. You can therefore see that you may

be responsible for many more dreadful pictures than you had supposed. For actions of a simple outward appearance have behind them, very often, the worst of thoughts or desires.

Student. — Have these pictures in the astral light anything to do with us upon being reincarnated in subsequent earth-lives?

Sage. — They have very much indeed. We are influenced by them for vast periods of time, and in this you can perhaps find clues to many operations of active Karmic law for which you seek.

Student. — Is there not also some effect upon animals, and through them upon us, and *vice versa*?

Sage. — Yes. The animal kingdom is affected by us through the astral light. We have impressed the latter with pictures of cruelty, oppression, dominion, and slaughter. The whole Christian world admits that man can indiscriminately slaughter animals, upon the theory, elaborately set forth by priests in early times, that animals have no souls. Even little children learn this, and very early begin to kill insects, birds, and animals, not for protection, but from wantonness. As they grow up the habit is continued, and in England we see that shooting large numbers of birds beyond the wants of the table, is a national peculiarity, or, as I should say, a vice. This may be called a mild illustration. If these people could catch elementals as easily as they can animals, they would kill them for amusement when they did not want them for use; and, if the elementals refused to obey, then their death would follow as a punishment. All this is perceived by the elemental world, without conscience of course; but, under the laws of action and reaction, we receive back from it exactly that which we give.

Student. — Before we leave the subject I should like to refer again to the question of metals and the relation of man to the elementals connected with the mineral world. We see some

persons who seem always to be able to find metals with ease — or, as they say, who are lucky in that direction. How am I to reconcile this with the natural tendency of elementals to hide? Is it because there is a war or discord, as it were, between different classes belonging to any one person?

Sage. — That is a part of the explanation. Some persons, as I said, have more of one class attached to them than another. A person fortunate with metals, say of gold and silver, has about him more of the elementals connected with or belonging to the kingdoms of those metals than other people, and thus there is less strife between the elementals. The preponderance of the metal-spirits makes the person more homogeneous with their kingdoms, and a natural attraction exists between the gold or silver lost or buried and that person, more than in the case of other people.

Student. — What determines this? Is it due to a desiring of gold and silver, or is it congenital?

Sage. — It is innate. The combinations in any one individual are so intricate and due to so many causes that you could not calculate them. They run back many generations, and depend upon peculiarities of soil, climate, nation, family, and race. These are, as you can see, enormously varied, and, with the materials at your command now, quite beyond your reach. Merely wishing for gold and silver will not do it.

Student. — I judge also that attempting to get at those elementals by thinking strongly will not accomplish that result either.

Sage. — No, it will not, because your thoughts do not reach them. They do not hear or see you, and, as it is only by accidental concentration of forces that unlearned people influence them, these accidents are only possible to the extent that you possess the natural leaning to the particular kingdom whose elementals

you have influenced.

Student. — I thank you for your instruction.

Sage. — May you be guided to the path which leads to light!

The Path

THE BHAGAVAD GITA: XI — *William Brehon*

CHAPTER FOURTH.

In the third chapter Krishna approached the subject of Yoga — or Union with the Supreme and the method of attainment —, and now in the fourth openly speaks of it. He had told Arjuna that passion is greater than either heart or mind, having power to overthrow them, and advised Arjuna to strengthen his hold on his real self, for by means of that only could he hope to overcome passion.

In the opening of this chapter we come across something of importance — the doctrine that in the early part of a new creation, called Manwantara in Sanskrit, a great Being descends among men and imparts certain ideas and aspirations which reverberate all through the succeeding ages until the day when the general dissolution — the night of Brahma — comes on. He says:

"This deathless Yoga, this deep union,
I taught Vivaswata, the Lord of Light;
Vivaswata to Manu gave it; he
To Ikshwaku; so passed it down the line
Of all my Royal Rishis. Then, with years,
The truth grew dim and perished, noble Prince!
Now once again to thee it is declared —
This ancient lore, this mystery supreme —
Seeing I find thee votary and friend."

Exoteric authorities agree that Vivaswata is a name for the sun; that after him came Manu, and his son was Ikshwaku. The latter founded the line of Solar Kings, who in early times in India were

men of supreme knowledge. They were adepts every one, and ruled the land as only adepts could, for the darker ages had not come on, and such great Beings could naturally live among men. Every one respected them, and there was no rebellion even in thought, since there could be no occasion for complaint. Although "Vivaswata" as a name for the sun reveals nothing to our western ears, there is a great truth hidden behind it, just as today there is as great a mystery behind our solar orb. He was the Being appointed to help and guide the race at its beginning. He had himself, ages before, gone through incarnation during other creations, and had mounted step-by-step up the long ladder of evolution, until by natural right he had become as a god. The same process is going on today, preparing some Being for similar work in ages to come. And it has gone on in the limitless past also; and always the Supreme Spirit as Krishna teaches the Being, so that he may implant those ideas necessary for our salvation.

After the race has grown sufficiently, the Being called "The Sun" leaves the spiritual succession to Manu — whether we know him by that name or another —, who carries on the work until men have arrived at the point where they furnish out of the great mass some one of their own number who is capable of founding a line of Kingly Priest Rulers; then Manu retires, leaving the succession in the hands of the Royal Sage, who transmits it to his successors. This succession lasts until the age no longer will permit, and then all things grow confused spiritually, material progress increases, and the dark age, fully come, ushers in the time before dissolution. Such is the present time.

Up to the period marked by the first earthly King called Ikshwaku, the Ruler was a spiritual Being whom all men knew to be such, for his power, glory, benevolence, and wisdom were evident. He lived an immense number of years, and taught men not only Yoga but also arts and sciences. The ideas implanted

then, having been set in motion by one who knew all the laws, remain as *inherent ideas* to this day. Thus it is seen that there is no foundation for the pride of ideas felt by so many of us. They are not original. We never would have evolved them ourselves, unaided, and had it not been for the great wisdom of these planetary spirits in the beginning of things, we would be hopelessly drifting now.

The fables in every nation and race about great personages, heroes, magicians, gods, who dwelt among them in the beginning, living long lives, are due to the causes I have outlined. And in spite of all the sneers and labored efforts of scientific scoffers to show that there is no soul, and perhaps no hereafter, the innate belief in the supreme, in heaven, hell, magic, and what not, will remain. They are preserved by the uneducated masses, who, having no scholastic theories to divert their minds, keep up what is left of the succession of ideas.

Arjuna is surprised to hear one whose birth he knew of declaring that Vivaswata was his contemporary, and so asks Krishna how that can happen. Krishna replies, asserting that he and Arjuna had had countless rebirths which he saw and recollected, but Arjuna, being not yet perfect in Yoga, knew not his births, could not remember them. As in the poem Arjuna is also called *Nara*, which means *Man*, we here have an ancient postulation of Reincarnation for all the human family in direct and unmistakable words. Then very naturally he opens the doctrine, well known in India, of the reappearances of Avatars. There is some little dispute among the Hindus as to what an Avatar is; that is, whether he is the Supreme Spirit itself or only a man overshadowed by the Supreme to a greater extent than other men. But all admit that the true doctrine is stated by Krishna in the words: —

* * "I come, and go, and come. When Righteousness
Declines, O Bharata! when Wickedness
Is strong, I rise, from age to age, and take
Visible shape, and move a man with men,
Succoring the good, thrusting the evil back,
And setting Virtue on her seat again."

These appearances among men for the purpose of restoring the equilibrium are not the same as the rule of Vivaswata and Manu first spoken of, but are the coming to earth of Avatars or Saviors. That there is a periodicity to them is stated in the words "from age to age." He is here speaking of the great cycles about which hitherto the Masters have been silent except to say that there are such great cycles. It is very generally admitted now that the cyclic law is of the highest importance in the consideration of the great questions of evolution and Man's destiny. But the coming of an Avatar must be strictly in accordance with natural law, — and that law demands that at the time of such an event there also appears a being who represents the other pole —, for, as Krishna says, the great law of the two opposites is eternally present in the world. So we find in the history of India that, when Krishna appeared so long ago, there was also a great tyrant, a black magician named Kansa, whose wickedness equalled the goodness of Krishna. And to such a possibility the poem refers, where it says that Krishna comes when wickedness has reached a maximum development. The real meaning of this is that the bad Karma of the world goes on increasing with the lapse of the ages, producing at last a creature who is, so to say, the very flower of all the wickedness of the past, counting from the last preceding Avatar. He is not only wicked, but also wise, with magic powers of awful scope, for magic is not alone the heritage of the good. The number of magicians developed among the nations at such a time is very great, but one towers above them all, making the rest pay

tribute. It is not a fairy tale but a sober truth, and the present prevalence of self-seeking and money-getting is exactly the sort of training of certain qualities that black magicians will exemplify in ages to come. Then Krishna — or howsoever named — appears "in visible shape, a man with men." His power is as great as the evil one, but he has on his side what the others have not, — spirit, preservative, conservative forces. With these he is able to engage in conflict with the black magicians, and in it is assisted by all of us who are really devoted to Brotherhood. The result is a victory for the good and destruction for the wicked. The latter lose all chance of salvation in that Manwantara, and are precipitated to the lower planes, on which they emerge at the beginning of the next new creation. So not even they are lost, and of their final salvation Krishna speaks thus: —

"Whoso worship me,
Them I exalt; *but all men everywhere*
Shall fall into my path; albeit, those souls
Which seek reward for works, make sacrifice
Now, to the lower gods."

He also declares that the right and full comprehension of the mystery of his births and work on earth confers upon us Nirvana, so that rebirth occurs no more. This is because it is not possible for a man to understand the mystery unless he has completely liberated himself from the chains of passion and acquired entire concentration. He has learned to look beneath the shell of appearances that deceives the unthinking mind.

This brings us to a rock upon which many persons, theosophists as well as others, fall to pieces. It is personality. Personality is always an illusion, a false picture hiding the reality inside. No person is able to make his bodily environment correspond exactly to the best that is within him, and others therefore continually

judge him by the outward show. If we try, as Krishna directs, to find the divine in everything, we will soon learn not to judge by appearances, and if we follow the advice given in this chapter to do our duty without hope of reward and without trimming ourselves with a desired result in view, the end will be peace.

Krishna then adverts to various systems of religious practice, and shows Arjuna that they all lead at last, but after many births, to Him, by reason of the tendency set up. The different schools are taken up in a few sentences. His dictum is that they "destroy sins," meaning that a certain purification of the nature is thus accomplished, which is followed upon death by a longer stay in Devachan, but it is only to one single practice he awards the distinction of being that which will bring about union with the Supreme Spirit. After enumerating all, not only the performance but also the omitting of sacrifice, he shows Arjuna that spiritual knowledge includes all actions and burns to ashes the binding effects of all work, conferring upon us the power to take Nirvana by reason of emancipation from the delusion that the lower self was the actor. The perfection of this spiritual knowledge is reached by strengthening faith and expelling doubt through devotion and restraint. Then occurs a verse, almost the same as one in the New Testament, "the man of doubtful mind enjoys neither this world nor the other, nor final beatitude."

(To be continued.)

The Path

TALES OF THE ANCIENT RAJPUTS — *Charles Johnston*

There is an old tradition, so old that it has almost died from the memories of men, that veils eventful epochs in the archaic history of India.

The Rajputs, afterwards the Kshattriyas, or warrior caste, were, according to this legend, the aboriginal dwellers in the sacred land of India. They had strong cities and powerful dynasties, and had already grown old in the land, when a newer race came to share their inheritance. The newer race were the Brahmans, who crossed the mountains of eternal snow, the Sacred Himavat, from lake Mansarawar the divine, on whose holy shores the Lord first came to Earth and taught to the Seven Rishis the archaic wisdom. The Brahmans had dwelt long by lake Mansarawar; they had learned the secret wisdom from the glowing lips of the children of the Fire-Mist in the Sacred Island.

Their lore was holy; its end was the attainment of spiritual bliss. But the Rajputs, the early dwellers in the land, had learned the darker lore, which bent to their power those subtle and tremendous forces which Nature ever seeks to keep concealed. And the Brahmans came to the Rajputs to learn their wisdom; for the Brahmans were then the pupils of the Rajputs.

Such is the old legend, which Echo has almost forgotten to whisper along the corridors of Time.

But in the Sacred Books of India are still found traces of the time when the Rajputs were greater than the Brahmans, and the Brahmans sat at their feet to learn their wisdom.

These two races have doubtless changed but little since that archaic time, ages ago.

Doubtless even then the Rajputs were, as they are now, "bronze-cheeked, large-limbed, leisure-loving"; while the Brahman was, as now, "tall and slim, with finely modelled lips and nose, fair complexion, and high forehead." But the Rajputs have lost that superiority which the Brahmans have gained.

The Sacred Books of India still preserve traces of Rajput supremacy in might and wisdom, and a few stories from the Scriptures to illustrate this may be collected here. The first is from the Kaushitaki Brahmana Upanishad; it is as follows: (1)

There was a certain Gargya Balaki, learned in the holy Vedas. He dwelt among the Matsyas, the Kurus, and the Videha. This Brahman, coming once to Raja Ajatasatru, a royal Rajput, addressed him thus: "Let me declare to thee divine knowledge, oh king!" The king replied, "We bestow a thousand cows on thee, oh Brahman, for this word of thine." The Brahman, deeply versed in the Vedas, then expounded the doctrines of his religion. But though the Brahman was wise, the Rajput king was wiser than he; and in all things it was seen that the sacred wisdom of the Rajput was greater than the love of the Brahman. Finally the royal Rajput Ajatasatru, perceiving himself to be more wise, thus addressed the Brahman: "Dost thou know only so much, oh Balaki?" "Only so much," he replied. The king rejoined, "Thou hast vainly proposed to me; let me teach thee divine knowledge."

Then the Son of Balaka approached the king with fuel in his hand and said, "Let me attend thee as thy pupil." The king replied, "Contrary to rule is it that a Kshattriya should initiate a Brahman in divine knowledge; nevertheless, approach, I will make thee to know the divine wisdom." The King, taking him by the hand, departed.

Another story is from the Chandogya Upanishad.

Svetaketu came to the assembly of the Panchalas: Pravahana Jaivali asked him, "Youth, has thy father instructed thee?" "He has, sire," replied Svetaketu. "Dost thou know," asked the King, "whither living creatures go, when they depart hence?" "No, sire." "Dost thou know how they return?" "No, sire." "Dost thou know," again asked the king, ""the divergences of the two paths whereof one leads to the gods and the other to the pitris? (2) "No, sire." "And hast thou then said, 'I have been instructed'; for how can he who knows not these things say he has been taught?" The young man returned sorrowful to his father, and said, "Thou saidest 'I have instructed thee,' but this Rajanya (Kshatriya) proposed to me many questions which I was not able to answer."

The father replied, "If I had known the answer to these questions, would I not have told them to thee?" Gautama (3) went to the king, who received him with honor. In the morning he presented himself before the King, who said, "ask, oh reverend Gautama, a boon of human riches." He replied, "To thee, oh King, belongs wealth of that kind. Declare to me the questions thou hast asked of the youth." The King desired him to make a long stay, and at last replied, "As thou hast declared to me, Oh Gautama, that this knowledge has not formerly reached the Brahmans who lived before thee, it has therefore been among all people a wisdom taught by the Kshatriya class alone." He then declared it to him. But the most famous of all these legends of Rajput supremacy is that which tells of the strife between Visamitra the Rajput, and Vasishta the white-robed Brahman. Many of the Rig-Veda hymns are attributed to the seership of the Vasishtas. Visvamitra is also the seer of many Vedic hymns.

In the Mahabharata is found the "ancient story of Vasishta" thus narrated: Visvamitra was the son of the Raja of Kanyakubja (Kanouj), a royal Rajput. Visvamitra, when hunting in the forest, came to the hermitage of Vasishta the Brahman, where he was

received with all honor, entertained together with his followers with delicious food and drink, and presented with precious jewels and dresses obtained by the Sage from his wonder working cow, the fulfiller of all his desires. (4) The cupidity of the Rajput Visvamitra was aroused by the sight of the cow. He offered a million cows in exchange for her, but Vasishta would not part with her, even on promise of a kingdom. Visvamitra was angry; "I am a Kshattriya, a warrior," said he, "have I not more power than thou, a Brahman, whose virtue is submissiveness? I shall not abandon war, the virtue of my caste, but shall take thy cow by force."

Vasishta challenged him to show his power, and Visvamitra seized the wonder-working cow. But she, though beaten with a whip, would not be moved from the hermitage. Witnessing this, Vasishta asks her what he, a patient Brahman, could do.

She asks why he overlooks the violence she suffers; Vasishta replies, "Force is the strength of Kshattriyas, patience that of the Brahmans. As patience possesses me, go if thou pleasest." The cow prays Vasishta not to abandon her; for, till he forsakes her, she cannot be taken away. Vasishta promises he will never forsake her. Hearing these words of her master, the cow tosses her head aloft and assumes a terrific aspect, her eyes become red with rage, she utters a deep, bellowing sound, and puts to flight the whole army of Visvamitra. Being again beaten with a whip, she becomes more incensed, her eyes are red with anger, her whole body, kindled by her indignation, glows like the noonday sun; she discharges firebrands, and creates bands of warriors, — Pahlavas, Dravidas, Sakas, Yavanas, Sabaras, Paundras, Sinhalas, and Kiratas; these warriors defeated Visvamitra's army, and put it to flight. Beholding this great miracle, Visvamitra was humbled at the impotence of a Kshattriyas nature, and exclaimed, "Shame on a Kshattriya's force; the might of a Brahman, this is force indeed!"

Examining what is and what is not force, and ascertaining that austere fervour is the supreme force, he abandoned his prosperous kingdom and all its brilliant regal splendour, and, casting all enjoyments behind his back, he devoted himself to austerity. Having by this means attained perfection and Brahmanhood, he arrested the worlds by his fiery vigour, and disturbed them all by the blaze of his glory: and at length this Rajput drank Soma with Indra. (5)

If one is permitted to speculate on the meaning of this legend, the conjecture may be put forward that Vasishta and Visvamitra stand for the Brahman and Rajput tribes respectively, having their territories probably on the upper waters of the Indus and Ganges. For it is only since 1200 A.D. that the descendants of the Kshatriyas have dwelt in the sandy jungles of Rajputana. Visvamitra probably represents an expedition of Rajputs to the Brahman country typified by the cow of Vasishta, — a "land flowing with milk." This cow, the source of fertility, supplies a wealthy booty to the Rajput if he will consent to be bought off: but the Rajput wants the Brahman's country for himself, and the wealth offered him only stimulates his cupidity. The Brahmans refuse to give up their territory, and the Kshatriyas begin the attack. The Brahmans summon to their aid the non-aryan tribes of Dravidas, Pahlavas, and Sinhalas. By their aid the Rajputs are defeated. This is, perhaps, a not improbable interpretation of the legend.

Let us return, however, to the austerities of Visvamitra, taking up the story in the Ramayana. Visvamitra the Rajput, being utterly vanquished by Vasishta, placed his son on his throne and travelled to the Himalayas, where he betook himself to austerities and thereby obtained a vision of Mahadeva, (6) who at his desire revealed to him the science of war in all its branches and gave him celestial weapons, with which, elated and full of pride, he

consumed the hermitage of Vasishta and put all its inhabitants to flight. Vasishta threatened Visvamitra, and raised on high his Brahman's mace. Visvamitra, too, raised his fiery weapon, and called to his adversary to stand. Vasishta cried out, "What comparison is there between the might of a Kshatriya and the might of a Brahman? Behold, base Kshatriya. my divine Brahmanical power." The dreadful fiery weapon, uplifted by Visvamitra, was quenched by the rod of the Brahman, as water quenches fire. Many other celestial weapons were used by Visvamitra — the discus of Vishnu, the trident of Siva, etc., but the Brahman's mace devoured them all. Finally, to the terror of the gods, the Rajput shot off the terrible Brahmastra, the weapon of Brahma. But it availed not against Vasishta the sage. Vasishta grew terrible in appearance, jets of fire issued from his body, the Brahmanical mace blazed in his hand like a smokeless mundane conflagration, or a second Sceptre of Yama, lord of death. But the devotees besought him, and his vengeance was stayed. Visvamitra cried, "Shame on a Kshatriya's strength; the strength of a Brahman is superior."

This tale is doubtless the echo of a tremendous conflict between the Rajputs — bringing to their aid their darker magic powers and the control of the terrible occult force which they had learned from the Atlanteans of the South — and the Brahmans, strong in the holy wisdom of the Sacred Isle. At first Visvamitra's devotion only obtained, for him the position of Rajarshi, a royal Rishi, while he aspired to the higher rank of Brahmarshi, — divine Rishi.

That he gained great power, however, the following story from the Mahabharata clearly shows.

King Trishanku desired to ascend alive to heaven. He came to Visvamitra to ask his aid. Visvamitra sacrificed, and addressed

him thus; "Behold, oh monarch, the power of austere fervor acquired by my own efforts. I myself, by my own power, will conduct thee to heaven. Ascend to that celestial region, difficult to attain to in an earthly body. I have surely earned some reward of my austerity." Trishanku ascended to heaven in the sight of the assembled saints. Indra ordered him to be gone, and to fall to the earth. Visvamitra again exerted his power, and the king obtained a place amongst the stars. (7)

Yisvamitra, still yearning for Brahmanhood, fasted and took a vow of silence. As he continued to suspend his breath, smoke issued from his head, to the great consternation and distress of the three worlds. The gods and Rishis addressed Brahma: "The great Muni, Visvamitra, has conquered many trials, and still advances in sanctity. If his wish be not granted, he will in wrath destroy the three worlds by his austere fervor. All the regions of the universe are confounded; no light anywhere shines: all the oceans are tossed, the mountains crumble, the earth quakes, the wind blows confusedly. We cannot, oh Brahma, guarantee that mankind shall not become atheistic. Before the great and glorious sage of fiery form resolves to destroy everything, let him be propitiated." The gods, headed by Brahma, addressed Visvamitra thus: "Hail Brahmarshi! we are satisfied with thy austerities; thou hast through their intensity attained to Brahmanhood." The sage, delighted, made his obeisance to the gods, and said; "If I have obtained Brahmanhood and long life, then let the mystic syllable (*omkara*), and the sacrificial formula, and the Vedas recognise me as a Brahman. And let Vasishta the Brahman, the greatest of those who know the Rajput knowledge and the Brahman knowledge, also recognise me." Vasishta, being propitiated by the gods, became reconciled to Visvamitra, and hailed him, though a Rajput, with the title of Brahmarshi. Visvamitra also, having attained the Brahmanical rank, paid all honor to Vasishta. Before

Visvamitra thus attained the pinnacle he had longed to reach, he performed many wonders, recounted in another part of the Mahabharata.

He destroyed Vasishtha's hundred sons by the power of austere fervor; when possessed by anger, he created many demons, fierce and destructive as death; he delivered the son of Richika from being offered in sacrifice; he cursed his fifty sons, and they became outcasts; he elevated Trishanku alive to heaven; he changed a troublesome nymph into a stone.

(To make the meaning of this clear, it should be explained that, when the gods had reason to dread the too great austerity of any saint, they used to send a "troublesome nymph" to disturb his orisons. Kama the love-god, when taking part in one of these expeditions, which had for its object the destruction of Siva's *Samadhi*, through the charms of Uma, daughter of the Himavat, lost his body, which was turned to ashes by Siva's glances, and is thenceforth known as Ananga, the bodiless god.) Besides this, Visvamitra induced Vasishtha to bind and throw himself into a river, though he emerged thence unbound. He also made himself invisible, and caused Rakshasa demons to obsess his enemies. He also incited the demon to destroy the sons of Vasishtha. On hearing of the death of his sons, Vasishtha supported his misfortune as the great mountain supports the earth. He meditated his own destruction, but thought not of destroying the Rajput Visvamitra. He hurled himself from the summit of Mount Meru, but fell on the rocks as if on a heap of cotton. Escaping alive from his fall, he entered a glowing fire in the forest; but the fire, though blazing fiercely, not only failed to burn him, but seemed quite cool. He next threw himself into the sea, with a stone tied around his neck; but the waves cast him up alive on the shore. He sought death from the Sutlej alligators, but they fled from the Brahman, seeing him brilliant as fire. Seeing that death would not receive him, he

returned to his hermitage. But at last Visvamitra attained to Brahmanhood, and Vasishtha was reconciled to him. How many other Brahmans came to the feet of the Kshatriyas to learn wisdom, and how the Kshatriyas triumphed over the Rajputs, and how Parasurama made a mighty slaughter of the Kshatriyas, must here remain untold.

FOOTNOTES:

1. This, and the quotations that follow, are not literal translations, but summaries of the Sanskrit text. ([return to text](#))
2. Vide "The Secret Doctrine," for the doctrine of the lunar Pitris. ([return to text](#))
3. *Not* Gautama the Buddha, but ages earlier. ([return to text](#))
4. Called *Kamaduk*. ([return to text](#))
5. In other words, he went to Devachan. ([return to text](#))
6. The great God of All. ([return to text](#))
7. This has reference to a very obscure, but not the less important, doctrine "Concerning the Star-Rishis." It has to do with the selfishness and materiality of our nature, and is not explained because dangerous. It will be known, however, quite soon enough. — Ed. ([return to text](#))

KARMA AND PROVIDENCE — *Alexander Fullerton*

Theosophy is reconstructing our conceptions of the universe, and reinterpreting the facts and tendencies and laws of life. When it first appeared on the outskirts of Western thought, an alien in origin and sentiment, it seemed a curious product of Oriental dreaminess, a trifle fantastic as to garb, a little uncouth in its bearing before the wonders of our gifted age, and very far from practical in its ideas of either duty or aspiration; but because of its difference from all familiar figures, and because, too, it held in its hands the Wand of Magic and was known to have used it with most unaccountable results, certainly a subject for interest, perhaps for study. Not very many years have passed, and yet the newspapers are reporting it, the public turns an ear to it, literature is discussing and fiction appropriating it. The eyes which first inspected it with curiosity are now examining it with interest, and the minds which then surmised that it might hold some truth are now reverent as before an oracle. More than this, hearts weary and sad, weary of explanations which did not explain and of consolations which did not console, sad because finding that the ills of existence are not to be salved with arbitrary beliefs or distant hopes, rallied under the influence of that reviving touch, and demanded fuller, richer knowledge. Most of all, the awakened spirit, realizing that conventional tenets were an opiate and not a tonic, hurled them away and arose in the vigor of a definite and intelligible aspiration. And all classes of inquirers, just in proportion as the inquiry was sincere and its pursuit continued, found a singular dwarfing of all other topics, a spontaneous, increasing concentration upon this as the one before which the rest were insignificant.

As Theosophy advanced from the outskirts to the centre of

thought in the West it was confronted, one after another, with the great problems which in every age and in every land have engrossed the energy of the thinker. The meaning and end of existence, the nature and direction of responsibility, our future in the world beyond death, — these and kindred questions lie at the door of the soul and meet it on its first excursion into the universe of inquiry. The primary duty of every religious system has been a reply to them, and if that was unsatisfying, men would have none of it. Theosophy undergoes the same rigid interrogation as the rest, and if it has encroached upon the preserves of other faiths and is giving answers to queries on later subjects, we must believe that this is because its first responses were convincing.

Very early in its course it is brought face to face with the great question of Providence, and must give its own interpretation of it. There is one already on the ground. It may not be logical or even rational, but it has the advantage of being in possession and of calming some of the strongest, if not the most meritorious, solitudes of the soul.

The demand for an active, supervising Deity is almost as universal as a demand for any Deity at all. A Creator withdrawing from care over his creation seems a contradiction in thought. The term "Father" voices the soul's need for a guardianship which shall be both authoritative and paternal. In his "Philosophy of Religion," Morrell found that the last analysis of the religious sentiment is into a sense of dependence. But this almost necessarily implies the converse qualities of provision, oversight, supply. Then, too, the emotional faculty calls for satisfaction. Faith needs a sympathetic ear, a responsive touch, a readiness to use every power of nature for the relief of an appealing sufferer. Thus instinct and devotion unite to cause belief in Providence, and the difficulty of supposing that the Supreme Being looks after

all the petty affairs of each of us is met by the fact that to the Infinite all are practicable, and, indeed, that in such a presence gradations in importance disappear.

There is, hence, a stage of religious experience in which every incident in the world of things and men is supposed to express a Divine purpose. God is present everywhere, acting everywhere, adjusting everywhere. "Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered," said Jesus. But in time comes an inevitable change. It is seen that the actual system, however ordered, by no means provides universal good. There are great wastes of sickening sorrow, vast and recurring areas of destitution, bitter cries from weariness and loss and agony. The intellect follows this up by its discovery of the reign of law. Events are not disconnected revelations of as many Divine intentions, but effects rigorously joined to their antecedent causes. As causation is better and more extensively perceived, the domain of admitted law expands, absorbing steadily the territory of Providence, and displacing the conception of ordering with the conception of order. At last no ground is left. Law is seen to pervade the universe, and to be the condition of all science, all foresight, all business. A life-insurance policy assumes the whole scientific doctrine of the reign of law.

But the sentimental want, though baffled, is not extinct. "There may be truth," it urges, "in the theory of causation and in the belief that the universe is a great machine, wisely contrived, endowed with sufficient impetus, and working automatically along. Yet all machines are liable to disarrangement, and exigencies arise for which the most perfect do not provide. It may very well be, then, that at grave crises, or for particular purposes, or to avert an evil, interposition may be proper. Let it be admitted that the usual administration is by law, if only is made concession that a Providence is sometimes possible." But even this the stern man of science must refuse. He is forced to answer that, whatever

may be true of imperfect machines of human make, no breakdown is conceivable in one of celestial origin; and that, even if we could conceive of a universe conducted partly by law and partly by manipulation, we could never define their limits or foresee which would act.

One more plea remains. "I will not contest," says the sentimental want, "the doctrine of uniformity in physical things. But they are not the whole of life. Moral ends are more important. In the interest of morals, Providence is a necessity. To teach a lesson, to emphasize a warning, to recall from recklessness or frivolity or sin, interpositions are essential. A blind material universe, mechanically turning out its infants and swallowing up its dead, is no fitting expression of a Divine fulness. There must be some higher aim, some better purpose." "There is," replies the thinker, "but not as you imagine it. All nature is crowded with moralities; its very uniformity ensures their exhibition. But even if it did not, if occasional interferences were more impressive, how are you to interpret them? You have not the clue to their meaning, and your prophets expound it differently. They do not even expound it fairly. For, as it would jar on the religious sentiment to attribute to Providence the harsh and bitter things, it is mainly the good things with which they credit it. The sickness overcome, the life saved, the steamer rescued, the boon secured, the peril escaped are providential; not the sickness fatal, the life lost, the steamer wrecked, the boon forfeited, the peril triumphant. But if the one is, the other must be. If it is a Providence which brings one vessel safely through the violence of a tempest, it must be a Providence which abandons another to its fate. If it is a Providence which puts a Washington at the head of one nation, it is a Providence which puts a Louis Napoleon at the head of another. If a skater, breaking through the ice, is saved by Providence, the drowning of his comrade must be by Providence: if Providence accounts for a

fortunate investment, a fulfilled presentiment, a happy marriage, it must also be accountable for the broken bank, the discredited prediction, the annals of the Divorce Court.

Nor have we any clue to the interpretation. It will not do to say "The Moral Lesson," for we do not know what the lesson is, nor whether it is a lesson at all. A boy swimming on Sunday is drowned. "This," urges the religious press, "expresses the Divine displeasure of such mis-use of Sunday." "But," replies the logician, "it can hardly do so unless you are prepared to show that all boys swimming on Sunday are drowned, and none on other days." *Purpose* is the very essence of Providence. If we have no clue to the *purpose* we have no clue to the Providence; for us it does not exist. Nor can you escape the difficulty by saying that it is inscrutable, for that vacates the whole position. If we are unable to scrutinize Providence, we are unable to make assertions about it, much more to expound it. So long as it keeps utterly in the dark, we cannot even prove that it is there,"

Thus, step by step, relentless reason forces back the struggling theory of an interposing power ever at work in manipulation, adjustment, the rectification of error in the machine of its own construction, the insistence on truths which it does not enable us to discover, the mumbling of unintelligible warnings which we have no power to make clear. Baffled, confused, exhausted, the old doctrine is now near its end. But the spirit which has informed it is vigorous as ever. Not a whit depressed, it still asserts the need for the perpetual presence of a moral force, for a Providence outside of which not a sparrow shall fall, not a wrong escape.

And it is right. No such sustained cry of the human heart could well be fallacious. It is one of the vindications, one of the glories, of Theosophy that it gives the frankest, most ungrudging welcome

to every want, intellectual or sentimental, of humanity, and then provides for it. To me it seems that this is peculiarly true in the matter of Providence. The religious instinct will never give up its demand for a Providence. It revolts at the thought that there is no moral order in the world, that good and bad fare alike, that character goes for nothing. An elaborate system in which the Supreme Being has expressed all the qualities but those most strongly called for, is to it a monstrosity and a contradiction. You may wrench away from it its theories and its whimsical or unsatisfying methods of interpretation, but it will construct new ones at once. With what amplitude of recognition Theosophy steps forward to greet this instinct! "You are entirely right," it says. "I am with you in fullest sympathy. You cannot insist more than I that the moralities exact an agency by which their vindication shall be assured. But such an agency must be intelligible and consistent. It must be so comprehensive that not a right or a wrong shall go unrewarded, so impartial that it handles all men with absolute equality, so precise that its equations shall exactly balance. You can never invent such, you can never discover it. But you do not need to. The doctrine of Karma, the treasured possession of the Wisdom-Religion, fulfils all the requirements you insist upon, avoids all the difficulties which embarrass you, and responds to every call of reason, justice, and the moral sense."

The vast superiority of Karma as a substitute for the conventional idea of Providence is evident from every point of view. It is not a negation of Providence, it is an enlarged affirmation of it. Instead of a fitful, capricious, inconstant, purposeless, mysterious, undecipherable force, it is a lucid, inerrant, steady, and meaningful adjuster. For what, after all, is its definition? *The law of ethical causation. Law, not whim: causation, not accident; and this, which the most orthodox now admit in the worlds of physics*

and of mind, extended to the noblest region, that of morals. Not that every incident of every life is to be read as a revelation of immediate desert, for that would be to forget the correlative doctrine of Reincarnation; but that the sum total of experiences in the chain of lives cannot err, and that the significance of the items in any one link may measurably be inferred. The conception of Providence expands till it covers everything. The religious instinct is satisfied, the claims of reason are allowed, the demand of justice is fulfilled.

I think that the devotional books of the future will print "Karma" where they now print "Providence." The concept is so much richer that the poorer one will not long content. The word "Karma" is not as strange as it was formerly. Sometimes we see it in improbable quarters. By and by it will be domesticated into the language, for Theosophists constantly employ it, and though — to transpose Gladstone's definition of a deputation — they do not signify many, they certainly signify much. After it is domesticated people will not be afraid of it. Then they will come to like it, as we all like what is familiar. In time the meaning will filter into them. It will displace the old narrow conception and establish itself as a broad and healthy philosophy of life. And when Karma is recognized, not merely as an ever-acting principle, but as an ever-forming fund, what may not be hoped for in the melioration of mankind?

The Path

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM: VII

Student. — What principal idea would it be well for me to dwell upon in my studies on the subject of elementals?

Sage. — You ought to clearly fix in your mind and fully comprehend a few facts and the laws relating to them. As the elemental world is wholly different from the one visible to you, the laws governing them and their actions cannot as yet be completely defined in terms now used either by scientific or metaphysical schools. For that reason, only a partial description is possible. Some of those facts I will give you, it being well understood that I am not including all classes of elemental beings in my remarks.

First, then, Elementals have no form.

Student. — You mean, I suppose, that they have no limited form or body as ours, having a surface upon which sensation appears to be located.

Sage. — Not only so, but also that they have not even a shadowy, vague, astral form such as is commonly ascribed to ghosts. They have no distinct personal form in which to reveal themselves.

Student. — How am I to understand that, in view of the instances given by Bulwer Lytton and others of appearances of elementals in certain forms?

Sage. — The shape given to or assumed by any elemental is always subjective in its origin. It is produced by the person who sees, and who, in order to be more sensible of the elemental's presence, has unconsciously given it a form. Or it may be due to a collective impression on many individuals, resulting in the

assumption of a definite shape which is the result of the combined impressions.

Student. — Is this how we may accept as true the story of Luther's seeing the devil?

Sage. — Yes. Luther from his youth had imagined a personal devil, the head of the fraternity of wicked ones, who had a certain specific form. This instantly clothed the elementals that Luther evoked, either through intense enthusiasm or from disease, with the old image reared and solidified in his mind; and he called it the Devil.

Student. — That reminds me of a friend who told me that in his youth he saw the conventional devil walk out of the fire place and pass across the room, and that ever since he believed the devil had an objective existence.

Sage. — In the same way also you can understand the extraordinary occurrences at Salem in the United States, when hysterical and mediumistic women and children saw the devil and also various imps of different shapes. Some of these gave the victims information. They were all elementals, and took their illusionary forms from the imaginations and memory of the poor people who were afflicted.

Student. — But there are cases where a certain form always appears. Such as a small, curiously-dressed woman who had never existed in the imagination of those seeing her; and other regularly recurring appearances. How were those produced, since the persons never had such a picture before them?

Sage. — These pictures are found in the aura of the person, and are due to pre-natal impressions. Each child emerges into life the possessor of pictures floating about and clinging to it, derived from the mother; and thus you can go back an enormous distance

in time for these pictures, all through the long line of your descent. It is a part of the action of the same law which causes effects upon a child's body through influences acting on the mother during gestation. (1)

Student. — In order, then, to know the cause of any such appearance, one must be able to look back, not only into the person's present life, but also into the ancestor's past?

Sage. — Precisely. And for that reason an occultist is not hasty in giving his opinion on these particular facts. He can only state the general law, for a life might be wasted in needless investigation of an unimportant past. You can see that there would be no justification for going over a whole lifetime's small affairs in order to tell a person at what time or juncture an image was projected before his mind. Thousands of such impressions are made every year. That they are not *developed into memory* does not prove their non-existence. Like the unseen picture upon the photographer's sensitive plate, they lie awaiting the hour of development.

Student. — In what way should I figure to myself the essence of an elemental and its real mode of existence?

Sage. — You should think of them as *centres of energy* only, that act always in accordance with the laws of the plane of nature to which they belong.

Student. — Is it not just as if we were to say that gunpowder is an elemental and will invariably explode when lighted? That is, that the elementals knew no rules of either wrong or right, but surely act when the incitement to their natural action is present? They are thus, I suppose, said to be implacable.

Sage. — Yes; they are like the lightning which flashes or destroys as the varying circumstances compel. It has no regard for man, or

love, or beauty, or goodness, but may as quickly kill the innocent, or burn the property of the good as of the wicked man.

Student. — What next?

Sage. — That the elementals live in and through all objects, as well as beyond the earth's atmosphere.

Student. — Do you mean that a certain class of elementals, for instance, exist in this mountain, and float unobstructed through men, earth, rocks, and trees?

Sage. — Yes, and not only that, but at the same time, penetrating that class of elementals, there may be another class which float not only through rocks, trees, and men, but also through the first of the classes referred to.

Student. — Do they perceive these objects obstructive for us, through which they thus float?

Sage. — No, generally they do not. In exceptional cases they do, and even then never with the same sort of cognition that we have. For them the objects have no existence. A large block of stone or iron offers for them no limits or density. It may, however, make an impression on them by way of change of color or sound, but not by way of density or obstruction.

Student. — Is it not something like this, that a current of electricity passes through a hard piece of copper wire, while it will not pass through an unresisting space of air.

Sage. — That serves to show that the thing which is dense to one form of energy may be open to another. Continuing your illustration, we see that man can pass through air but is stopped by metal. So that "hardness" for us is not "hardness" for electricity. Similarly, that which may stop an elemental is not a body that we call hard, but something which for us is intangible

and invisible, but presents to them an adamantine front.

Student. — I thank you for your instruction.

Scwe. — Strive to deserve further enlightenment!

FOOTNOTE:

1. See *Isis Unveiled* in the chapter on Teratology. [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

The Path

ANALOGIES — *Alexander Fullerton*

Theosophy being of recent disclosure to the West, and none of us, therefore, having been Theosophists from childhood, almost every one encounters perplexities from the unfamiliarity of the new facts and of the new methods of thought. We may be entirely convinced of their correctness; the demonstration may be conclusive; in fulness, reason, stimulus, and expectation, the new faith is so obviously richer that the deserted one may appear incomparably jejune and poor; we may have become fluent with its ideas and its terms; nevertheless, its whole genius is so diverse from all hitherto habitual to us that we do not as yet think or move quite easily. It is as if an inhabitant of the dry Egyptian plain was transported, to Switzerland. It would not be only a revelation as to scenery, but an induction into a new life, whereof the sights, the sounds, the movements, the habits, the very air breathed and water drunk, had been wholly unknown. Until all these had become familiar, there would be a process of mental remoulding, re-adjustment, modification. And so with the thinker transported from the circumscribed habitat of conventionalism to the stupendous scenery of the Theosophic domain. His Deity has been an enlarged, not always an exalted, Man; his universe ended with the telescope; his chronology went back but 60 centuries; other than animals, he knew of but three kinds of beings, — men, angels, and demons; human life was short, not easily justified, and morally puzzling; its hereafter was hazy, and all but its terrors had been carefully concealed; of its present, nothing could be known except what was disclosed to the eyes, ears, and touch, and any supposition of forces or beings or agencies beyond was probably absurd and certainly false.

Out of these ideas the Theosophist has removed to a realm

practically boundless. Limitations have dropped off in every direction. Anthropomorphic conceptions of Deity vanish at once. Matter expands till it fills space. Existing chronologies have as much real antiquity as yesterday's newspaper. Life multiplies till air, earth, fire, water, the illimitable ether teem with it. Humanity receives a justification and acquires a destiny. Light is poured into futurity. The senses, as sole criteria of fact, are deposed; means are put within reach by which the investigation of the whole universe is made possible. There is no boundary line to knowledge; there is not even an horizon.

Now, of course, our mental capacities cannot instantly enlarge to this. The fresh air is invigorating, but then it is strange. The lungs are inelastic, the muscles torpid, the movements new. We hardly realize our freedom, and at every slight excursion we strike against some old prejudice or error, or feel the cramp which reminds us how long and how closely we had been bound. This is inevitable, but it is also temporary. We shall acquire agility; the cramp will gradually disappear; the errors discarded as beliefs will steadily weaken as hindrances; new habits of thought will form, new powers of perception develop, new vigor of advance arise. Revolutions do not go backwards, nor are the emancipated again enslaved.

In the happy process of enlargement, we are wise, I think, to meet every check or difficulty with whatever means, however humble, may most effectually remove it. And it very often happens, in Theosophic thought, that a perplexity dissolves if we can confront it with some visible, familiar fact in life. The latter, being known to us, if in clear analogy with the former which is *not* known, may dissipate its strangeness and secure for it a welcome. Nor is this an artificial or whimsical procedure. It is but an application of the doctrine of Analogies, which, say the Adepts, pervades the universe. "As above, so below" is one of their constant maxims.

We are quite right to use it in our humbler exercises.

Of the many illustrations possible let us take, this evening, one from each of three planes of life, — that below us, our own, and that above us.

For the conception of a medium of existence diverse from ours, diffused, invisible, yet material, though of a far more tenuous and rarefied nature than our air, science has happily prepared us by its "Undulatory Theory of Light," wherein is predicated a sensitive ether pervading space. We have, therefore, no antecedent difficulty in conceding an unseen world of more delicate texture than this. But science has done nothing to people it, and so the Theosophic doctrine of Elementals is new. We are abundantly accustomed to the word, yet the thing has perhaps for us not wholly lost a fanciful quality and entered the region of fact. Now I have found it to gain reality by thought on this wise. It is difficult to conceive of the direct action of will upon matter. There seems no mode by which an intangible, immaterial purpose can educe obedience from a lifeless, irresponsive block. I see a stick lying 20 feet away. I will it to approach me, but there is in it no consciousness of my will, and there is no apparent link between the distinct kingdoms of mind and matter. I sign to my dog, and he brings it at once. Here, then, is the link supplied, an intermediary agency with sufficient intelligence, on the one side, to apprehend the order, and with the physical power, on the other, to carry it out. The widely-separated kingdoms are connected by a medium uniting some of the features of each. In fact, a very subtle question in thought is promptly solved by one of the most common-place facts in life.

Analogy instantly suggests a similar nature and function in Elementals, and hence a similar naturalness. What is there either improbable or inconceivable in an order of beings lower than our

own, with no more conscience than have some grades of animals and with as much intelligence as have others, quite as controllable by men who understand them as are animals by men who understand *them*, and dwelling in a medium which, though unseen, may be as real as the unseen ether of Light? But Analogy does not stop here. Those of you who have read Sir John Lubbock's remarkable monograph on Earth-Worms know that the whole face of nature is being constantly re-formed through that humble agency. That is to say, an important, an indispensable, condition of agriculture is committed to the charge of a lowly, unprogressive, mindless creature, which lives, perpetuates its species, blindly performs its mission, and expires. Why, then, may not a somewhat higher function in Nature be entrusted to a somewhat higher organism, a still higher function to a still higher organism, and so on, the intelligence and the physical strength increasing, but there being no moral endowment because there are no moral duties? If earth-worms knead the soil and coral-insects erect islands in the ocean, it seems not unreasonable that larger operations in ever-active Nature, less mechanical and more intelligent, may be effected by Elemental spirits. And analogy goes still further. We see in animals instincts and habits which may as well mark Elementals. Secretiveness, playfulness, mischievousness, friendliness or hostility to man, a transmitted tendency to routine, constructive power, conformity to laws in mechanics, — all are illustrated in dogs, kittens, monkeys, beavers, birds, and bees. Why then may they not exist in sylphs and gnomes? In fact, if the perfection and regularity of a bee's honeycomb, which combines the maximum of space with the minimum of material, are due to the action of a conscious being, why may not this be equally true of a crystal? Yet again. The enormous differentiation of animal life in structure and quality, according to its function and its habitat, seems to indicate a corresponding differentiation, for

corresponding reasons, of Elemental life in the various regions and operations peculiar to it. The four classes usually mentioned are doubtless capable of subdivision indefinitely. And once more. No small part of the animal world has been subdued to the will of man. This is, of course, mainly due to his larger intelligence, yet is in measure the result of his ability to impart, record, and transmit observations. The same reasons seem to justify the possibility of his controlling Elementals. Indeed, the theological doctrine that he is to conquer the earth implies that he is to conquer the beings which mould the earth, and any far-reaching vision of human triumph must include a sway over all lower organisms.

It would seem, then, that analogies from very familiar facts around us warrant some vivid conception of the unseen beings no less around us. Our knowledge of the animal kingdom impels to a belief in the Elemental kingdom.

Let us now step up to the plane of man, and attempt a similar process there. Whether we look at the lives of men or at the conventional beliefs they hold, it is equally evident that this present visible existence is considered the normal and important one, its interests being necessarily dominant, and those of the future, invisible world, however to be cared for, being, from the nature of the case, subordinate. More or less of this mode of thought has been so habitual with ourselves that we probably find the opposite, the Theosophic, mode only natural while we are reading Theosophic books or afterwards meditating on their contents. And yet most certain is it that Theosophy affirms the real, permanent, important life to be unseen, that which depends upon a material environment being absolutely transient and relatively mean. As the Adept, St. Paul, expressed it, "The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Now if we are to be true Theosophists in either thought or aim, we have to reverse our former conception. The invisible world has to become the true world, and the visible world the deceptive world. And here again analogy is at hand to help us. The simplest incidents or acts disclose the tremendous forces hidden from sight. A leaf falls because of the all-pervading principle of gravitation; I hold this paper because of an inscrutable energy behind the muscular contraction which is its physical expression. You who are listening to these words hear them, indeed, through undulations set up in a material atmosphere and impinging on the tympanum of the ear; but no sense can reach the mysterious force which transmits the vibrations of the material tympanum to the unmaterial mind, still less the force which transmutes mere sound into thought, least of all the force which is mind. Look around you in the world and analyse the causes of the seething activity everywhere apparent. Every sound, every movement in this great city has its source in some desire of the inner being, — ambition, love, acquisitiveness, or other. We can hardly take one step from visible things towards their causes before we are in the realm of the invisible. All roads seem to lead to the unseen. It, not matter, has "the promise and the potency" of every form of life.

But if the mechanics of daily life, if the continuance of vegetation, the conservation of vital powers, the evolution of all terrestrial advance are referable back to impalpable forces, — gravitation, electricity, magnetism, etc., only the effects of which we see; if even our own careers and the very constitution of society itself are but the objective, visible results from subjective, intangible desires; is it too much to say that the unseen is as much vaster than the seen in its resources as it must be in its extent? A pebble, a stick, a leaf has behind it stupendous powers; it is insignificant, but it reveals the immeasurable.

The effect of observation, then, is to belittle the seen in

comparison with the unseen; and herein Theosophy is in complete analogy with science. Yet surely the analogy need not pause at this point, but may proceed to urge that the constitution, the training, and the destiny of Man may justly be based on the same principle. The material elements must be the less important elements, the material life the less important life. Permanency, potency, boundlessness must inhere in a region which is not transient, weak, limited, as is this earth. And, indeed, our confidence in the analogy is strengthened by the fact that, up to a certain point, it is held to vigorously by all men in civilized lands. Cultivation of the mind is considered finer than cultivation of the body; the scholar ranks higher than the athlete. But if it is admitted that spiritual powers are nobler than mental, even as mental are nobler than physical, — which is, in truth, the position of the Theosophist, it follows that there is the same reason for developing the spirit rather than the mind, that there is for developing the mind rather than the body. The same principle which elevates a Herbert Spencer above a Sullivan will, analogically extended, elevate an Adept above a Herbert Spencer. And it follows that, when we read of the training given to secure mastery of self, ascendancy over distraction from discomfort or desire, fixedness of meditation with a view to enlightenment, a distaste for levels of being lower than the highest, we have not encountered something which is chimerical or grotesque, but a sober, logical, scientific method of spiritual education.

The third illustration proposed is from the plane of life above us, — that of Adepts. No doubt there is, among Theosophists, much misconception of the Adept character. For present purposes, however, we may describe him as an advanced man, who, through the expanding of the spiritual principle, has become a Master in mind and over matter, and whose powers are therefore, from the conventional point of view, supernatural. (1)

All this, to the conventionalist, appears nonsense. To us it is a reality. Nevertheless, there is a certain remoteness about it. There is only one conceded Initiate in Western lands, and few of us have been privileged to see her. The East is faraway, and residence even in it by no means ensures approach to a Master. Hence belief is not always without misgivings, and I suppose there are few Theosophists who are not at times staggered by the strangeness of the conception. Still, it too is not without its analogies, and the weak may fortify themselves by recalling them.

All history shows that deeds beyond experience have been pronounced incredible upon hearsay, and pronounced miraculous upon being seen. An astronomer foretells an eclipse to barbarians; he is ridiculed till it arrives, and then he is worshipped. The Adept from whom I have quoted a sentence once healed a cripple in cultivated Greece, and was hailed with the cry, "The Gods have come down to us in the likeness of men." In these days, though apotheosis does not follow phenomena, incredulity lasts till demonstration. It has been so with every great invention of modern times, and it must be so till is pulverized the inveterate habit of judging impossible that which does not square with ordinary observation. The moment we realize — not concede only — the dictum that "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy," we are unshackled; and the moment we perceive that those things are attainable, our freedom has begun. And why should it not be so? Every new fact in science or invention means that an explorer has been where we have not been, and has brought back something which we have not seen before. Surely we are accustomed to the idea that realms beyond our ken are being daily entered, examined, and sampled. Where, and on what principle, are we to set bounds to them? Is the Astral Light necessarily more impervious than the Space-Ether? If a Tyndall

may reveal the vibrations of the one, is it impossible that a Adept may reveal the photo-pictures of the other? In fact, (one may ask), is an Adept more impossible than a Tyndall? Each represents high ability, developed by specialized training into exceptional power.

We speak now, it is true, of matters on planes lower than the spiritual. But this does not vitiate the analogy. For, 1st, the difference between the lofty spiritual functions of an Adept and the highest attainments of an acute physicist is not any more truly a difference in *kind* than are those attainments of the physicist and the solely-muscular capacities of a burly savage; and, 2nd, if antecedent improbabilities of evolution fail in the one case, they may in the other. Indeed, one may say that the contrast between an Adept and a Tyndall is not any greater than between a Tyndall and a savage.

Moreover, there is yet another consideration. All of us know that our unseen minds may, and do, grow in power of apprehension and in thoroughness of insight. We know, too, that the moral nature, also unseen, expands and strengthens with appropriate exercise. It would seem, then, that the spiritual principle, no less unseen, may no less have capacities as yet feeble. It, too, may evolve, and quicken, and ultimately triumph.

These various analogies indicate that an Adept is not a phantasm, or a chimera, or an ingenious invention of Mr. Sinnett, but an entirely possible flower of a peculiarly rich, a highly cultivated, yet an entirely natural, soil. And, if so, we believers are not only judicially yielding to the burden of testimony, but are rationally following the pathway of logic. Before the sceptic and the scoffer we have only to point to Nature, Analogy, and Fact.

Reverting now to the propositions with which this paper began, it would appear that the means to give reality to the more distinctive features of Theosophy is to perceive their likeness to

those in departments of life better known. While we treat them as eccentric, we are never free from a haunting suspicion that they are doubtful. But if they are merely an extension of principles elsewhere demonstrated, if analogy shows that, so far from being isolated or grotesque, they lie really along the very lines enclosing conceded fact, the only thing needed for greater peace of mind is greater use of mind. The demand is not for more faith, but for more reason. We are not required to apologize, internally or externally, for positions which seem at first odd, but rather to assert that they are quite what might have been expected from the very constitution of being. Given a world enormously transcending that which we can see or hear or touch with our physical senses, its repletion with various forms of life seems inevitable. Given a humanity whose most powerful motives and impulses come from interior desire, and whose development on the material plane is necessarily limited while that on the immaterial plane has no bounds whatever, there can hardly be question as to the true sphere of effort. Given a telescopic look into the realm of Evolution, with some apprehension of what that discloses and means and foretells, and the supposition that Adeptship is incredible becomes infantile. More than this; there awakens a prevision that we ourselves are the proper subjects for all the fulness which analogy assigns to the race, and an assurance that every day of duty wrought and concentration gained is speeding us on to a time when incarnations shall have been completed and destiny shall have been achieved.

FOOTNOTES:

1. The reference, of course, is only to *White Adepts*. ([return to text](#))

THE BHAGAVAD GITA: XII — *William Brehon*

He that, being self-contained, hath vanquished doubt,
Disparting self from service, soul from works,
Enlightened and emancipate, my Prince!
Works fetter him no more! Cut then atwain
With sword of wisdom, Son of Bharata!
This doubt that binds thy heart-beats! cleave the bond
Born of thy ignorance! Be bold and wise!
Give thyself to the field with me! Arise!

These strong words end the chapter. They are addressed to those who can be strong, and not to the ever-doubting one who believes neither his own thoughts nor the words of others, but who is forever asking for more. But there can be no uncertainty about the cause of doubt: as Krishna says, "It springs from ignorance, and all we have to do is to take the sword of knowledge and cut all doubts at once." Many will say that they have been always looking for this that they may have peace, and that so many systems are presented for their consideration they are unable to come to any conclusion whatever. This would seem very true on a view of the thousand and one philosophies placed before us with varying degrees of clearness by the exponents of them. But it has appeared to us that they can all be easily sifted and divided into classes where they will range themselves under two great heads, — those which permit nothing to be believed until the miserable mass of mediocre minds have said that they at last accept this or that, and those which have each a little of what may possibly be true and a great deal that is undeniable nonsense. The doubter is a devotee of the first school, or he is an adherent partly of one and partly of the other; and in the latter case is torn almost asunder by the numberless conventional ideas which bear the

stamp of authority coercing him into an acceptance of that which revolts his judgment whenever he permits it to have free exercise. If you tell him that the much-lauded mind is not the final judge, and that there are higher faculties which may be exercised for the acquirement of knowledge, he disputes on the lines laid down by learned professors of one school or another, and denies the validity of proofs offered on the ground that they are instances of "double cerebration," and what not. To such as these the chapter will not appeal, but there are many students who have sincere doubts, and with those the difficulty arises from ignorance. They are afraid to admit to themselves that the ancients could have found out the truth; and the reason would appear to be that this judgment is passed from a consideration of the merely material state of those people or of the present nations who in any degree follow such philosophies. Our civilization glorifies material possessions and progress, and those who have not these boons cannot be the possessors of either truth or the way to it. But the keepers of truth have never said that we will be neither rich nor civilized if we follow their system. On the contrary, in the days when Krishna lived and taught his system there was more material glory and power than now, and more knowledge of all the laws of nature than every one of our scientists put together have in their reach. Hence if any theosophist teaches that the reign of the doctrines of the Masters of the Society will be the knell of all material comfort and progress, he errs, and sows the seeds of trouble for himself and his friends. Why, then, is it not wise to at once admit that there may be truth in these doctrines, throw away all doubt, and enjoy the light coming from the East?

So long as doubt remains there will be no peace, no certainty, nor any hope of finding it in this world or the lives upon it hereafter, and not even in the vast reaches of other universes on which we may live in future ages; the doubter now will be the doubter then,

and so on while the wheel revolves for the millions of years yet before us.

If we follow the advice of the great Prince, our next step will be to assume, in view of patent facts of evolution, that certain great Beings exist who long ago must have trod the same road, and now possess the knowledge with the power to impart as much as we are able to take. To this Krishna refers in these words;

"Seek this knowledge by doing honor, by prostration, by strong search, and by service; those gifted with this knowledge, who perceive the truth of things, will teach this knowledge to thee."

And such are the exact words of the Masters of our Society. They do not reward or teach merely because we so wish it to be, nor because we value ourselves at so much; our valuation of ourselves is not Theirs; They value us at the real and just rate, and cannot be moved by tears or entreaties not followed by acts, and the acts that delight Them are those performed in Their service, and no others.

What, then, is the work in which They wish to be served?

It is not the cultivation of our psychic powers, nor the ability to make phenomena, nor any kind of work for self when that is the sole motive.

The service and the work are in the cause of Humanity, by whomsoever performed, whether by members of the Theosophical Society or by those outside of it. And all the expectant members of the Society now standing with their mouths open waiting for what they are pleased to call food, may as well know that they will get nothing unless the work is done or attempted.

Let this right attitude be taken, and what follows is described in this chapter:

"A man who perfects himself in devotion finds springing up in himself in the progress of time this spiritual knowledge, which is superior to and comprehends every action without exception."

The fourth chapter is ended. Let all our doubts come to an end!

"What room for doubt and what for sorrow can there be in him who knows that all spiritual beings are the same in kind, differing only in degree."

The Path

TWO SYSTEMS - OF LUST AND SORROW — *A Buddhist*

The great Buddha referred to two systems for the government of life which he said were each ignoble, and one both ignoble and evil. One is the System of Lust, which is devotion to the enervating pleasures of sense; it was said by him to be vile, vulgar, unsound, ignominious, and productive of evil. Yet it is that which governs the lives of most people in these days.

The other extreme is the System of Sorrow. It consists of mortification of the flesh and of self torture in order to acquire knowledge and powers. This was extensively practised by Hindu ascetics in Buddha's time, and is today pursued to some extent. The Indian books are full of stories of the great powers over nature acquired by saints through the practise of austerities. Not ten years ago there died in India a certain Swami — or holy man — who was known as the Swami of Akalkot. He did many wonderful things, and nearly all of them known to young and old in India today. His powers were obtained through the use of the System of Sorrow. In the *Bhagavad-Gita* this practise is spoken of by Krishna, who declares that it is not the best method, although productive of great results.

Both of these systems were known practically to Gautama. As the Prince Siddhartha, he was surrounded by his father's order with every luxury to tempt the senses. There were gardens, flowers, jewels, music, animals, servants, and the most beautiful women. There are so many stories told of the magnificent things collected about him that we must infer for his youth a complete realisation of the System of Lust, or sensation, even if it was of the finer and more noble quality. This at last, pleased him not, and he entered on the practice of the System of Sorrow, which he declared, after

he had obtained Nirvana, to be ignoble and unworthy of a true man. This he continued in until he had tried all the varieties. It was then that he decided on the middle path from which comes attainment to truth and Nirvana.

It is a well-known doctrine in the occult lodges of India that the same result can be obtained in two ways, by one extreme or the other. But in order to reach the end in those ways, great power is required, — more power than men in general possess. The reason is that, from the action of a law which may be roughly called The Law of Tendency, the extreme practice warps the being in such a manner that success is prevented. So, when one follows the System of Sorrow, he will indeed acquire great powers, such as those possessed by Viswamitra, Vasishta, and others, but with the greater number of cases it will all end at last in confusion.

The System of Lust has the same end and with no exception. For its tendency being downward, an impulse is set up that sends the man lower and lower with no hope of salvation.

In pursuing the middle course — that of moderation — Buddha did not ignore any department of his nature, for he says, "By five means have I seen these truths, — by the mental eye, by understanding, by wisdom, by science, and by intuition." Herein he agrees with the teaching of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, which tells us not to eat too much nor too little, not to oversleep nor to refuse proper sleep. Krishna says further, "Do necessary acts, ever remembering me. Fix your mind on me. Treat every creature as my tabernacle. This is the best devotion. In this path there is no ruggedness, no defeat."

The System of Moderation, then, is the best, for it clears the inner eye and strengthens every part of the nature, Theosophists, whether they are Buddhists or not, should remember this. Some are inclined to pursue an extreme course in one direction or

another. Some say that the mental powers only are to be developed; others ignore those and claim that the spiritual alone should have attention. The latter err as well as the former. It is true that the spirit is the greater. But it is also true that the mental plane and powers cannot be obliterated unless we obliterate the Universe in the Night of Brahma. If we do not use the mental eye as Buddha directs, some day we will meet on the mental plane a new experience for which we are unprepared, and defeat shall be our portion. The true practice would prevent this. There are numerous instances of such disasters being thus caused. Ascetics of extraordinary powers have been brought into sin and contempt through experiences which were new to them because they lived forever on a plane where others of a different sort had place. It is only when salvation has been obtained that we can hope to be above the influence of all Karma.

"Such is the Law * * *

The heart of it is love; the end of it

Is peace and consummation sweet. Obey!"

The Path

IS HEREDITY A PUZZLE?

A well known writer in *Harper's Magazine* said lately "Heredity is a Puzzle." He then proceeded, "The race is linked together in a curious tangle, so that it is almost impossible to fix the responsibility.

* * We try to study this problem in our asylums and prisons, and we get a great many interesting facts, but they are too conflicting to guide legislation. The difficulty is to relieve a person of responsibility for the sins of his ancestors, without relieving him of responsibility for his own sins."

This is the general view. Heredity is a puzzle, and will always remain one so long as the laws of Karma and Reincarnation are not admitted and taken into account in all these investigations. Nearly all of these writers admit — excepting those who say they do not know — the theological view that each human being is a new creation, a new soul projected into life on this earth.

This is quite logical, inasmuch as they assert that we are only mortal and are not spirits. The religious investigators admit we are spirits, but go no further, except to assume the same special creation. Hence, when they come to the question of "Heredity," it is a very serious matter. It becomes a puzzle, especially to those who investigate heredity and who are trying to decide on whom responsibility ought to rest, while they know nothing of Karma or Reincarnation. And it is hinted at that there is necessity for legislation on the subject. That is to say, if we have a case of a murderer to consider, and we find that he has come of a race or family of murderers, the result of which is to make him a being who cannot prevent himself from committing murder, we have to conclude that, if this is due to "heredity," he cannot in any sane

sense be responsible. Take the case of the tribes, or family, or sect of Thugs in India, whose aim in life was to put people out of the world. Their children would of necessity inherit this tendency. It is something like a cat and a bird. It is the nature of the cat to eat the bird, and you cannot blame it. Thus we should be driven to pass a law making an exception in the case of such unfortunate persons. Then we should be met by the possibility of false testimony being adduced upon the trial of the criminal, going to show that he came under the law. This possibility is so great that it is not likely such a law will ever be passed. So that, even if the legal and scientific world were able to come to any conclusion establishing the great force of heredity, it would be barren of results unless the truth of Karma and Reincarnation were admitted. For in the absence of these, no law, and hence no remedy for the supposed injustice to be done to irresponsible criminals, could be applied. I am stating, not what I think ought to be done, but what will be the inevitable end of investigation into heredity without the aid of the other two great laws.

If these two doctrines should be accepted by the supposed legislators, it would follow that no such law as I have adverted to would ever be put on the books; for the reason that, once Karma and Reincarnation are admitted, the responsibility of each individual is made greater than before. Not only is he responsible even under his hereditary tendency, but in a wider sense he is also responsible for the great injury he does the State through the future effect of his life, — that effect acting on those who are born as his descendants.

There is no very great puzzle in "Heredity" as a law, from the standpoint of Karma and Reincarnation, although of course the details of the working of it will be complicated and numerous.

I know that some theosophists have declared that it puzzles them,

but that is because it is a new idea, very different from those instilled into us during our education as youths and our association with our fellows as adults.

None of the observed and admitted facts in respect to heredity should be ignored, nor need they be left out of sight by a Theosophist. We are bound to admit that leanings and peculiarities are transmitted from father to son, and to all along down the line of descent. In one case we may find a mental trait, in another a physical peculiarity; and in a great-grandson we shall see often the bodily habits of his remote ancestor reproduced.

The question is then asked, "How am I to be held responsible for such strange inclinations when I never knew this man from whom I inherit them?" As theories go at this day, it would be impossible to answer this question. For if I have come from the bosom of God as a new soul; or if what is called soul or intelligence is the product of this body I inhabit and which I had no hand in producing; or if I have come from far distant spheres unconnected with this earth, to take up this body with whose generation I was not concerned; it would be the grossest injustice for me to be held responsible for what it may do. It seems to me that from the premises laid down there can be no escape from this conclusion, and unless our sociologists and political economists and legislators admit the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation, they will have to pass laws to which I have referred. We shall then have a code which may be called "Of limitations of responsibility of criminals in cases of murder and other crimes."

But the whole difficulty arises from the *inherited transmitted* habit in the Western mind of looking at effects and mistaking them for causes, and of considering the instruments or means,

through and by means of which laws of nature work, as causes. Heredity has been looked at, or is beginning to be, as the cause of crime and of virtue. It is not a cause, but only the means or instrument for the production of the effect, the cause being hidden deeper. It seems just as erroneous to call heredity a cause of either good or bad acts as it is to call the merely mortal brain or body the cause of mind or soul.

Ages ago the Hindu sages admitted that the body did not produce the mind, but that there was what they called "the mind of the mind," or, as we might put it, "the intelligence operating above and behind the mere brain matter." And they enforced their argument by numerous illustrations; as, for instance, that the eye could not see even when in itself a perfect instrument, unless the mind behind it was acting. We can easily prove this from cases of sleep walkers. They walk with their eyes wide open, so that the retina must, as usual, receive the impinging images, yet although you stand before their eyes they do not see you. It is because the intelligence is disjoined from the otherwise perfect optical instrument. Hence we admit that the body is not the cause of mind; the eyes are not the cause of sight; but that the body and the eye are instruments by means of which the cause operates.

Karma and Reincarnation include the premise that *the man* is a spiritual entity who is using the body for some purpose.

From remote times the sages state that he (this spiritual being) is using the body which he has acquired by Karma. Hence the responsibility cannot be placed upon the body, nor primarily upon those who brought forth the body, but upon the *man himself*. This works perfect justice, for, while the man in any one body is suffering his just deserts, the other men (or souls) who produced such bodies are also compelled to make compensation in other bodies.

As the compensation is not made at any human and imperfect tribunal, but to nature itself, which includes every part of it, it consists in the restoration of the harmony or equilibrium which has been disturbed.

The necessity for recognizing the law from the standpoint of ethics arises from the fact that, until we are aware that such is the law, we will never begin to perform such acts and think such thoughts as will tend to bring about the required alterations in the astral light needed to start a new order of thoughts and influences. These new influences will not, of course, come to have full effect and sway on those who initiate them, but will operate on their descendants, and will also prepare a new future age in which those very persons who set up the new current shall participate. Hence it is not in any sense a barren, unrewarded thing, for we ourselves come back again in some other age to reap the fruit of the seed we had sown. The impulse must be set up, and we must be willing to wait for the result. The potter's wheel continues to revolve when the potter has withdrawn his foot, and so the present revolving wheel will turn for a while until the impulse is spent.

The Path

THE BHAGAVAD GITA: XIII — *William Brehon*

CHAPTER FIFTH.

The name of this chapter in Sanskrit is "Karmasanyasayog," which means "The Book of Religion by renouncing Fruit of Works." It has always seemed to me to be one of the most important in the Bhagavad-Gita. As the poem is divided into eighteen parts, this one is just beyond the first division, for the (.....) to be put into six groups of three chapters each, and we have finished four.

Arjuna is supposed to bring forward the objections raised by, or views belonging to, the two great Indian schools called the Sankhya and the Yoga, one of which advised its votaries to renounce all works and to do nothing whatever, while the other called for the performance of works.

The divergent views naturally caused great differences in practice, for the followers of one would be found continually working, and those of the other continually doing nothing. Hence we find, in India, even at the present day, great numbers of ascetics who remain inert, and encounter on the other hand those who go on making Karma with a view to salvation.

A very little reflection will show the student that the only result of action, as such, will be a continuation of action, and hence that no amount of mere works will in themselves confer Nirvana or rest from Karma. The only direct product of Karma is Karma. And this difficulty rose before Arjuna in the fifth conversation. He says:

Thou praisest, Krishna, the renunciation of works; on the other hand, devotion through them. Declare to me with precision that one only which is the better of these two.

Whereupon Krishna replies:

To cease from works
Is well, and to do works in holiness
Is well; and both conduct to bliss supreme;
But of these twain the better way is his
Who working piously refraineth not.
That is the true Renouncer, firm and fixed,
Who — seeking nought, rejecting nought — dwells proof
Against the "opposites."

The meaning of the teacher has been by some suggested to be that, inasmuch as the life of the ascetic is very hard, almost impossible for the majority of men, it is wiser to now perform good acts in the hope that they will lead one hereafter to a favorable birth in such surroundings that complete renunciation of action — outwardly — will be an easy task, and that the two sorts of practice were not intended to be laid before the student for selection, nor is he put in a dilemma compelling him to choose. I think such is not the meaning, but that, on the contrary, the seemingly easy alternative of performing actions properly is in reality the most difficult of all tasks. And, no matter how much we may wait for a favorable birth, for a much hoped-for environment which will not only permit the new sort of life, but, in fact, urge it upon us, it will never arrive for us until we have learned what is the right performance of action. This learning can never be acquired by a renunciation of works now. Indeed, it may be taken for granted that no person will be able to renounce the world unless he has passed through the other experience in some life. A few may be found who attempt to do so, but if they have not been through all action they cannot proceed. The character of the man himself inwardly is the real test. No matter how many times during countless births he has renounced the world, if his inner nature has not renounced, he will be the same man during

the entire period, and whenever, in any one of his ascetic lives, the new, the appropriate temptation or circumstance arises, he will fall from his high outward asceticism.

That our view as to the extreme difficulty of *right renunciation through action* is correct, we may refer to what Krishna says further on in the chapter.

Yet such abstraction, Chief!

Is hard to win without much holiness.

Krishna praises both schools, telling Arjuna that the disciples of each will arrive at a like end; but he says that right performance of action is the better. Now we must reconcile these two. If one is better than the other and yet both conduct to the same goal, there must be some reason for making the comparison, or hopeless confusion results. Acting upon his apparent equal endorsement, many seekers have abandoned action, thereby hoping to gain salvation. They ignored the sixth verse, which reads: "O thou of mighty arms, it is difficult to attain true renunciation *without right performance of action*; the devotee *rightly performing action attains to true renunciation* before long." Here again is a higher place assigned to performance of action. It seems clear that what Krishna meant was that renunciation of action in any one life, followed by the same conduct in all the subsequent lives thereby affected, would at last lead the renouncer to see how he must begin to stop that kind of renunciation and take up the performance of actions while he renounced the fruit of them. This is thought by many occultists to be the true view. It is well known that the ego returning to regeneration is affected by the actions of his previous births, not only circumstantially in the various vicissitudes of a life, but also in the tendency of the nature to any particular sort of religious practise, and this effect operates for a length of time or number of births exactly commensurate with

the intensity of the previous practise. And naturally in the case of one who deliberately renounced all in the world, devoting himself to asceticism for many years, the effect would be felt for many lives and long after other temporary impressions had worn off. In going on thus for so many births, the man at last acquires that clearness of inner sight which brings him to perceive what method he really ought to follow. Besides also the natural development, he will be assisted by those minds whom he is sure to encounter, who have passed through all the needed experience. Additional support for these suggestions is found in the sixth chapter, in the verses referring to the rebirth of such disciples:

So hath he back what heights of heart
He did achieve, and so he strives anew
To perfectness, with better hope, dear Prince!
*For by the old desire he is drawn on
Unwittingly. (1)*

What we are to endeavor to understand, then, is how to renounce the fruit of our actions, which is what Krishna means when he tells us to perform actions as a renunciation. The polluting effect of an act is not in the nature of the mere thing done, nor is the purifying result due to what work we may do, but on either hand the sin or the merit is found in the inner feeling that accompanies the act. One may donate millions in alms, and yet not thereby benefit his real character in the least. It is very true that he will reap material rewards, perhaps in some other life, but those even will be of no benefit, since he will be still the same. And another may only give away kind words or small sums, because that is all he has to give, and be so much benefited by the feeling accompanying each act that his progress up the ascending arc toward union with spirit is rapid. We find in the Christian Testament Jesus of Nazareth enforcing this view in the parable of

the widow's mite, which he regarded as of more value than all that had been given by others. He could not have referred to the intrinsic value of the coin given, nor to the act as thus measured, for that quantity was easily ascertained; he only looked to the inner feeling of the poor woman when she gave all that she had.

No matter in what direction we see ourselves acting, we perceive how difficult it is to be true renouncers. And we cannot hope to reach the perfection of this better sort of renunciation through action, in the present life, be it the one in which we have begun, or be it the twentieth of such effort. However, we can *try*, and such is our duty; if we persevere, the tendency toward the right understanding will increase with each life more rapidly than would otherwise be possible.

And even in the high aim found in aspiration to discipleship under a master, or even to Adeptship, we encounter the same difficulty. This aspiration is commendable above most that we can formulate, but when we coldly ask ourselves soon after that aspiration has been formed, "Why am I thus aspiring; why do I want to be near in sense to the Master?", we are obliged to admit that the impelling motive for acquiring the aspiration was tinged with selfishness. We can easily prove this by inquiring in the forum of our own conscience if we had the aspiration for ourself or for the great mass of men, rich and poor, despicable and noble; would we be able to feel content were we suddenly told that our deep longing had given the boon to others and that we must wait ten lives more. It is safe to say that the answer would be that we were very sorry. In the twelfth verse we find the remedy for the difficulty, as well as the difficulty itself, clearly stated thus: "The right performer of action, abandoning fruit of action, attains to rest through devotion; the wrong performer of action, attached to fruit thereof on account of desire, remains bound."

These instructions will be very difficult for all who are living for themselves and who have not in some small degree begun to believe that they are not here for their own sake. But when we feel that there is no separation between us and any other creature, and that our Higher Self is leading us through all the experiences of life to the end that we shall recognize the unity of all, then, instead of continually acting contrary to that object of the Higher Self, we try to acquire the right belief and aspiration. Nor need we be deterred, as some are, by the extreme difficulty of eliminating the selfish desire for progress. That will be the task during many lives, and we should begin it voluntarily as soon as it is known, instead of waiting for it to be forced in upon us through suffering and many defeats.

A common mistake made by theosophical students as well as those outside is corrected in this chapter. It is the habit of many to say that, if these doctrines are followed to the letter, the result is a being who cares for nothing but the calmness which comes from extinction in the Supreme Spirit, — that is, the extreme of selfishness. And popular writers contribute to this ridiculous impression, as we can see in the numerous articles on the subject. Among those writers it is the sequence of the "personal aggrandizement idea," which is the bane of the present age, as occultists think, but the chief beauty of it in the eyes of those to whom we refer. Krishna puts it clearly enough in the twenty-fifth verse:

"Effacement in the Supreme Spirit is gained by the right-seeing sage whose sins are exhausted, who hath cut asunder all doubts, whose senses and organs are under control, and *who is devoted to the well-being of all creatures.*"

If the last qualification is absent, then he is not a "right-seeing sage" and cannot reach union with the Supreme. It must follow

that the humblest imitator, every one who desires to come to that condition, must try to the best of his ability to imitate the sage who has succeeded. And such is the word of the Master; for He says in many places that, if we expect to have His help, we must apply ourselves to the work of helping humanity — to the extent of our ability. No more than this is demanded.

FOOTNOTE:

1. The italics are my own. — B. ([return to text](#))

The Path

DWELLER ON THE THRESHOLD — *Eusebio Urban*

Has such a being any existence? Has any one ever seen it? Are there many or several, and has it any sex?

Such are the questions asked by nearly all students who read theosophical books. Some of those who all their life believed in fairies in secret and in the old tales of giants, have proceeded to test the question by calling upon the horrid shade to appear and freeze their blood with the awful eyes that Bulwer Lytton has made so famous in his "Zanoni." But the Dweller is not to be wooed in such a way, and has not appeared at all, but by absolute silence leads the invoker to at last scout the idea altogether.

But this same inquirer then studies theosophical books with diligence, and enters after a time on the attempt to find out his own inner nature. All this while the Dweller has waited, and, indeed, we may say, in complete ignorance as yet of the neophyte's existence. When the study has proceeded far enough to wake up long dormant senses and tendencies, the Dweller begins to feel that such a person as this student is at work. Certain influences are then felt, but not always with clearness, and at first never ascribed to the agency of what had long ago been relegated to the lumber-room of exploded superstitions. The study goes still farther and yet farther, until the awful Thing has revealed itself; and when that happens, it is not a superstition nor is it disbelieved. It can then never be gotten rid of but will stay as a constant menace until it is triumphed over *and left behind*.

When Glyndon was left by Mejnour in the old castle in Italy, he found two vases which he had received directions not to open. But disobeying these he took out the stoppers, and at once the room was filled with intoxication, and soon the awful, loathsome

creature appeared whose blazing eyes shone with malignant glare and penetrated to Glyndon's soul with a rush of horror such as he had never known.

In this story Lytton desired to show that the opening of the vases is like the approach of an enquirer to the secret recesses of his own nature. He opens the receptacles, and at first is full of joy and a sort of intoxication due to the new solutions offered for every problem in life and to the dimly seen vistas of power and advancement that open before him. If the vases *are kept open long enough*, the Dweller of the Threshold surely appears, and no man is exempt from the sight. Goodness is not sufficient to prevent its appearance, because even the good man who finds a muddy place in the way to his destination must of necessity pass through it to reach the end.

We must ask next, *WHAT* is the Dweller? It is the combined evil influence that is the result of the wicked thoughts and acts of the age in which any one may live, and it assumes to each student a definite shape at each appearance, being always either of one sort or changing each time. So that with one it may be as Bulwer Lytton pictured it, or with another only a dread horror, or even of any other sort of shape. It is specialized for each student and given its form by the tendencies and natural physical and psychical combinations that belong to his family and nation.

Where, then, does it dwell? is the very natural inquiry which will follow. It dwells in its own plane, and that may be understood in this manner.

Around each person are planes or zones, beginning with spirit and running down to gross matter. These zones extend, within their lateral boundaries, all around the being. That is to say, if we figure ourselves as being in the centre of a sphere, we will find that there is no way of escaping or skipping any one zone,

because it extends in every direction until we pass its lateral boundary.

When the student has at last gotten hold of a real aspiration and some glimmer of the blazing goal of truth where Masters stand, and has also aroused the determination to know and to be, the whole bent of his nature, day and night, is to reach out beyond the limitations that hitherto had fettered his soul. No sooner does he begin thus to step a little forward, than he reaches the zone just beyond mere bodily and mental sensations. At first the minor dwellers of the threshold are aroused, and they in temptation, in bewilderment, in doubt or confusion, assail him. He only feels the effect, for they do not reveal themselves as shapes. But persistence in the work takes the inner man farther along, and with that progress comes a realization to the outer mind of the experiences met, until at last he has waked up the whole force of the evil power that naturally is arrayed against the good end he has set before him. Then the Dweller takes what form it may. That it does take some definite shape or impress itself with palpable horror is a fact testified to by many students.

One of those related to me that he saw it as an enormous slug with evil eyes whose malignancy could not be described. As he retreated — that is, grew fearful —, it seemed joyful and portentous, and when retreat was complete it was not. Then he fell further back in thought and action, having occasionally moments of determination to retrieve his lost ground. Whenever these came to him, the dreadful slug again appeared, only to leave him when he had given up again his aspirations. And he knew that he was only making the fight, if ever he should take it up again, all the harder.

Another says that he has seen the Dweller concentrated in the apparent form of a dark and sinister-looking man, whose slightest

motions, whose merest glance, expressed the intention and ability to destroy the student's reason, and only the strongest effort of will and faith could dispel the evil influence. And the same student at other times has felt it as a vague, yet terrible, horror that seemed to enwrap him in its folds. Before this he has retreated for the time to prepare himself by strong self-study to be pure and brave for the next attack.

These things are not the same as the temptations of Saint Anthony. In his case he seems to have induced an hysterical erotic condition, in which the unvanquished secret thoughts of his own heart found visible appearance.

The Dweller of the Threshold is not the product of the brain, but is an influence found in a plane that is extraneous to the student, but in which his success or failure will be due to his own purity. It is not a thing to be dreaded by mere diletanti theosophists: and no earnest one who feels himself absolutely called to work persistently to the highest planes of development for the good of humanity, and not for his own, need fear aught that heaven or hell holds.

The Path

THE PLANES OF CONSCIOUSNESS — *J. D. Buck*

There are three conditions of consciousness in ordinary daily experience, that of ordinary wakefulness, that of sleep with dreams, and that of dreamless sleep. We have already shown that not memory, but consciousness, is the all-potent factor in man. Consciousness as a fact returns to the individual as well as memory, after deep sleep. Every one will admit that, in sleep where dreams occur, consciousness is on a different plane, or under different conditions, from the waking state, and memory brings into the waking state the subject and the varied experiences of dreams. After dreamless sleep memory may bring nothing back from the subjective world, but it resumes the thread of life just where it was dropped before unconsciousness came on. Now what becomes of consciousness during the dreamless slumber? Either it continues or it does not. If it continues, then it must simply be upon another plane and under different conditions, at least so far as thought and memory are concerned, for the gap is between consciousness and memory in relation to thought. If, on the other hand, consciousness is blotted out and re-created every time we enter dreamless sleep, how does it happen that both consciousness and memory, both new creations, at once take up the thread of life just where they dropped it, and resume the even tenor of their way as though nothing had happened? Such a position is evidently absurd. Nature never does things in that way. Her adjustments require time, her developments and all her varied relations are slow growths. Both consciousness and memory have grown and expanded from the original germ. The true philosophy of dreams, then, is a problem in the conditions of consciousness, while we may fairly assume that consciousness still persists in dreamless sleep, though under different

circumstances. Nothing is more common in daily life than the shifting of the planes of consciousness. Take, for example, the action of anaesthetics. Chloroform changes the consciousness of the real ego. The individual cannot be called strictly unconscious. He is not conscious in the ordinary way. He suffers no pain, and retains no recollection of what occurs while under the influence of the anaesthetic, but the organic consciousness remains undisturbed, muscular motion may occur, but without coordination. The cerebrum, cerebellum, and sensory ganglia are unconscious in dreamless sleep; the medulla, spinal cord, and solar plexus, and the sexual area are wide awake, and sometimes these are super-sensitive. The light of self-consciousness is withdrawn, drawn within, but not quenched. In syncope or an ordinary faint, consciousness is likewise withdrawn, but if one will watch carefully the first return of consciousness in such cases, it will generally be found that consciousness has been by no means dead or idle, for by gently attracting the attention just on the turning point it will be found that a few seconds have been sufficient for the recall of a long forgotten experience, recovered now from the all-pervading ether, or for the weaving of romance, comedy, or tragedy quite sufficient for a good sized novel. But, perhaps, the rather common instances of sleep-walking or somnambulism offer the best illustrations of at least dual consciousness. The literature of the subject is, however, so full and so easy of access that it is unnecessary here to go into details. Persons subject to these attacks from childhood really lead dual lives bearing no direct relation to each other. Individuals walking in their sleep have been known to enter a company where there were strangers, carry on a conversation with those to whom they were introduced, and retain no recollection of the events or of the names of the strangers, or even to have met them. But on the succeeding night, walking again in sleep, meeting the same individuals they recognize them and resume the conversation of

the previous night. One such case is sufficient to show the existence of another than the outer plane of consciousness. Experiments in animal magnetism, and more especially the recent investigations in hypnotism, demonstrate beyond all controversy more than one plane of consciousness, and these may have no direct relation to each other, or, when desired, the connection may be established between the different planes. In many of these cases the extent of knowledge and intelligence of the faculties of the individual in subjective consciousness altogether transcends the ordinary plane. As previously remarked, the difficulty is not in finding illustrations of the different planes and relations of consciousness, but in selecting from the mass of available material. Even the delirium of fever, the intoxication produced by alcohol and many drugs, no less than monomania and insanity, each and all consist largely in either a temporary or a permanent shifting of the planes of consciousness, and aberrations of memory. Take, for example, the delirium caused by opium and alcohol. Consciousness is shifted to a subjective plane, and sometimes to a very low plane. It is a great mistake to assume that the objects seen and the events that occur have no real existence. If all these are to be regarded as the creations of the imagination, whence arises the great uniformity of the objects witnessed from the effects of alcohol? When we get any rational idea of the subjective world, we shall discover that the snakes and dragons witnessed there are as veritable on that plane, to subjective sense, as their living phototypes are on the phenomenal plane to objective sense; for it must be remembered that the universal ether is that infinite ocean whence all creation proceeds, and into whose all-dissolving bosom all things return. Our relation to objects here is largely incidental, determined by location, circumstance, and the like.

On the subjective plane our relations are determined by

attractions and intrinsic conditions, and an individual full of all evil passions, inflamed by alcohol, will attract entities of like degree, and so on to the end of the chapter. To say that all such cases result from pure imagination is not even to make them thinkable. Many persons assume that when they have named a thing they have explained it, and that further questions are an impertinence. Perhaps the most important consideration in regard to the shifting states of consciousness from the objective to the subjective condition regards that vague and varying state known as insanity. As a rule, with the insane this transfer of consciousness is partial, seldom complete. Consciousness is rather out of joint than actually transferred from plane to plane. There is usually an organic lesion, or a functional obstruction that tends to tissue change in some of the nerve centers. The result in many cases is to break down that sharp line of demarcation between the objective and subjective worlds. The individual becomes bewildered, loses his bearings. His experiences are no longer coordinate. The instrument through which consciousness manifested is out of tune, and the result is discord. The great mistake in regard to all these cases of perverted function arises from the fact that no differentiation is made as to planes or states of consciousness. Practically but one state of consciousness is recognized, and the still further mistake is made of looking upon all objects cognized, and all experiences outside the ordinary plane of consciousness, as altogether non-existent, a figment of the imagination. But pray what is imagination? Ask the artist, the poet, the painter; ask genius that is so closely allied to insanity; ask all who create from ideal forms; and they will tell us, one and all, that imagination is the wings of the soul that bear up the lagging fancy, the slow and plodding mind, till it enters the ideal world and gazes there on both beauty and deformity in all their nakedness. They will tell us that what we call the real world is at best but a poor and colorless caricature as compared to the ideals

open to the imagination, and that what the world is pleased to call the work of genius bears but a touch of that transcendent truth and reality that veils its face from every faculty of man on the phenomenal plane. Ask the true scientist what we knew of anything, of matter, space, time, or motion, — of the whole phenomenal world —, and he will tell us, and tell us truly, that we have our own ideas of these, and nothing more. Finally, ask that greatest of all modern philosophers, Schopenhauer, what is imagination? and he will tell us that not only the world, but ourselves included, is reducible to two terms, Imagination and Will; the one, the essence and the creator of all forms in nature; the other, the creative and motive power; and that these powers are as potent on the subjective plane as on the objective; are as active in drunken delirium, in mania, and insanity, as in that other condition of consciousness that we call sanity, but which is often more insane than any other. There is no subject likely to yield more valuable results to the earnest student than the various planes and conditions of consciousness.

The Path

BE IT DONE UNTO THEE ACCORDING TO YOUR DESIRE — *Harij*

Those whose attention has been but recently attracted to Theosophical studies often have considerable difficulty in taking their bearings. These are attracted by the mystery that attaches to Theosophy, and have equal difficulty in estimating their own motives and in understanding the new doctrines. There are, indeed, a few who do not come under this head, those who realise that they have at last found that for which they waited and sought; but these need little assistance, for the momentum gained by long and weary waiting will carry them a long way on the path. The great majority of students belong to the former class, and these are now for the first time brought face to face with themselves. If they mean only to have an amusing and interesting flirtation with occultism, get the reputation of being "a little fast" in the new fad, yet preserve through it all their reputation for virtuous intelligence, they ought to be made aware that they are trifling with very serious matters. It would not be difficult to imagine a man who had been out with boon companions engaged in drunken orgies, and who at midnight had come reeling home, leering and besotted, to find that home in flames, and all he had held most dear and that he had imagined safe being devoured by the cruel flames. Such a one would be sobered in a moment, and in that awful awakening self-reproach and horror would take possession of his soul. He would in that awful moment stand face to face with himself. His own conscience would be his Nemesis, though he might have had nothing directly to do with bringing on the calamity that had overtaken him. Suppose he had returned from a mission of mercy to find the same calamity awaiting him, the difference in the two cases can easily be imagined. He would now be face to face with his calamity, and in either case he would

doubtless do his best to rescue his treasures. What makes the difference in these cases? Is it not all in the man's own soul? Every student of Theosophy will find the subject full of mystery, but that mystery will be but the reflection of his own nature.

If one were to inquire, What is Theosophy anyhow? and what shall I find in it of interest or value?, it might be answered, What are you? and what do you seek in Theosophy? Are you satisfied with your present life and your past achievement? Does it give you zest and satisfaction? If it does, and if you are quite satisfied with things as they are, you had better let Theosophy alone, for it will break your repose and make you the most wretched of mortals; it will place you face to face with yourself, and you will not be pleased with the reflection in the mirror; nor will you ever again find that self-complacent satisfaction you have heretofore enjoyed when thinking of yourself. If you are involved in a round of pleasure, and are rushing from one sensual delight to another, discontented when left to yourself, yet still imagining you are happy if only you can keep up the dizzy dance of life, you will find nothing in Theosophy to compensate you for the lost pleasure; it will break the charm and destroy the illusion. Let it alone. The baby has first to learn that fire will burn its little fingers, before it will learn to avoid the fire. So also with the votary of pleasure; until he has learned the Cheat, and how utterly inadequate are all sensuous enjoyments to satisfy a living soul, he will seek these enjoyments as a child cries for the light or vainly reaches out its frail arms for the moon. You will find in Theosophy just what you desire and just what you find in yourself. It will not satisfy you if you still long for selfish enjoyment; it will repel you, and send you back from its cold embrace to the dizzy whirl of the maddening dance of life, glad that there is warmth *somewhere*.

If, on the other hand, your soul is already filled with a great

unrest; if you have already discovered the cheat and lost the old zest of childhood, and yet been unable to find anything to take its place; and if you are almost ready to despair, and count life as a failure and hardly worth the living, then, my friend, my brother, Theosophy has a message for you. It will again show you yourself, and more, it will show you the meaning of life, and place you face to face with your priceless opportunities, and just in proportion to your present hopelessness and discouragement will it inspire you with zeal and with courage. It will show you the cause of failure, the cause of disease, and the cause of unhappiness, and it will give you the panacea for all these ills of life. It will banish that bane of life, *ennui*, forever. It will enable you to find within yourself the disease and its remedy, and it will put you in possession of a never-failing source of inspiration and of joy. If you desire all this, be it done unto you according to your desire. But do you really desire it? Remember the issues are with your own soul. You are both priest and penitent, and absolution can come only to a clean conscience. There can be no deception practiced. You will be alone with your own soul, and will realize how utterly hopeless, how absurd; it would be to attempt any deception. *There can be none*. Are you afraid to stand face to face thus with yourself? and do you prefer to wait for the midnight hour and the great awakening! Then wait! no human being can say you Nay. Follow the cheat called pleasure! Raise high the orgies of self! Silence the voice within, and wait till all is ready or till death come and the account is closed.

The true Theosophists are not a legion, the ranks are by no means crowded. These are not measured by their occult lore, or by their mysterious power, nor yet by any worldly standard, but solely by their convictions. They are one and all *dead in earnest*, dead to all things else. They may not outwardly yet renounce, but they have inwardly relinquished, and will rejoice at the coming of the time

when incidentals shall vanish and only essentials remain. These have lived in all ages, giving meaning and dignity to life, invincible and immortal.

Think of Epictetus, when tortured for a trifle, saying to his tormentor, his "master!", "If you twist my limb much farther, you will break it, and so deprive yourself of a servant," and, when the bone broke, replying only, "There, I told you you would break it." A poor crippled slave, yet all the masters among besotted kings could not touch his soul, more than a drop of water could reach the heart of volcanic fires. But this was so long ago, and the world is so much wiser and better now! and Epictetus was not only a slave but a heathen! Well, courts of law, masquerading in the name of Justice, at the command of Mammon can still imprison the greatest discoverer of the age, and when they have persecuted Mr. Keely to death they will doubtless ascertain the commercial value of his "secret." Whether power wears a crown, a mitre, a golden helmet, or a cap and bells, 'tis all the same. Power in the throne, in the holy Inquisition, in the seat of Justice, or in the service of mammon, will never comprehend and never master the silent power and invincible courage of one noble soul that knows and loves the simple truth.

Though we persecute truth daily,
Though we plant with thorns her brow,
Scourge her, spit upon, revile her,
And crown error here and now:
Through the cycles of the ages
Truth comes uppermost at last,
And the heroes of the present
Were the martyrs of the past.

THE TEST OF THEOSOPHIC INTEREST — *Harris P.*

The test of Theosophic interest is precisely the test of every other kind of interest, — What one will do to promote it. And here, obviously, two considerations arise.

The first is that no act which is superficial, or perfunctory, or for personal benefit, can at all gauge devotion to a cause which is both impersonal and deep-reaching. It is easy to descant on the glory of a system so elevated as the Wisdom-Religion. It is as easy to proclaim one's own appreciation of its tenets. It is not difficult to attend punctiliously the meetings of a Theosophical Society, and to absorb with readiness, perhaps with profit, whatever of truth may be there disclosed. It may not be easy, but it is entirely possible, to read every Theosophical work of repute, to extract its main thought, and to digest well the learning acquired. And yet, very evidently, the first two are exercises only of the voice, the last two only of the mind. If Theosophy was a matter of the breath or the brains, this participation in it would not only be salutary but ample.

In truth, however, Theosophy gives but a light benediction to either the mere talker or the mere student. It by no means undervalues sincere homage or zealous inquiry, but it is so intent on the work of transferring interest from the lower to the higher levels of being, so eager to excite the unselfish enthusiasm for others' good which, subordinating its own advancement, shall be most thrilled at the chance to advance Humanity, that its ideal is the man who is exerting himself to help others, rather than the man who is exerting himself to get ahead. And, as it believes that the present most efficacious agency for extending truth, vivifying motive, and elevating the race is the Theosophical Society,

Theosophy regards as its best expositors those who are working most for the Society it has founded.

Some man with more impetuosity than perception will at once cry, "But this is only the Church and its motive over again!" Not at all. There is no question of doctrinal triumphs, of sect growth, of rival temples, of missionary comparisons. The elements of social distinction, of clerical rank, of legislative influence are all absent. There is not even the ambition to push the Society into the area of recognized religious organizations, for it not only disclaims competition with Churches, but is disqualified for such competition by its lack of creed, its slight coherency of organism, and its vigorous assertion of individualism in opinion and in training.

Moreover, before assuming the danger of possible ecclesiasticism, one must remember that the standard applied to the Theosophical Society is exactly the same as that applied to a Theosophist, — self-forgetfulness in work for others. If the individual member is held to the doctrine that he best realizes Theosophical aims through the obliteration of ambition and the substitution therefore of an altruistic life, similarly as to the Society. Self-aggrandizement, as a pursuit, might evolve a Black Magician; it might even evolve a Church; but it never could evolve a Theosophical Society.

Of the three objects contemplated in the establishment of the T. S., the first and greatest is the promotion of Universal Brotherhood. But this does not mean merely a sentimental recognition of a general human fraternity; it means an active beneficence towards the rest of the family. And if correct views, loftier ideals, richer motives, finer principles, healthier aspirations are more attainable through the Theosophic system than through other systems of faith or morals, the Theosophist is best serving the

interests of his brother-men by giving that system all the publicity he can. And if, still further, he accepts the fact that the Masters have adopted the Society as their channel for conveying and distributing Truth to the human family, he reaches the conclusion that in laboring for the Society he is conforming most closely to their desires, benefiting most efficiently the race of which he is a part, using most hopefully the best agency for spiritual good. Practically, therefore, the truest Theosophist at the present day is he who is most interested in the Theosophical Society.

And now has been reached the point where the test of Theosophic interest may be applied to a Theosophist. *What is he doing to sustain the Society?* Not how many times does he place F. T. S. after his surname; not how loud his voice in benediction on the Founders; not how warm in praise his letters to active members; not how many meetings he attends, or books he reads, or intricate problems in Occultism he explores; not what food he eats, or clothes he wears, or opinions he proclaims; but *what is he doing to help?* He may be copious in phrases and efflorescent in gracious speech, or, as are some, mysteriously mournful over the faults of others which so impede their own progression; he may fold hands before the needs of the Cause, and piously avow trust in the interposition of Mahatmas, or he may point out that the time is unpropitious, or that a spiritual system has no claim for cash, or that it degrades Theosophy to make a collection; he may suggest that in giving his name he does better than give funds, or that there seems as yet no opening for the expression of his zeal, or that his sympathies are with us and his one aspiration is to be upon the path. And yet the inexorable test, inexorable because in the nature of things and therefore not amenable to cajolery or humbug, stands before him, — *What is he doing to help?*

The second consideration referred to at the outset is that the test of Theosophic interest is not the absolute amount of help given,

but that amount as related to the capacity of the giver. Five cents, five hours, constitute a far larger proportion of one man's available means or time, than five thousand dollars or five months do of another's. Hence it is not the figures, but their fractional value, which determines the extent of the interest. Just so is it in every other human interest. How much one cares for a relation, for a friend, for a philanthropic cause, for a public object, is unerringly shown by the proportion of outlay he devotes thereto. And this does not mean a careless proflusion with superfluous goods, but the cutting-off of personal indulgences, cherished but dispensable, for the better sustentation of a cause, — in other words, *self-sacrifice*. Nor does self-sacrifice mean the sacrifice of other people, as some think; the bearing with great fortitude privations one does not share, the consecration of money or time or effort which really belongs to one's family or entourage. It means the sacrifice of *yourself*, of your own habits and enjoyments and expenses, in order to build up a cause you profess to love. And the extent to which this is done gauges the proportion of your love for that cause to your love for yourself.

Now Theosophy is not unreasonable or captious. It does not advise any man to starve himself, or to wear rags, or to scout at the conditions of life in the civilization wherein he was born and which express the laws of sociology. It does not enjoin monasticism, or seclusion, or parsimony, or want of public spirit, or abnegation of social amenities, or one-sidedness, or bigotry, or folly under any name. We are to be men, rational men, civilized men, cultivated men, and we promote no noble cause, least of all the noblest, if we are unsocial, unpractical, or fantastic. But while all this is true, it is equally true that in one's own private affairs, in that sphere of personal belongings outside the claims of others and wherein absolute freedom is unquestioned, the test of Theosophic interest is directly applicable. It is, as has been shown,

the proportion of time, money, literary or other effort, one is willing to give up for the Theosophical Society.

Not a few sincere readers may honestly ask, What is there for me to do? The answer to this is the showing what there is to be done, and then each may inquire within himself how and to what extent he can aid. First, there is the support of the Theosophical Society itself, its organic action and work. Hardly any one is too poor to become a member-at-large and aid to the extent of \$1.00 a year. If able to contribute more, he can do so with the certainty that its growing needs in printing, postage circulation of documents, advertising, the occasional schemes for Theosophic advance for which direct help is asked, constitute an ample channel for any donation. Then there is Theosophic Literature. Its periodicals need to be sustained, sustained by the subscriptions of those who believe them useful, sustained by those who both take them for their own reading and order them sent to points where they may do good. Pamphlets, tracts, documents may be bought by the zealous and sent to individuals where budding interest is suspected, thus aiding to make possible new ones and giving circulation to those now printed. Theosophical books may be presented to Public Libraries, and, as current facts show, *with the certainty that they will be read*. In private conversations a Theosophical idea or phrase maybe dropped, enough to provoke inquiry, possibly investigation. Openings for the impartation of truth may be judiciously used. Then there is the establishment of a Branch. Every member of the Society in a town without a Branch may well judge its foundation his special mission. In many ways and in many hearts the seed may be sown, confident that time, possibly short time, will bring that harvest. If a member of a Branch, he has before him work in strengthening it, enlarging its Library, enlivening its meetings, helping to feed and not merely feeding, thinking out schemes by which its existence

may be known through the community and it be recognized as a distributing centre of light. If having access to the press, he can secure the insertion of brief items or clippings which will keep the topic before the public. If competent to write, he can present some truth he finds potent or correct some mistake he sees popular.

What is there for me to do? Everything that you *can* do. A word, a hint, a tract, a volume, a subscription. If it costs you nothing, your interest is nothing. If it costs you little, your interest is little. If it costs till you *feel* it, then it is that you feel your interest. And when you yourself, body, soul, and spirit, are devoted to the doing, when you thrill with that topic as with no other topic, when your pleasure is in self-sacrificing efforts for its promotion, when you forget yourself, have lost yourself, in it, then will you have become in measure what are the Founders, — may one not even say, what are the Masters Themselves.

The Path

SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND THEIR ATTAINMENT — *Dies Non*

One of the questions which a Theosophist is apt to ask, and to ask with some earnestness and intensity, is, How can I make progress in the higher life? How can I attain spiritual gifts? For the phrase "spiritual gifts," which is a rather loose-jointed expression, we are indebted to Paul, the Apostle and Adept, who thus wrote to the Corinthian Church: "Concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant." Among the "gifts" which he goes on to enumerate are these, — wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, the working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, the speaking of divers tongues, and the interpretation of tongues. And while the Apostle urges the Corinthians to "covet earnestly the best gifts," he yet proceeds to show them a more excellent way, namely the supreme law of love. "Now abideth," he says, "faith, hope, charity (or love), these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Spiritual gifts, then, however desirable their possession may be, are plainly not, in the opinion of this good Adept, on the highest plane, not the supreme object of human attainment, or the most excellent way of reaching human perfection. They may doubtless properly be regarded as evidences of advancement on the higher planes of thought and spiritual life, and may be coveted and used for the benefit of others; but they are not in themselves the chief object of human desire. For man's supreme aim should be to become God, and "God is love."

But let us look at the matter a little more closely. In the first place, what is a "gift"? What is the common acceptation of the word? Clearly something given to or bestowed upon a recipient, not something which a man already possesses, or which he may obtain by a process of growth or development. The latter, strictly speaking, would be a "fruit," not a gift. A tree which has been

producing nothing but leaves and branches for many years finally breaks out into blossom and fruit. No new "gift" has been conferred upon it; it has simply reached a stage of development in its natural growth where certain powers, inherent in the tree from the beginning, have an opportunity to assert themselves. In the same way the transcendental powers possessed by the Adepts are not gifts; but the natural result of growth in certain directions, and the necessary efflorescence, so to speak, of the profound development in their cases of those spiritual potentialities which are the birthright of all men.

Taking this view of the meaning of the word, I think most Theosophists will be ready to admit that the phrase "spiritual gifts" is a misnomer. There are and can be no gifts for man to receive. Whatever the student of the higher life is, he is as the result of his past labors. Whatever he may become in the future will be due to his own efforts. He may develop his latent faculties and in time become an Adept, or he may drift along the currents of life without aim or effort, till he finally sinks into oblivion. His destiny is in his own hands, and is in no way dependent upon "gifts."

Bearing in mind, however, the manifold nature of man, the subject may be looked at from another point of view. For all practical purposes man may be said to consist of body, soul, and spirit, the soul being the true ego, and the spirit one with the Supreme. And regarding these for the time as separate entities, it is perfectly true, as James, another apostle, puts it, that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above." Even aspiration of the soul for spiritual things, every resolve of the man to lead a purer life, every helping outstretched hand to a weaker brother, every desire for the truth, all hungering and thirsting after righteousness: — these and like yearnings and strivings of the soul have first of all come from above, from the Divine within. In

this sense they may be called "gifts," — gifts from the higher nature to the lower, from the spiritual to the human. And this action of the above upon the below is seen in those humane attributes, or qualities, or virtues — whatever one may be pleased to call them — which Paul in another place enumerates as the "fruits of the spirit, — love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

Looked at from either of these points of view, how can we attain spiritual gifts? The answer would seem to depend upon what we are really striving for. If the extraordinary powers of the Adepts have captivated our fancy and fired our ambition, then we must possess our souls in patience. Few, if any, of us are at all fitted for a "forcing" process. We must be content to wait and work; to grow and develop; line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, till, ages hence perhaps, we come to the full stature of the perfect man. If, however, wisely recognizing our limitations, we strive instead after what may be termed the ordinary manifestations of the spirit, two obvious lines of conduct suggest themselves.

Every impulse from above, every prompting of the Divine within, should meet at once with a hearty welcome and response. If you feel as if something urged you to visit some sick or afflicted neighbor or friend, obey the suggestion without delay. If the wish to turn over a new leaf comes into the lower consciousness, don't wait till next New Year's before actually turning it over; turn it now. If some pathetic story of suffering has moved you, act on the emotion while your cheeks are still wet with tears. In short, put yourself at once in line with the Divine ways, in harmony with the Divine laws. More light, more wisdom, more spirituality must necessarily come to one thus prepared, thus expectant. How can a bar of iron be permeated with the earth's magnetism if it is placed across instead of in line with the magnetic meridian? How

can a man expect spiritual gifts or powers if he persists in ignoring spiritual conditions, in violating spiritual laws? To obtain the good, we must think good thoughts; we must be filled with good desires; in short, we must *be* good.

And this practical suggestion is to fulfil faithfully and conscientiously every known duty. It is in and through the incidents of daily life, in work well done, in duties thoroughly performed, that we today can most readily make progress in the higher life, — slow progress, it may be, but at any rate sure. These are stepping stones to better things. We advance most rapidly when we stop to help other wayfarers. We receive most when we sacrifice most. We attain to the largest measure of Divine love when we most unselfishly love the brethren. We become one with the Supreme most surely when we lose ourselves in work for Humanity.

The Path

MEDITATION AND ACTION: I — *Pilgrim*

It is the fashion nowadays, with those who write about ideas which lie beyond the world of sense, to express opinion in very guarded terms. In contradistinction to the old priestly dogmatism, it has of late years been considered "good form" to handle these subjects in so tentative a manner as almost to imply agnosticism. It is a frame of mind that has eminently suited the time, and was a worthy set-off to the old superstitious intolerance.

But when a new revelation is bursting on the souls of men, when the error and the ignorance, alike begotten of the ancient superstition and the modern incredulity, are so powerful as to defy all but the best aimed shafts of the most cogent Reason, the tentative hesitation of the groper after Truth is no longer an appropriate attitude.

We have no desire to soar into the lofty region of metaphysics, where we are sure to be met with the assertion that truth about these ultimate realities never has been and never can be formulated or uttered by man. Let us content ourselves with the humbler elevation of practical ethics, and acknowledge that Truth is a relative term. To quote from a remarkable letter lately addressed to his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, "A religion is true in proportion as it supplies the spiritual, moral, and intellectual needs of the time, and helps the development of mankind in these respects. It is false in proportion as it hinders that development, and offends the spiritual, moral, and intellectual portion of man's nature. And the transcendently spiritual ideas of the ruling powers of the Universe entertained by an Oriental sage would be as false a religion for the African savage as the grovelling fetishism of the latter would be for the

sage, although both views must necessarily be true in degree, for both represent the highest ideas attainable by the respective individuals of the same cosmico-spiritual facts, which can never be known in their reality by man while he remains but man."

With this prelude let us attempt to form some just estimate of a remarkable and interesting book which has recently been published, *Scientific Religion*, by Laurence Oliphant. It is certainly in marked contrast to the style of writing commented on in the opening paragraph, — indeed it is refreshing to listen to such earnest utterances on subjects of the deepest interest. While expressing his sincerest attachment to the true Christian faith, no writer attacking the anti-Christian creeds of the churches could demolish the orthodox conceptions with more powerful or crushing arguments. The 22nd chapter, which deals with the interpretation of part of the Book of Revelation, is one which the orthodox would do well to "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest." His remarks throughout the volume about the orthodox science of the day (for there is now an orthodoxy in this also!) are equally admirable. The following is a specimen. "But a blind belief in the superficial senses is as unsafe a guide to truth as a blind belief in a book. Science is as mole-eyed as theology, and yet to one or the other the whole civilized world trusts for enlightenment. No wonder that these two sets of blind guides, leading their blind followers, should stumble against each other in the dark and right furiously."

The new vital impulses descending on man are then dealt with. They are supposed to emanate from those inhabiting the Unseen Universe. Whatever opinions may be held on this subject — and opinion is today in a state of flux — the following may certainly be called an ingenious explanation. "Where there is scepticism in the human pneuma or inmost thought of the man, antipathetic atomic combinations are formed in his two external dielectrics,

and interpose a hostile atomic element which encompasses the medium, and forms a barrier that the psychic force of the spiritual agent cannot penetrate. It is for this reason that physical manifestations are successful just in proportion as there is a strong faith-sentiment in the spectators, whose external dielectrics are then co-operating with the spiritual agent."

The remarks on the discoveries claimed by Mr. Keely too are so interesting as to deserve reproduction. "Mr, Keely has discovered that such a change can be effected by vibration, in the atoms of which the atmosphere is composed, that what he terms 'atmospheric disintegration' can be produced, which has the effect of liberating a subtle essence, the nature of which has still to be determined, and which he believes to be 'inter-atomic.' The energy it possesses is so great that it exercises a pressure of 25,000 lbs. to the square inch, and, in the engine which he has just constructed for traction purposes, develops a force of 250 horsepower. All this is achieved without the introduction of any extraneous motive power, the whole apparatus being so constructed that the liberation of this tremendous agency from its atmospheric prison-house can be effected by the vibrations produced by a tuning-fork. Those who are sufficiently unprejudiced to connect the bearings of this discover, of what must be dynaspheric force, with phenomena which have hitherto been regarded as supernatural by the ignorant, will perceive how rapidly we are bridging over the chasm which has always divided the seen from the unseen, and obliterating the distinction between what has erroneously been called matter, and what has no less erroneously been called spirit." Further on in the book it is significantly pointed out that this dynaspheric force with which Mr. Keely can operate on external substance is synonymous with the inter-atomic energy that produces the phenomena of hypnotism, telepathy, mediumship, and all such abnormal

manifestations.

While differing in some points to a marked degree from the recognized theosophic teachings, the author nevertheless demonstrates that the source from which he has drawn his inspiration is conscious of many of the occult facts, — for instance, the androgynous or bisexual nature of primeval man; the highly attenuated character of matter which composed his frame, compared with the fleshly covering we now wear; the esoteric meaning hidden from the vulgar gaze in the Bible as well as in the Scriptures of all religions, and the consequent necessity of initiation in the mysteries; the mistaken notion of the popular mind as to the fundamental difference between spirit and matter: but it is needless to enumerate them further.

We now come to the great subject of which the whole book is a gospel, — the sympneumatic impulse, the descent of the Divine Feminine. Taken in the widest sense, the author's inspiration appeals to our highest reason, and we cannot but give approval to the general proposition that the far-off regeneration of the race will lie (amongst other things) in the reversion to the bisexual type of our prehistoric spiritual ancestors, — in other words, in the absolute quenching of the principle of lust, the double-faced goddess today worshiped, though in varying degrees, by all Humanity — by the votaries alike of marriage and of free-love. This will be an unpalatable way of stating the truth to many, for it is a view from a light which naturally seems to dwarf the difference between the virtuous world and those whom the virtuous world avoids touching with the hem of its garment.

But while assenting to the general proposition, there are details in the working out of the idea which do not appeal to our sense of truth. Writing in chapter 20 of one who is pursuing the upward path, he says, "She will know — not because it is to be found in

the Bible — not because her reason suggests its truth, but because her physical organism forces the fact upon her, that she is the feminine half of a two-fold being, and that her completion consists in union with her masculine complement." And again in chapter 21, interpreting extracts from the Kabbalah, he refers to the sympneumatic descent, "for it will result in the union on earth of the halves hitherto divided, whereby man will regain his lost condition." This is no new idea either. Without going back to Plato (and we should probably err in ascribing to his deeply-veiled utterance the meaning that the words might naturally seem to imply), we find it unmistakably expressed in "Jocelyn," that touching story of Lamartine's, in the stanza which begins —

"Mon coeur me l'avait dit: toute ame est soeur d'uneame;
Dieu les crea par couples et les fit homme ou femme;
Le monde peut en vain un temps les separer,
Leur destin tot ou tard est de se rencontrer."

The completion of the at-present incomplete nature of man or woman by an ideal union must to many be a very fascinating thought, but instead of its being as it here purports to be, the explanation of the mystery of the differentiation of sex, is it not rather a perversion of the truth, the truth being that both man and woman have within each one the potency of both sexes, and in this consists their true equality, — in other words, that the Soul is bisexual, and is therefore capable of assuming and wearing either the male or the female form, and that its true apotheosis consists in its assertion of and its reversion to its real nature and Divine source.

Much that is written in this section of the book on the subject of woman's mission is admirable. Though the author is severe on the colleges for the higher education of women, which, he says, are "attractive to a certain class of the sex, but which are

nurseries of hybrids which turn out an inferior species of man-woman," yet, as he truly points out, the degree in which they (women) compete, with more or less success, with men in the intellectual and executive battles of life is the degree to which they stunt and destroy their own higher faculties.

Of the truth of his inspiration generally, what shall we say? Each man must judge according to his own light which opinion and belief are our guides, and before we have risen to the heights necessary for directly cognising these facts of the Unseen Universe. While leaving those who are able to do so to deal critically with the detailed statements, and to discriminate between the interpretations of symbols and passages, many of which appear to be far-fetched, it seems to us generally that, while the learned and able author has received shreds and fragments of transcendental truth from the Astral World, the knowledge of the primary fact is wanting which would have been capable of discriminating between the teachings and of welding them all into one homogeneous whole, — we mean the doctrine of re-incarnation and the law of Karma, facts which are recognised as the basis of all the great Oriental religions, and which it is the shame and loss alike of Christendom and of Islam to have generally ignored, though traces of the truth are still to be found in the scriptures of the former, and though it is secretly acknowledged by the mystical followers of the latter.

The author also suggests that the attainment of a perfect human state by man while still he bears the body is a realizable possibility. A whole chapter is devoted to the subject of the formation of households which are gradually to realize this perfect state. But let the author speak for himself, though of course no short extract in this or in any other case can do full justice to the gradually elaborated idea of the author in his own work. "For as he labours thus side by side with his fellow-men,

tilling, perhaps, the land, and ploughing deep furrows into his own soul, which are destined in good time to bring forth an abundant crop, he perceives that he is indeed laying the foundations of a reconstructed society; and a vista opens out to his charmed gaze of co-operative industries, harmonious communities, and a political system in which liberty, equality, and fraternity shall develop under the aegis of absolute authority, and in association with a hierarchy composed of such different degrees of rank as correspond to their fitness to enjoy it."

It must necessarily be with regret that criticism is allowed finally to replace approval of a book which contains so much that is excellent, and the lessons in which are so sadly needed by this self-satisfied and self-vaunting age of ignorance and error. But the unwarranted optimism implied in the above calls for comment; and, besides, there is an apparently wilful misunderstanding throughout the volume of some of the deepest and most occult truths, which recalls a similar though much less flagrant example of misunderstanding, viz: the exaltation of woman as the crown of the universe by the late Mrs. A. Kingsford in her and Mr. Maitland's work, *The Perfect Way, or the Finding of Christ*. If it is fair thus to cite a single blemish in a book of such exalted inspiration and remarkable value as the one just named, it may still stand as an example of the error which all psychics are specially liable to, who trust to "spirit-guides" apart from the true intuition of the well balanced nature, as well as from the ancient traditions of revealed authority.

(Concluded in March.)

The Path

REFLECTIONS

When I am annoyed by an ungovernable animal, I am reminded that the brutes would not oppose man if man understood and entered into his true relations with all things. The brutes are unconsciously aware of the general human opposition, which they see focalized in each human being. When I am in harmony with all things, men *cannot* and brutes *will not* oppose me. In underrating instinct, the brute is more true than is the man to the unwritten Law.

The "idle word" condemned by Jesus is inactivity of Being. It is the cessation of the homogeneous resonance, the Logos or Word. The Word in its highest activity is pure spirit; in stagnation it is hell. To each man it is given in trust for all men; if he misinterprets it he is tortured. If he sequesters it, he is condemned to eternal death that it may be free; for it is eternally free. Through misuse, he may learn its use. If he denies it, he is lost; for by it alone he lives.

It is better for a man to sin deliberately against the Law than to chafe under the mandates of conscience. The first is a renegade who chooses another King; the second is coward and slave who rebels but dares not disobey. The energy of direct sin may, by reaction, compel return, but the lethargy of fear bears no fruit.

If you wish to receive, *give*. If you wish to ascend, *descend*. If you wish to live, *die*. If you wish to understand these words, read them by the lamp of the spirit, and reject that of the understanding.

Apparent evil is a necessary result of manifestation or duality. The good alone is *in Time* inactive. Evil is the balance of good: the

Equilibrating power reigns above and is alone eternal.

When the silent Eternal gives birth to the activity of Spirit in Space the worlds are evolved, and, seeking equilibrium, return again to the eternal silence. So with the soul of man.

More saving grace may be found in the society of thieves than in that of fine persons who never reverberate to a true thought. In the first there is rebound; the latter is the negation of life.

Expiation is the kernel of sin. "Evil" containing its own punishment continually defeats itself, and sows the seed of "good" in its own regeneration.

He who would see Perfection must become It. How? By beginning the attempt. Its first step is the full realization of imperfection in himself.

The Path

GET YOUR LUGGAGE READY — *J. Campbell Ver Planck*

One night I seemed to see a great and populous country. It teemed with life and wealth, yet no sound, no motion arose from it. It was a petrified land. Rich harvests turned the earth to gold, but no reapers came forth. Fruits of the purple, the rose, and every splendid hue, weighted the orchard boughs, but not a hand was raised to pluck them. The flowers shone unseen; the dead air could not woo forth their perfume. The waters had no song; the birds, no flight; the clouds, no rain; the sun, no beams in that leaden atmosphere. The march of the seasons was arrested. Never was land more fertile, more beautiful. It needed but the heart and hand of man to continue its prosperity. High mountains, too, were there, where the gods abode, hovering so near to men that I cried aloud, to see these divine opportunities neglected or forgotten.

Pondering upon a sight so mournful, I saw that the inhabitants of this country had all a strange kind of mental atrophy which annulled all efforts, frustrated every activity. Surrounded by everything which could secure usefulness, happiness, and the fullest development of their natures, they did not know how to set about securing these ends. Their minds were under a spell. In an intellectual darkness, they were dimly conscious of their wretched condition, and called for some one to come and remove the torpor of their minds, to tell them how they might enter into this splendid Life and possess it. At times they did what work they must, then sank into quiescence again, while the glory of Life seemed to taunt and mock them. In truth it did not do this. These glorious opportunities were there to urge them on, but could not rouse them.

The anguish of this paralyzed and waiting multitude was so great, that I too began to share their pain and their expectancy as I looked on, and I called aloud anxiously, "Will no one come to help them?"

Some unseen person promptly answered me, "Helpers have already set out for this country, which is called 'The Future.'" "Will they soon arrive?" I asked. My informant replied, "Look, and judge for yourself."

At this I felt impelled to turn around, and saw great masses of clouds breaking open before me, making a rift through which I could look. The view was so misty that I understood, in some mystic way, that I was about to see into the Past. What I perceived was a long railway train starting on a journey to some very distant point. There was great confusion about it. Some of the travellers were leaning out of the slowly moving train, gesticulating towards huge piles of luggage left behind. Others were endeavoring to turn the air brakes. Some had reached the engineer, and were arguing briskly, urging him to stop the train or to go back. Many others slept, and by their feverish rest I could see that their thoughts were on the baggage vans. Meanwhile, back in the station, were travellers absorbed in checking and marking their luggage, or wandering about half dazed, trying to find their personal effects, and to keep them distinct from the rest. People were arriving, too, in a constant stream, belated by their overladen coaches, and, in far homes, I saw others bustling hither and thither, packing and repacking. All of these were so absorbed that they did not know the hour was past, or that the train had set out for the land where they were all bound to go.

"Are these the helpers?" I asked. My unseen friend said that they were.

"But why do they not make haste when they are so sorely

needed?"

"You see they are willing enough, but their luggage detains them."

"Could they not do with less, and arrange it more rapidly! or even discard much of it, which seems to consist of mere personal luxuries fostered by habit?"

"They could indeed, but this they do not understand."

"And, will no one reach that unfortunate country?" I exclaimed.

"Yes; the train will arrive there, but it will be detained. And many of the people in it are so harassed by their thoughts of their lost or strayed luggage, or so preoccupied in keeping it together, that they will not be able to set to work promptly on their arrival. Thus they will not resist the peculiar lethargy which prevails in that land, and they will swell the numbers of the unfortunates, who, like them, originally started out hoping to reach a happy Future."

"Are there, then, no persons of clear and unencumbered minds," I asked, "who can be of use to the rest?"

"Indeed there are, but they are comparatively few, and are swallowed up in that great crowd. There in the train you may see an occasional traveller who is tranquil, whose thought is fixed upon his errand. There are such also in the city, and they are putting forth all their strength. Who shall say whether they can do much? What is needed is that the great majority of men should try with one accord to think of The Future, to prepare to enlighten and free it. They cannot attain the great prizes here and now, but they can do something; they can prepare for it."

This person spoke so quietly that his even tones annoyed me.

"And you," said I, "you appear to take all this suffering and possible disaster very coolly. To think that a land so fertile, one

with such glorious, and even divine possibilities through its Humanity, should lie extinguished in darkness because of the delays of these travellers! It is enough to break any heart."

"I am not 'cool,' as you say, but I am calm. I am obliged to be, for I have seen this sight for many an age; I shall see it for many more. In all time the sad lesson repeats itself, and Time is one. What you have seen is what takes place age after age. The waiting races are always delayed by the impediments of those who start out to reinforce and to help them."

"And what luggage is this that they cherish so much as to let it stand between them and their highest impulses, their noblest endeavor? Why do they not cast it aside?"

"This luggage is needed by every traveller if he would not arrive in that distant country utterly helpless, to be himself a burden to the community. Know the truth, my friend. This luggage which every man and woman carries is *the mind*. They cannot cast it away. What they need to do is to set it in order; to cast all useless thoughts and energies, all personal mental habits aside; to concentrate and strengthen it; above all, to hold it in readiness to start on the journey to the Future, so that when they arrive they may at once begin, without loss of time, to redeem and lift that Age. Then the journey will be more swiftly made; then there will be no such long waits between stations, no obstructing of trains. I and my companions are set apart to endeavor to teach men this; we learned it through our own experience many cycles ago. And in your age as in ours, men are slow to comprehend; slower even, for in yours the darkness has settled down like a pall. Yet Hope is the very nature of Life itself, and hence, we hope." He said no more to me then, and the vision came to an end. I saw how true was all that I had heard, and each day bears fresh witness to its truth.

The mind of man is a tremendous Force, capable of engendering many energies, of various grades, correlating and interacting. The highest of these act on every plane; the lower upon lower planes only, where they tend to beget obstructive consequences by, so to say, intensifying or thickening — condensing too — the one substance of which all things are made, into gross and material strata, which greatly impede the entrance of higher force to our planet and isolate it and us by degrees.

What then determines the quality of a mental energy, so that it becomes of a "high" or "low" order? Its relation to the personal self determines it. The free will of man has its point of departure in the mind. He can generate thoughts which) by concentration upon or relation to the self, tend to contract his sphere (in more senses than one), and to preserve his Being intact in the life of separateness Or he can evolve thoughts which relate to the whole world; which flow out towards the Unity, and, by their action and interaction upon the highest forces, a part of which they are, tend to dissolve his personal life as such, to unite all his principles to their cosmic sources, and reveal the beauty, power, and wisdom of Being to his enraptured soul.

Very many of us can find but little work to do for Humanity, though work is here, pressing enough, tangible enough. But circumstances of iron control many, and these are Karma. What each one can do, however, is to purify the mind, and to develop in it such affinities, such tendencies and habits, as may be drawn up into the higher nature. These, then, will guide our soul's course after death, leading the Ego to reincarnate there where it can at once begin the work for Humanity. The predominating love spun by our nature is like the stray end of the spider's web, cast loose upon the air. It reaches across to some branch to which it instantly adheres, and upon it the Ego, the mysterious weaver of Life's web, crosses the gulf we call Death, and finds each life in

strict continuity with the preceding one.

These few thoughts cannot be better illustrated, or more fitly closed, than by an extract from a private letter written by H. P. Blavatsky:

"What is this about the soldier not being free? Of course no soldier can be free to move about his physical body wherever he likes. But what has the esoteric teaching to do with the *outward man*? A soldier may be stuck to his sentry-box like a barnacle to its ship, and the soldier's Ego be free to go where it likes, and think what it likes best. * * No man is required to carry a burden heavier than he can bear, nor do more than it is possible for him to do. * * If one cannot, owing to circumstances or his position in life, become a full adept in this existence, let him prepare his mental luggage for the next, so as to be ready at the first call, when he is once more reborn. What one has to do before he pledges himself irretrievably, is to probe one's nature to the bottom, for self discipline is based on self knowledge. It is said somewhere that self-discipline often leads one to a state of self-confidence which becomes vanity and pride in the long run. I say, fool is the man who says so. This may happen only when our motives are of a worldly character, or selfish. Otherwise, self-confidence is the first step to that kind of WILL which will make a mountain move.

'To thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.'

"The question is whether Polonius meant this for worldly wisdom, or for occult knowledge; and, by 'own self,' the *false* Ego (the terrestrial personality), or that spark in us which is but the reflection of the One Universal Ego."

It appears, then, that our best course of action is to get our mental luggage ready, and especially to free it from the thought of self, or the "terrestrial personality" living in a dream of separation.

The Path

MEDITATION AND ACTION: II — *Pilgrim*

(Concluded from February)

It is the Utopia of every dreaming Socialist to found a Kingdom of Heaven upon earth, though his means of attaining it may be somewhat different from the peaceful formation of groups of individuals bent on realizing a higher life; but surely more appreciation of existing facts and possibilities is shown even by the religionists who declare that their kingdom is not of this world!

That our race may and will evolve the perfect state is an occult fact, but that evolution will take countless aeons of time, during which the race will inhabit other and more ethereal planets than the present material world, to correspond with the more ethereal bodies which the race will gradually assume, and it will only be after countless weedings-out, during which the great majority will be left behind to carry on such lives as they are fitted for, that the remnant of elect souls will realize the perfect state of terrestrial being (between which and the perfect state of transcorporeal being there will then be but the thinnest veil), the general conditions of which state render it perfectly impossible for us to make any comparison with the present, for, amongst other changes, the sexual passion will then be non-existent, for the Humanity of the sixth and great seventh round will have reverted to the androgynous type of their far-off ancestors of the first round, which today is buried in the depths of prehistoric time, while we of the fourth round, who are wallowing in the very nadir of materiality, are naturally removed by the whole diameter of the circle alike from the first and the seventh.

But we now approach the kernel of the whole question. What is

bred in the bone comes out in the flesh. Like the sportsman who by the most curious perversion of logic (perhaps not altogether to be wondered at in a bucolic intellect), and glorying in his very shame, defends the brutality of slaughter, or the cruelty of hunting an animal to death, on the ground, forsooth, that the courage of the human animal is thereby fed and increased (as if true courage could not be kept up without brutality!), so the man who has been brought up to Western ways of thinking not only fails to realize the very first axiom of true thought, but, with the perverted idea of his race, glories in *his* very shame, for he exalts action above meditation. This is the idea strongly dwelt on in many passages of the book before us. This is the rift in the lute that spoils all the music.

The Western nations having reached what heights they have through action chiefly, it is no great wonder that their representative sons should bow down before the goddess who has ennobled them, but that one who, like the author of *Scientific Religion*, has received so much true inspiration, should not in this also have been rightly guided, is a problem for psychologists to explain.

The right understanding of meditation and action is the great subject with which the *Bhagavad-Gita* — that holy book — begins and ends. Two quotations on the subject of action will demonstrate its scope and object. The first is from chapter VI.

"By works the votary doth rise to Saint.
And Saintship is the ceasing from all works."

The second is from chapter XVIII.

"Better thine own work is, though done with fault,
Than doing others' work, ev'n excellently.
He shall not fall in sin who fronts the task

Set him by Nature's hand! Let no man leave
His natural duty, Prince! though it bear blame!
For every work hath blame, as every flame
Is wrapped in smoke! Only that man attains
Perfect surcease of work whose work was wrought
With mind unfettered, soul wholly subdued,
Desires forever dead, results renounced."

No ordinary man can escape from action, for, while desire of action remains, action is being done, — if not on the material, still on the mental plane. And again it is written in chapter III, verse 4, "A man does not attain to freedom from action by not engaging in action merely, nor is the perfect state gained by simple abandonment of action."

But it is one thing to perform all actions that duty enjoins, looking forward to the time when all earthly actions will have been performed, and when duty will no longer call; it is another and very different thing to glory in the action, to blindly imagine that any action we can possibly perform is the "worthy and laudable service" which is required of us.

The sympathetic relief of physical suffering is well; the teaching by which man's mental horizon is widened and man's moral nature is elevated is better. They both form worthy preludes to the higher goal. But best of all is to *become* part of the spiritual pabulum by which Humanity lives, and the very first step on the path that leads to this stupendous result is meditation; in other words, the detachment from all the ephemeral interests of life, — which detachment displays itself by perfect equanimity in good and evil fortune, the centering of all thought on the Supreme, until thought itself drops off and the soul is face to face with Deity.

It will be apparent in the above that the "service of man" is the

key note throughout, but the "service of man" and what is more or less accurately described as the "Worship of God" must go hand in hand, until they finally become one and identical. It is this final unity which we desire to bring into prominence. Service on the physical plane is good; service on the mental or psychic plane is better; the altruistic effort involved in both requires the impulse of the higher worship as a goal. But with the culmination of worship comes the culmination of service, for they are merged in one. When the self as we understand it is annihilated, when the soul has been able to endure the transcendent vision of Itself as Deity, when difference no longer exists and the one is merged in the All, the store-house of spiritual energy is thereby replenished, and all Humanity receives an impulse that raises them a step nearer the Divine Union also, — nay further, the Divine impulse after passing through man descends to vivify the lower creation. The whole Universe is thrilled by it!

All are capable of the lower service; many are capable of the higher; few are yet fit for the highest. Each one is bound to serve according to his powers, and, following this law, the service which seems worthiest for the writer, who can certainly lay claim to nothing beyond the single-mindedness of an ardent and aspiring but deeply passion-stained man, is to convince if possible an unbelieving world of the existence of that at once highest service and highest worship, which the religious have materialized and degraded, and which the agnostics ignore.

When it is realized that, for the attainment of true meditation, the whole nature requires to be transformed, the Will begins to make the attempt. Though as Matthew Arnold pithily puts it,

"Tasks in hours of insight will'd
Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled,"

it yet seems too much of a miracle to permanently change the

nature, to induce altruism in the selfish man, or purity in the lustful, let alone humility in the proud, for this last (pride) being an attribute of spirit is necessarily far deeper seated than the surface blemishes of the physical nature. The Poet truly wrote, "Pride is the last infirmity of noble minds"; and, indeed, it can be, and often is, used as a means of ennobling the nature, and purging it of the grosser taints of the body.

This permanent change of nature will not likely be effected in an ordinary man in one lifetime, — rather will it require the concentrated energy of many life times on the "Great Quest," but the first step toward it must be the recognition of the truth, the realization of the supreme desirability of the state to which true meditation leads, and the knowledge that action impelled by desire in one life can only eventuate in similar action in the next, and that the only wise action to perform is that which looks for no reward, that which is dissociated from all idea of self, — in fact, such action as is preached from beginning to end of the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

We often hear it stated that a man is better than his creed, and it is a blessed thing for Humanity that the moral nature is sometimes able to withstand the debasing effect of the dire creeds of the churches, but the aimlessness of even the best moral nature which acts without knowledge must be replaced by the distinct realization of the goal to be aimed at. "The first good level is Right Doctrine;" and till the perverted notion of the worthiness in itself of any earthly act disappears from the mind, and some faint conception of the sublime state we aim at takes its place, no further advance seems possible.

He must indeed be a devotee of a very blind optimism who can contemplate the hideous results of action in this vaunted civilization, and can still expect that, without a cataclysm in

which the whole vile thing shall be swept away, any gradual evolution can bring a reformed state. For he sees around him a fair country blackened and marred by belching furnace-fires and the never-ending grind of machinery, the still more awful tumult of the fevered rush of the competing multitudes, and, worse than all, the continually increasing degradation of the lives of the toilers, with every sign that all these evils are steadily on the increase.

The story of Martha and Mary is a standing protest against our deification of action. "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful!"; and many other similar sayings of the great Teacher might be quoted, but the churches called after his name, and whose representatives have become as a rule "mere echoes of the world's self-seeking," have been reduced to accept the world's apologetic theory that the teachings of Christ are incapable of practical application, — indeed, as the author of *Scientific Religion* points out, the present state of things in Europe has absolutely made them so.

But though the literal application of Christ's teaching has become an impossibility in the West, there are still spots on the earth's surface where the fever of the modern life has not yet reached, where the lust of wealth and luxury — the Gods or Demons whom the West worships — has no power to quicken the pulses in many a quiet household, whose inmates have at least inherited from their nobler ancestors a juster appreciation than is met with in the West, of the ephemeral character of life, and a worshiping reverence for those who are capable of true meditation.

If the so-called Christian Churches, instead of steeping their hands in the blood of tortured victims and rivaling Princes in the lust of conquest, had taught the Brotherhood of man that Christ believed in, it would not today have become in practice an unthinkable

proposition, and we should not now be looking forward to the possibility of a social catastrophe which is too awful to contemplate. But surely the outcome of our present civilization, the steadily increasing accentuation of both poverty and wealth — which indeed constitutes the source of danger —, makes it apparent that the cup of iniquity is rapidly filling to the brim!

Nay, rather let us avoid adding more than is absolutely enjoined by duty to this fevered rush of existence. Let us remember always that in our true self we are the spectator only and that all action is but the result of the "Qualities"; so let us gradually transcend the "Qualities." And realizing that the Divine inner Self — the goal of our great endeavor — ever abides in the true heaven, "let us in heart and mind thither ascend, and with him continually dwell."

"Only by Soul itself

"Is soul perceived — when the Soul wills it so!
There shines no light save its own light to show
Itself unto itself!"

"None compasseth

Its joy who is not wholly ceased from sin,
Who dwells not self-controlled, self-centred — calm
Lord of himself! It is not gotten else!
Brahm hath it not to give!"

* * * * *

"Meditate!

There shines no light, save the Soul's light, to show!
Save the Soul's light!" (1)

FOOTNOTE:

1. From the Second Valli of the Katha Upanishad, translated by Edwin Arnold under the title of "The Secret of Death." ([return to](#)

text)

The Path

CULLED FROM ARYAN SCIENCE

RAIN CLOUDS.

In the Vishnu Purana it is said:

"During eight months of the year the sun attracts the waters and then pours them upon the earth as rain;" and,

"The water which the clouds shed upon the earth is the ambrosia of the living beings, for it gives fertility to the plants which are the support of their existence. By this all vegetables grow and are matured and become the means of maintaining life."

JUPITER'S SATELLITES.

In the Vishnu Purana Jupiter is named Brihaspati, and is described as having a golden car drawn by eight pale colored horses. This refers to his satellites.

ORIGIN OF PLANET MERCURY.

The Puranashave a legend that the moon was originally in Jupiter's house but was seduced into living with Tara (the present path of the moon), the result of which was the birth of Mercury, meaning that Mercury was withdrawn from its original orbit into its present one nearer the sun.

THE END OF THE WORLD.

This event is brought about, the Puranas state, by the rays of the sun dilating into seven suns which then burn up the world.

THE EARTH'S SPHERICITY.

The earth, situated in the middle of the heavens and composed of

the five elements, is spherical in shape. *Aryabhattiyam*.

A hundredth part of the circumference of a circle appears to be a straight line. Our earth is a big sphere, and the portion visible to man being exceedingly small, the earth appears to be flat.

Some fancy that those on the other side of the earth have their heads hanging down. Just as we live here, so do the rest, and feel in no way uneasy.

Those at the north have for their zenith the north, and those at the south, the south, pole; the equator forms the horizon for both, and both find the heavens move from left to right and right to left, respectively. *Goladhyaya*.

THE ATMOSPHERE.

The atmosphere surrounds the earth to the height of 60 miles, and clouds, lightning and the like are all phenomena connected with it. *Ibid*.

POLAR DAYS AND NIGHTS.

For the period when the sun is north it is visible for six months at the north pole and invisible at the south, and *vice versa*. *Ibid*.

PLANETARY LIGHT.

The earth, the planets and the comets all receive their light from the sun, that half towards the sun being always bright, the color varying with the peculiarity of the substance of each.

Laghvaryabhattiyam.

CURRENTS IN EARTH AND ITS OCEANS: AND BLOOD CIRCULATION.

Just in the same way as there are arteries for the circulation of blood in the human body, the earth has undercurrents lying one

over the other. *Varahasamhita*. [We find now that the gulf-stream is a well defined current in a great body of water, and in the Mediterranean two currents run out and in over one another. On land are many well defined rivers running all their course underground.]

The Path

THE SEVEN DWIPAS: I – *Charles Johnston*

FROM THE INDIAN PURANAS.

I.

It is the opinion of many at the present day that the almost grotesque myths, and fantastic geographical and astronomical descriptions contained in the religious writings of many ancient faiths, are not, as they have hitherto been too often considered, mere vagaries and extravagances of the youthful imagination of the early races; but are really deliberately contrived and constructed allegories, by which ancient sages sought to veil, and effectually succeeded in veiling, the sacred truths which could only be declared in the secret recesses of the temples.

If this be so, then valuable truths and revelations of ancient history of great and absorbing interest may be laid bare, if we succeed in removing the veil from these venerable allegories. To understand them completely, demands doubtless a knowledge not at the command of ordinary students; but nevertheless, in studying these myths and making ourselves familiar with them, we find a link which binds us by sympathy to a remote past, and to a phase of the human mind which must have its representative in us, ready to vibrate responsive to these old-world stories.

They bring us back to an epoch which knew not the iron which has since entered so deeply into our souls; when man perhaps saw deeper into the mystery of things; and the universe reflected itself more clearly in his yet undarkened soul.

These old myths, if they contain transcendental truths known to us, and which we can recognize, will open up to us an almost limitless vista in the souls of the ancient sages who inwove their

theories therein, and will give us one more proof of the brotherhood of man, wherever born, and in whatever age.

With these reasons in view, we shall try to make our readers familiar by degrees with the great allegories of India, as they appear in the Brahmanas, the Puranas, and the great epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana.

In a recent number, we told the tale of the Rajput supremacy, and of the mighty contest between the Brahman and the Kshatriya, and the rivalry of Vashishta and Visvamitra; and at present we shall try to give the history of the seven dwipas, the great divisions of the world in the Puranic cosmogony.

We shall first try merely to reflect faithfully into our pages the picture presented by the Puranas, and afterwards summarise any ideas as to the meaning of the Puranic stories which occur to us.

But there is little doubt that the full import of these stories will not be brought to the light, until they have lain in the minds of mystics for years; until the time when the facts of nature to which they refer reflect themselves again in the minds of men.

The seven dwipas, or divisions of the earth, are said in the Vishnu Purana to have been formed as follows:

Priyavrata distributed the seven dwipas, into which the earth had been divided (by Narayana in the form of Brahma) amongst his seven sons; who are the regents of the seven dwipas. Before this, Priyavrata, being dissatisfied that only half the earth was illumined at once, by the sun, followed the sun seven times round the earth in his own flaming car of equal velocity, like another celestial orb, resolved to turn night into day; the ruts made by his chariot-wheels were the seven oceans: in this way the seven dwipas, or continents were made.

These seven continents are called Jambu dwipa, Plaksha dwipa, Shalmali dwipa, Kusha dwipa, Krauncha dwipa, Shaka dwipa, and Pushkara dwipa.

These continents, which appear to have lain in concentric circles, with Jambu dwipa in the centre, were separated by annular oceans, said to have been formed of salt water, sugar-cane juice, clarified butter, curds, milk, and fresh water, respectively.

Jambu dwipa lay in the centre of all these continents. It fell to the lot of Agnidhara, son of Priyavrata, who again divided it among his nine sons.

In the centre of Jambu dwipa is the golden mountain Meru, 84,000 yojanas high, and crowned by the great city of Brahma.

Then follows a minute description of Jambu dwipa.

Before referring to it, however, let us try to make clear our conception of the Puranic idea so far.

Let thirteen concentric circles be drawn: the inner is Jambu dwipa; the annular space next to it is the salt ocean; the next annular space is Plaksha dwipa; and so on. Outside, we have the sea of fresh water which encircles the whole system.

The subdivision of Jambu dwipa, which is, as we have seen, a circular island, is as follows:

Mount Meru is in the centre.

South of Mount Meru are three mountain ranges; and north of it are three mountain ranges; dividing it into seven strips. These strips are the Varshas, or subdivisions, of Jambu dwipa.

The centre strip is divided further into three parts, a western, central, and eastern division; making in all nine Varshas. Meru is in the centre of this central division of the central strip. This

central Varsha is called Havrita. It is divided from Harivarsha, to the south, by the Nishada range; and from Ramyaka to the north by the Nila range. To the west of Havrita, lies the Varsha of Ketumala; while to the east lies Bhadrasva.

Harivarsha is, we have seen, the Varsha directly to the south of Havrita. South of it lies Kimpurusha, separated from Harivarsha by the Hemaketu range. South of Kimpurusha and separated from it by the Himadri or Himalaya range, lies Bharata Varsha.

These three, Harivarsha, Kimpurusha, and Bharata Varsha, are all to the south of the three central Varshas.

To the north of the three central Varshas lie three other Varshas: Ramyaka, Hiranmaya, and Uttara Kuru. Ramyaka is, as we have seen, separated from the zone containing the three central Varshas by the Nila range.

North of Ramyaka, and separated from it by the Shveta range, lies Hiranmaya; while north of this Varsha, and separated from it by the Shringin range, lies Uttara Kuru.

This will make sufficiently clear the geography of Jambu dwipa; each division of which was under the rule of one of the nine sons of Agnidhara, the son of Priyavrata.

Bharata Varsha seems to be identical with what we know as India, bounded on the north, as it is by the Himadri, or Himalaya, and on the south reaching to the extremity of Jambu Dwipa, which is surrounded by the ocean of salt water.

A description of the other eight Varshas follows:

In these, Kimpurusha and the rest, it is said that the inhabitants enjoy a natural perfection attended with complete happiness gained without toil. There is there no change, nor age, nor death, nor fear; no distinction of virtue and vice, and no difference of

best, medial, and worst; nor any change resulting from the four ages (yugas).

Again it is said: In those eight Varshas, there is neither sorrow nor weariness nor anxiety, nor hunger nor fear. The people live in perfect health free from every suffering, for ten or twelve thousand years.

Indra does not rain on these Varshas, for they have many springs. There is no division of the time into the Krita, Treta, and other Yugas.

In the Aitareya Brahmana it is said of the Uttara Kurus that they are consecrated to glorious dominion; and the following story is told:

Satyaharya declared to Atvarati a great inauguration similar to Indra's; and in consequence Atvarati, though not a king, by his knowledge went round the earth on every side to its ends, reducing it to subjection; Satyaharya then said to him "thou hast subdued the earth in all directions to its limits; exalt me now to greatness."

Atvarati replied, "When I conquer the Uttara Kurus, oh Brahman, thou shalt be king of the earth, and I will be only thy general."

Satyaharya replied, "That is the realm of the gods; no mortal man may make the conquest of it."

The Uttara Kurus are mentioned also in the Ramayana, as "the abodes of those who have performed works of merit," and again "you must not go to the north of the Kurus: other beings also may not proceed further."

In the Mahabharata, Arjuna is thus addressed: "Thou canst not, son of Pritha, subdue this city. He who shall enter this city must be more than man. Here are the Uttara Kurus, whom no one

attempts to assail. And even if thou shouldst enter, thou couldst behold nothing. For no one can perceive anything here with human senses."

And again, in another place, it is said by Kushika, on seeing a magic palace: "I have attained, even in my embodied condition to the heavenly state; or to the holy northern Kurus, or to Amaravati, the everlasting city of Indra."

We shall try to point out further what seems to us to be the great value of these texts, when trying to unravel a little of the Puranic mystery.

To make quite certain our identification of the Bharata Varsha of Jambu Dwipa in this cosmogony with India, we shall quote the following text from the Vishna Purana:

The country to the north of the ocean, and to the south of the Himadri, the snowy mountains, is Bharata Varsha, where the descendants of Bharata dwell.

As all our readers know, it was between two divisions of the descendants of Bharata that the Mahabharata war was fought.

The following qualities of Bharata Varsha are noticed:

In Bharata Varsha, and no where else, do the four Yugas, Krita, Treta, Dvapara, and Kali exist. Here devotees perform austerities, and priests sacrifice. In this respect Bharata is the most excellent division of Jambu Dwipa: for this is the land of works, while the others are places of enjoyment.

In the Bhagavat Purana it is said: Of the Varshas, Bharata alone is the land of works; the other eight Varshas are places where the celestials enjoy the remaining rewards of their works.

This is almost all the information we can collect of the Puranic

idea of the divisions of Jambu Dwipa. We shall afterwards examine some of these texts, with their bearings; first glancing at the accounts of the other dwipas.

(Concluded in May.)

The Path

THE FOURTH DIMENSION: I – *Frank S. Collins*

The subject of four dimensional space hardly seems, at first glance, to have much connection with theosophical doctrines; except possibly that most persons would regard both as being vaguely mysterious, and many persons would consider both as arrant nonsense; and I am afraid that if I should claim that there was quite a definite relation between the study of the fourth dimension, and the fundamental principle of the T. S., universal brotherhood, even the members themselves might smile incredulously; but I hope I shall be able to show that such a relation is not preposterous, but quite natural.

We all know that from the very first records that we have of philosophy, especially of esoteric philosophy, there has been a peculiar and mystical virtue assigned to numbers. "All systems of religious mysticism are based on numerals." *Isis Unveiled* II, 407. Pythagoras said that the essence of things consisted in Number, and that the Cosmos was generated out of numbers.

And this mystical virtue has also been attributed, to various geometrical figures. The line, the circle, the triangle, the square, each has been used as a symbol of some great truth; as well as, on a lower plane, a potent instrument in magical ceremonies. Now geometry is the study of dimensions, surfaces and solids; and the study of four dimensional space, if such a thing there be, is merely a higher branch of geometry; and we may perhaps find in its teachings of an order beyond what we can get from a mathematics dealing with space of fewer dimensions.

Of course you will not expect that in the short time I shall use this evening, I can give you much idea of higher space and the laws which work in it; or perhaps a better expression would be, the

forms under which, in higher space, are manifested those universal laws with whose working in our ordinary space we are familiar. To do this would be a long and not very easy task; I can only hope to show that there is something to study and to learn, something that will repay the study. And in what I shall say, I am almost entirely indebted to Mr. C. H. Hinton, whose books "Scientific Romances" and "A New Era of Thought" are most fascinating and instructive studies for any one who cares to look within the surface of things.

To begin at the beginning: — a point, mathematically speaking, has location, but no dimensions. When this point is moved in any direction, we have a line, extending from the point of starting to the point of stopping; and we may call this line space of one dimension, that of length. Suppose this whole line to be moved in a direction at right angles to itself, and we have a surface, a square; space of two dimensions, viz: — length and breadth. Let this square move at right angles to itself, that is, at right angles both to the original course of the point to form the line, and to the course of the line in forming the square; we have now a solid body, *i.e.*, space of three dimensions, length, breadth and thickness. Now just as the line moved at right angles to itself and formed the square; just as the square moved at right angles to itself to form the cube; so if the cube can be moved in a direction at right angles to itself, that is, at right angles to each and every line and surface in itself, we shall get — what? We can't say now, but certainly something quite different from a line, a surface, or a solid.

Suppose the length of the line to be two inches; then the area of the square will be $2 \times 2 = 4$ inches, the contents of the cube 4×2 inches = 8 inches. If we represent the first (the line) by the algebraical expression a , the second (the square) will be a^2 , the

third (the cube) will be a^3 ; so that these three terms can be graphically represented to us. But in algebra the expression a^4 , that is a^3 multiplied by a , is perfectly proper; how shall we represent that graphically? We cannot; we have to stop at a^3 .

The length of the line is 2 inches, the area of the square is 4 inches, the contents of the cube is 8 inches; but these inches are quite distinct from each other. No possible number of inches composing the line will make up one of the inches composing the square; no possible number of the inches composing the square can make up one of the inches composing the cube. So no conceivable number of the solid units composing the cube representing a^3 , can make up that which we mean by a^4 ; the two are incommensurable. So as soon as we try to go beyond a^3 , we come up against a wall, metaphorically speaking; and why should we not say that there *is* nothing beyond it?

The only way here is to apply a famous occult motto, what we might almost call a fundamental axiom of occult science; the words from the emerald tablet of Hermes: "As is that which is above, so is that which is below." We cannot directly perceive that which is above, but if we look at that which is below, we may learn from analogy.

Let us suppose beings existing in space of two dimensions; beings with senses and intelligence, like ourselves, but neither they nor the world in which they exist, having any dimensions but length and breadth; no such thing as thickness. Or, as such beings would be to us, and to our modes of thought, merely abstractions, let us suppose them to be exceedingly thin in the third dimension, say of no greater thickness than a single molecule of matter. In a work on astronomy or physics, when we wish to show how gravitation holds bodies on the earth, on whichever side of it they

may be, we represent the latter by a section of it, a circle, along the circumference of which we place representations of the various bodies on it, which are held firmly to it by the force of gravity, drawing them towards the centre. Now to these beings of the plane world, this circle is their earth, not merely a section of it; they are free to move round it; by an effort opposing the force of gravity they can move from it, as we can by an effort and by suitable appliances rise from the surface of our earth, as by a ladder or for an instant by jumping.

Looking at the corner of this room, we find three lines proceeding from it at right angles to each other; two horizontal and one vertical; now from that corner we can proceed to any point of space in the room by moving on those lines, or lines parallel to them. The plane being, supposing the plane he inhabits to be that of this floor, could reach any point in his space by one or both of the two directions, which proceed from the corner on his plane; to rise from that plane into what we call space, would be as inconceivable to him as for us to pass to some point not to be reached by either of our three lines or lines parallel to them.

Cut out of paper an equilateral triangle, each side say two inches long: cut this in two by a line from one angle to the middle of the opposite side: let the two parts lie on the table without changing their relative position from what it was before the original triangle was divided; you have now two triangles of the same dimensions, their angles and areas just the same: but as long as they lie in the same plane you may move them round and round as much as you like, and you can never make them coincide. But if you lift one of them from the surface on which it lies and turn it over, it will then coincide exactly with the other.

Draw a square on a piece of paper; put a coin on the paper inside the square; can you slide that coin on the paper in any way so as

to bring it outside, without touching the square? No; but you can lift it up and set it down outside.

Now in these two apparently, and to us actually simple operations, we have accomplished what to the two-dimensional being is an impossibility, an actual absurdity; equally impossible and absurd as would be to me to turn round my left hand until it fitted my right glove just as my right hand does: or corresponding to the second example of two-dimensional impossibility, the moving of an object in and out of a closed room or box without any opening being made in the walls. To make the two triangles coincide, we lift one out of the plane in which it lies, and turning it over through the third dimension of space, lay it down on the other triangle, and thus accomplish what never could be done as long as we moved it about in the two dimensions. Now just as the triangle exists in space of two dimensions, so my hand exists in space of three dimensions; the two hands agree in every particular, dimensions the same in every respect, every curve and angle the same; but no possible way that I can move them will make them coincide. As the plane being would say as to the triangle problem, it is impossible. But as the two dimensional impossibilities are very simple things to us, so to a being existing in higher space, if such a being exist, our impossibilities must be equally simple matters.

(Concluded in May.)

The Path

THE SEVEN DWIPAS: II – *Charles Johnston*

FROM THE INDIAN PURANAS.

(Concluded.)

Plaksha dwipa, the nearest to Jambu dwipa, is divided into seven provinces. Existence there is always that of the Treta yuga, a perpetual silver age. In the five dwipas, (all except Pushkara dwipa and Jambu dwipa), the people live 5,000 years without sickness. The four castes, with different names, exist on each of them.

In the Bhagavat Parana it is said of the inhabitants of Plaksha dwipa: The four castes, purified from passion and darkness by the touch of the water of the rivers, live a thousand years, and resemble the gods.

It may be noted of this text that the purification of these castes from passion and darkness leaves them only one of the "three qualities," goodness, which is said to be the distinctive mark of the true Brahman; so that the measure of spirituality on this dwipa is much higher than in Jambu dwipa.

An ocean of sugar-cane juice separates Plaksha dwipa from Shalmala dwipa: which is also divided into seven Varshas. It has four castes who worship Vishnu in the form of Vayu, (air.) Here the vicinity of the Gods is very delightful to the soul.

This dwipa is surrounded by an ocean of wine, whose exterior shore is compassed by Kusha dwipa: here the inhabitants are men dwelling with Devas, Gandharvas, and other beings.

In the Mahabharata, it is said: No one dies in Kusha dwipa; the people are fair, and of very delicate forms.

Kusha dwipa is surrounded by a sea of clarified butter, of the same compass as itself: around this sea runs Kramcha dwipa. Vishnu Parana says: In all the pleasant divisions of this dwipa, the people dwell free from fear, in the society of the gods.

A sea of curds encompasses this dwipa, which is of the same circumference as itself. This sea is surrounded by Shaka dwipa, of which the Vishnu Purana says: These are the holy countries whose holy rivers remove all sin and fear. There is among them no defect of virtue, nor any mutual rivalry, nor any transgression of rectitude in the seven Varshas. Here the people are holy, and no one dies, says the Mahabharata. Shaka dwipa is surrounded by an ocean of milk, outside which lies Pushkara dwipa: where men live ten thousand years, free from sorrow and pain. There is no distinction of highest and lowest, of truth and falsehood, — [because all alike are good and true], men are like gods; there are no rules of caste, and happiness dwells with all.

Of the seven dwipas, the Mahabharata says: Each doubly exceeds the former in abstinence, veracity, and self-restraint; in health and length of life.

Prajapati, the lord, governs these dwipas. All these people eat prepared food, which comes to them of itself. To finish its account, the Vishnu Purana says: Pushkara dwipa is surrounded by an ocean of water which envelopes all the seven dwipas.

On the other side of the sea is a golden land of great extent but without inhabitants; beyond that is the Lokalaoka mountain, ten thousand yojanas in height and ten thousand yojanas in breadth.

It is encompassed on all sides with darkness, which is enclosed within the shell of the mundane *egg*.

Thus ends the account of the Seven Dwipas, as told by the Indian Puranas.

The objective point from which this cosmogony starts is Bharata Varsha, or India, bounded southward by the salt ocean, and reaching northward to the Himadri, or Himalaya.

Perhaps the other Varshas, in one of their interpretations, are the lost continents of former races with Meru, the north pole, in their centre.

But it seems to us from what is told of the other Varshas, and, above all, of Uttara Kuru, that these Varshas are not to be found on earth, but represent the various planes rising from the physical to the spiritual, from Bharata Varsha, taken as the type of physical life, or waking consciousness, to the Uttara Kurus, the highest spiritual stage that dwellers on this earth can reach.

We are led to believe that these Varshas which I have described and explained in my last paper are not located in the physical world from what is told of the perfection of their inhabitants; the length of life, which is measured by thousands of years, and, above all, by the specific statement that these Varshas are the abodes of those who are reaping the fruits of their merits, while Bharata is the Varsha where this fruit was earned, the world of works, or physical life.

We observe that these Varshas are nine: though when we mark their position in the circular island of Jambu dwipa according to the directions of the Puranas, we find that while nine Varshas are mentioned they fall into only *seven* strips: and moreover, while a great symmetry reigns among the various dwipas we find it absent in this particular, for five of the other dwipas have only *seven* Varshas.

Perhaps therefore the nine Varshas of Jambu dwipa, or our earth, are only a veil, to conceal the seven, or the real mystic number of the planes.

Perhaps, however, these nine Varshas represent the nine phases of consciousness as explained by Mr. T. Subba Row; this division, which appears in the "Theosophist" for Jan. 1888, being as follows:

Jagrat:

Jagrat 1. waking life.

Swapna, 2. dreaming.

Sushupti, 3. deep sleep.

Swapna:

Jagrat, 4. waking clairvoyance.

Swapna. 5. trance clairvoyance.

Sushupti, 6. Kama loka consciousness.

Sushupti:

Jagrat, 7. Devachan consciousness.

Swapna, 8. Consciousness between planets.[lb]

Sushupti, 9. Consciousness between rounds.

Jagrat, *swapna*, and *sushupti* mean, respectively, waking, dreaming, and deep sleep.

This division falls, as will be seen, into three groups of three each; just as the nine Varshas fall into three groups of three each. The ninth form of consciousness in this division is an *arupa* consciousness; that is to say, a state in which the consciousness does not take cognizance of forms. In connection with this it will be remembered that it was said of the ninth Varsha, Uttara Kuru, that "if thou shouldst enter, thou couldst behold nothing. For no one can perceive anything here with human senses."

But this would hold equally true of the seventh plane of consciousness: if we take the nine to be a veil of seven.

It seems, therefore, that the seven or nine divisions of Jambu

dwipa may mean our physical earth, or the physical life known to us, and its higher planes or principles; the mountain ranges being the points of separation between the planes. If this be so, and if we credit the authors of the Vishnu Purana with adeptship, and transcendental knowledge, which they have imparted in it in a veiled form, it would seem that valuable knowledge of the superior planes might be gained by a careful analysis of what is said in the Vishnu Purana of the other Varshas of Jambu dwipa.

If we are right in identifying Jambu dwipa with our earth, we may conjecture that the salt ocean which surrounds it, besides meaning the sea, may also mean the aura of the earth; that part of the astral light which clings round our planet. If then we are right in considering jambu dwipa to be the earth, what view are we to take of the nature of the other six dwipas?

It is clear that they are connected with our earth, and with the evolution of life on it. It is also said that the dwipas are in an ascending order of spirituality, Jambu dwipa being the lowest, and Pushkara dwipa the highest; while the other five dwipas have many attributes in common, and are classed together.

Moreover, each of these five dwipas has seven Varshas: and if we are right in considering the Varshas of Jambu dwipa as planes, or principles, may we not suppose that the Varshas of the five dwipas are also planes or principles?

Jambu dwipa is said to be a circular island; but there is no doubt that the Hindus knew the earth to be a sphere. Therefore this may simply mean that if Jambu dwipa is a sphere, in that case we are perhaps justified in believing that, when the other six dwipas are represented as annular, they are really spheres, and that the statement that each lies outside the preceding, and separated from it by an ocean, really means that these dwipas are spheres, isolated from each other, but surrounded by some more subtle

medium which serves as a connection between them.

Are we justified then in considering that the seven dwipas mean a system of seven spheres united to each other by a subtle medium, and cooperating in the work of human evolution by furnishing man with a series of dwellings in an ascending scale of spirituality?

It has doubtless already become apparent to our readers that this idea is, in almost every particular, identical with that of the Planetary Chain, as expounded in the Secret Doctrine. A careful review of all the statements we have collected as to the other dwipas will give further indications of the identity of these two ideas, and will elicit many facts of great interest.

What is meant by the oceans of sugar, wine, curds, and milk? Is this a hint of the nature of the auras of these different planets? Are the colours and properties of these liquids taken as symbolizing these auras?

If so, then the ocean of pure water which surrounds the whole system may mean the ether which extends through all space, as distinguished from the aura which is differentiated and condensed around each planet.

The outer darkness which shuts in the golden wall cannot but be the void space between our solar system and the stars, the mundane egg which encloses it being the limit of the life of the system to which we belong.

For the mundane egg is not the boundary of the whole universe, nor does our system exhaust the infinitude of life.

"There are thousands and tens of thousands of such mundane eggs; nay hundreds of millions of millions."

The Path

WHY A GURU IS YET PREMATURE – *Alexander Fullerton*

The first step on the Theosophic path is naturally acceptance of the Theosophic doctrine. But this is by no means a dry and lifeless creed; it is a spirited, vitalizing scheme, so permeated with a final cause that its acceptance almost spontaneously generates some measure of purpose, hope, endeavor. To realize the conception is well nigh to echo it. So noble is the theory of the universe presented, so rich the picture of what human life is and means, so elevated and pure the motive which is everywhere insisted on as the condition of all progress, that natures at all sympathetic with the spiritual respond at once to its disclosures, are fired with its genius, aspire to its privilege. As this impulse develops into a purpose, as larger reading gives shape to the conception and fuller meditation clarifies it, there is born, almost of necessity, a wish for a guide along the intricate and darksome path which has just opened, some better-instructed spirit who knows the way from having trod it, and can save from disappointment and from wasted strength. I suppose that there is no sincere Theosophist, perceiving something of the measureless work before him and yet resolved that it be undertaken and pursued, whose first heart-cry is not for a Guru. Such a teacher seems the imperative, the indispensable, pre-requisite to any advance at all.

Nor, when we look somewhat more closely at the conditions around it, does a demand like this appear unwarranted. Here, let us say, is a genuine aspirant. He has a fairly accurate idea of the goal to be attained, but no idea of the means to its attainment. He desires spiritual illumination. But the faculties thereto, he is told, are as yet dormant in him. He asks how he is to become conscious of their existence, how arouse them to action, how assure himself that their action is normal. There is no reply. He reads that the

first duty of the student is embodied in the maxim "Know thyself." He struggles with the question whether this means to know himself as a specimen of analyzed human nature, peering into the mysteries of biology, physiology, mind, and the psychic nature, — in which case a lifetime would be too short, or whether it means to know himself in his individual peculiarities, tendencies, weaknesses, desires. A mistake here might hopelessly mislead him. Yet the books which give the dictum do not settle the question it excites. He inquires if any particular diet, habit, daily observance is requisite to progress, and hereto, indeed, answers abound, but they are variant, opposite, and contradictory. He peruses the Manual which, both from its title and its teachings, is believed by all Theosophists to throw light upon the path, but much of it is enigmatical, and its explanations have to be explained. Somewhat disheartened, he asks its author, "How am I to eradicate selfishness from my nature?", and receives this reply, — "That is what every man must find out for himself."

These difficulties are largely external. But others quite as serious encompass any attempt at internal action. In the Manual to which I have referred, he is told, among other directions towards "Seeking the Way" to "seek it by plunging into the mysterious and glorious depths of your own inmost being." What is the meaning of this; indeed, has it any: Meditation is also recommended. But meditation must have some topic and be conducted on some plan. Neither is vouchsafed. Most of the prescriptions for developing the spiritual senses, even when intelligibly expressed, presuppose a familiarity with abstruse interior processes which are the very things as to which a beginner, in our land, is particularly ignorant. If he is to reverse his whole mental habitudes, think on different lines, invoke a new set of thought appliances, he must have, it would seem, some hint of the first steps and stages, some competent instructor to start him, some voice which shall be

distinct in either the silence or the Babe — in other words, a Guru. And thus, whether we look at the general fact in regard to beginners, or at the causes producing the fact, it appears that demand for a Guru is the earliest cry of the new-born Theosophist.

On the other hand, however, it is just as certain that no such Guru is provided. In one sense, indeed, it may be said that any one who has more information is Guru to him who has less, and that any author, any friend, any speaker may thus sustain *quad hoc* this relation. But in the specific, technical sense, Gurus, whatever may be our desire for them, are not accorded us: and if there is justification for the desire, there must be justification for the denial to it. It may not be amiss to look into the grounds on which that rests.

A Guru, be it remembered, is not a teacher of general learning, but a teacher of a particular science. His teaching presupposes an adult mind, some educational advantages, and a moderate attainment in principle, self-knowledge, and self-discipline. These things are the preparation, the basis, the needful foundation for his work. It is in this spiritual science as in secular education. A child, it is true, has a teacher from the beginning, but this is because there is nothing to go upon; he has to start with the alphabet, and that must be communicated to him. Through his later Course he has the two resources of ability to read and to reflect — the condition of all advance — and of aid from masters, and with these he completes his general studies. Then comes that specific training which would be impossible without the preliminary. If he is to be a lawyer, a physician, a clergyman, he applies for and receives the distinctly professional instruction he needs, just so, it would seem, is the case in Occult Science. A Guru for a person just devoting himself to Theosophy would be as much out of place as a Professor of Law or Medicine teaching the

alphabet in an infant school. His functions begin where antecedent attainments make them possible, and as we expect to find in a Medical College only such students as have laid the foundation for a specific training in a general training, so we expect to find under Gurus only such natures as have reached the point where their directions would be either intelligible or efficacious. For, obviously, they could not be understood if their terms, their meaning, the line and mode of thought were wholly unfamiliar: nor could they be operative if the faculties addressed, the motives emphasized, the powers incited were yet in abeyance. On the purely intellectual side there must be some reasonable acquaintance with the truths from which the whole system starts; and on the purely spiritual side there must be a facility of apprehension and an incisiveness of intuition which are the result, not of a brief aspiration, but of years of systematic effort. It is noticeable that, in such expositions of Esoteric methods as have been given us, it is distinctly stated that it is the developed faculty of *intuition* in the student upon which his teachers rely. But this is the very faculty of which we beginners know least, and to give us a Guru whose main work would be its employment would be precisely the same thing as to address a syllogism in logic to a child who had no idea what logic meant and who was wholly unable to reason.

But this is not the only consideration. In secular studies the successful instructor is he who most consistently acts upon the meaning of the word "education," — an educating, a drawing-out of what is in the student. Education is not so much a pouring in of information as the eliciting of the aptitudes, forces, vigors, which lie within. Very much of the whole process is in the encouragement to independent action, the cultivation of that spirit of energetic enterprise which does not shirk difficulties but surmounts them, the fortifying of that manly resolve which, not

refusing assistance or disdaining experience, yet feels that the most satisfactory triumphs are those which one wins oneself, and that a gift is not comparable to an achievement. There is a vast difference in *morale* between the classical student who works out a difficult passage and the one who cons a translation, just so in that developing process which, we are given to understand, precedes and constitutes a fitness for Guru guidance. A Theosophist finds himself encompassed by perplexities. It would be comfortable to be relieved by another. But would it be best? The old classic fable of the cartman and Hercules is the answer. No; the ingenuity, the patience, the strength aroused by the need would all be lost if the extrication came from another. We are better men, finer men, stronger men, and we are far more capable of subsequent advance, if we work out these problems for ourselves, getting light by seeking it, not by asking for it, capturing truth, not accepting it. This is the type of men the Masters want for the future custodians of the mysteries, and why should they thwart the supply by spoiling it?

Then, too, there is still another consideration. We most assuredly have no right to demand further privileges till we have exhausted those now given. If any man has fully read, — and not merely read, but digested, — the best attainable literature in the main features of Theosophic truth; if he has a fairly accurate conception of the spiritual philosophy; if he has his carnal nature well in hand and is not seriously disturbed by tumultuous revolts which have now become hopeless; if the personal element, the selfish element, is so far refined away that it but slightly taints his motive and his work; if his duties are as much a matter of principle as his aspirations; if he has overcome mind-wanderings and gained the power to think with intentness and continuity; if he has made all the attainments possible to unassisted zeal; if, in short, he has used up all the material provided and hence can do

no more; — then, surely, he is in a position to claim a Guru. We may surmise, indeed, that in such case the Guru would already have arrived. But if not one of these things is true; if the reading is imperfect, the conception thin, the passions strong, the self vigorous, the duty scant, the concentration poor, the attainment insignificant, the material hardly touched; what possible need for an advanced teacher? And if we can picture to ourselves a disciple thus feebly-equipped accosting a Guru (supposing such an official to be recognizable) and, inviting guidance, is it not inevitable that the Guru should reply, smilingly, that the disciple was not yet ready for him?

This may seem a discouraging state of things. But I do not think that it is really so. We have never been promised Gurus at our very early stage of progress, and, if we expect them, it is because of a misapprehension for which we have only to blame ourselves. To get out of illusions, to correct errors by examining them, is part of our necessary experience, and quite as much so in the department of theoretical development as in the department of practical life. Nor is the deprivation of present hope for Gurus so serious a drawback as might appear. It no doubt throws us more upon ourselves, but this is the very thing which we most need, for it is the arousing of *self-help*, *self-energy*, *self-effort* which is iterated all through the scheme. Nor is it the fact that there is no objective aid except from Gurus. There is plenty of it. In the small Library of the Aryan Society we have enough intelligible direction for more needs than any of us, its members, are likely to feel. I do not say that they are always explicit, or always copious, or always systematized, but perhaps the necessity for extracting the clearness and the fullness and the proportion gives an important exercise to the faculties which we are striving to expand. To illustrate: We are told in *Esoteric Buddhism* that there are seven principles in the composition of a man. Of course it is not claimed

that these are all sharply separated, but there is a distinction and we ought to frame some idea of it. Suppose, then, that a student, having carefully read the chapter thereon, determines to give fifteen minutes to close thought on the difference between the fourth, the Animal Soul, and the fifth, the Human Soul. Here is a definite subject for meditation, and abundant material for the process. If now he turns to Patanjali, he finds that Concentration is the "Hindering of the modifications of the thinking principle," — in other words, a stoppage of wandering thought, or of all thought on other subjects than the one before the mind. What he has to do, therefore, is to check by the will all roaming of his mind, and fasten it simply and solely on the distinction he would realize. The process is twofold, — an exercise in concentration and an exercise in imagery. He will almost instantaneously experience the extreme difficulty of restraining the natural wanderings of the mind, and form some estimate of the task which lies through years before him, — that of making his mind as docile and as manageable by the will as are his hands or his eyes. Before the fifteen minutes have passed, he will perceive, as he never perceived before, the distinction between the mind and the will, and that, before thought can be effected, the mind must be broken in, subdued, put under curb and rein. But also he will have begun to discriminate, though imperfectly because of the yet imperfect process, between the elements making up the fourth, and those making up the fifth principle. He will have taken one step towards disentangling and grouping under their appropriate heads the desires, loves, tastes, qualities, as these have a physical or an intellectual basis. In fact, his introduction into this mere vestibule of Theosophic schooling will have accomplished a triple effect, — some suspicion of the vastness of the curriculum awaiting him, some admission that the matter already furnished for him is most copious, some perception that within him he will find the true, the ever-widening field for his most careful and

persistent effort. I might add a fourth, — resignation to the obvious consequence that a Guru is yet a very long way off.

Take one more illustration, — this time of interpretation. One of the first rules given in *Light on the Path* is — "Kill out desire of comfort." This statement is extreme, and, like all extreme statements, untrustworthy. Theosophy is nothing if not reasonable, and it could not be reasonable if it enjoined the extirpation of an innocent wish as if it were a vice. Moreover, if desire for comfort is to be treated as a vice, its opposite must be treated as a virtue, in which case the desire for discomfort ranks with honor and truth and justice. This is so absurd that some qualified meaning to the words is dictated by common sense. When we think out the topic, observing Patanjali's rule of Concentration, the thought clears up. As conduct is directed by will and will is moved by desire, the main conduct of life follows from the main desire, and if this is for physical luxury, spiritual upliftings and exercises will be subordinated. Nor is this all. So far as the two are antagonistic, the physical should be depressed, and the rule would therefore seem to formulate this principle, — that wherever a bodily craving is incompatible with the growth of spirituality, it must be made to give way. Thus interpreted, it is harmonious with reason and expressive of truth.

It might even be said, and, I fancy, with no little correctness as to most of us, that we are not yet at the stage when so mild a use of the meditative power as that indicated in these two illustrations is needed. There is a consensus of all authority, from the Bhagavad-Gita to *Theosophy, Religion, and Occult Science*, that the very first practical act in Theosophy is the seizing hold of the reins over oneself. If a man is irritable, or mean, or slothful, or censorious, or greedy, or exacting, or selfish, or ungenerous, — qualities which are not crimes, but which are really as fatal to any high standard of character, — he has his Theosophic work at hand. So

long as any one of these or like pettinesses exists, that first work is unfinished. It is far from improbable that some of such blemishes remain on those Theosophists who cry out for a Guru. And yet would there be anything more ludicrous than a Guru for a man who is peevish because the weather is bad, or who gives less to the Theosophical Society than he does for his tobacco?

Looking over the whole subject impartially, I doubt if we should greatly err in stating thus the rule, — that no one has a right to expect a Guru until he has exhausted all other and attainable resources. He certainly cannot demand new powers if neglecting those possessed, and if not new powers, why new opportunities? Similarly as to books, duties, exercises, and privileges. And if this is the fact, then the desire for Guru guidance which so many feel and not a few express, is less an evidence of mature purpose than of immature perception. It needs revision rather than stimulus, correction rather than approval. Should that wholesome process give a chill to Theosophic zeal, such consequence would be the surest proof that the zeal had been but a subtle form of that ambition which we are told is a curse. For, evidently, the desire would not have been for truth or fact, but for a phase of self-importance, for a chance at self-display. And self-love as an element in spiritual development is not favored by Theosophy more than self-love in secular life.

Yet there is a corollary to the rule. Walt Whitman has stated it in one line which we beginners can only trust, but which more advanced students can surely verify, — "When the materials are all prepared and ready, the architects shall appear."

REFRACTIONS — O. E. W.

When pierced hangs the dew-drop's tiny prism
By some minutest needle-ray of light,
A stain of blood or blue betrays to sight
The fervors of that white drop's secret schism;
And were the oceans all one cataclysm
Hung out betwixt the sun and farther night,
The same disparting force would spring a bright,
Wide arch of rainbow o'er the vast abysm.

And I would that the vital beam, far lined
Through space to throw its spectrum sensitive
Of worlds and suns and galaxies upon
The universe's awful wall, may find
My soul a crystal medium fit to give
Its paint of color in the throbbing dawn.

O. E. W.

THE PRACTICAL ETHICS OF THEOSOPHY — *Em'ly*

Let us be practical, my friends; let us be practical, I say. I shall touch today only upon the practical ethics of Theosophy, and in a very simple, colloquial style.

My general experience among the classes interested in and leaning on Theosophy, Mental Science, Christian Science, Mind Healing, — and, indeed, all students of psychics, and of those silent and invisible forces in Nature which move with a solemn stillness, and yet which are invincible, — is that they are too dreamy, too theoretical, too vague, and too hysterical, to meet the trials of this commonplace, work-a-day life.

Many of us who call ourselves Theosophists proceed to repeat the fundamental teachings of this science-religion, without ever troubling ourselves to sift them to the bottom of their meaning, or satisfying ourselves that we apply them to our own lives.

I recall a few cases which illustrate this point, and I may safely relate them as convincing proof of what I have said.

The first is of a lady who believed herself a devoted Theosophist; so did others. But, when a marplot of a dressmaker failed to deliver her new gown while she waited to don it for a dinner party, her impatience grew to such a fume that it boiled over in a flood of petulant tears, while she threw herself, face downwards, on a couch. Now, if a woman's theosophy, superior will, Divine wisdom, or whatever you choose to call it, does not serve her at times of such frivolous disappointment, it is not worth much.

The second is of a lady who became enamored of Mental Science; enamored! mark you. For the time being she was enraptured with the group of ideas represented under this title, as a child is with a

new doll, or a suitor with a fresh sweetheart. These subjects are not matters for amorous jugglery. They are to live by, to study as a science, and to rest on as a companion, in whom you feel a deeper confidence and higher solace day-by-day. She was a gifted elocutionist; coughs, colds, and sore throat had been her mortal dread and worst enemies. After her first few lessons in Mental Science, she boldly and persistently denied the existence of influenza or catarrh; and believed this positive attitude of mind a bulwark against the inheritance of generations and the indiscreet habits of years. But the colds continued to come; crowding thick and fast upon her, making her so hoarse she could hardly speak, while she bravely fired off her ammunition of denials from behind a great fortress of catarrh. Do you not think she would have better shown divine wisdom by keeping out of draughts, changing wet stockings for dry ones, and wearing sufficient clothing? I do.

One more illustration, and I have done. Not long since I was regretting the existence in life of those little, far away, desolate Inlands where a seeming fate hurls us and then leaves us to stand all alone, while we feel the ground slipping away from under our feet: a waste of dark waters around us, and no human help in sight. A friend turned on me and upbraided me severely for not believing in Universal Brotherhood. It was useless for me to protest. By and by an emergency came into my life. I needed twenty-five dollars instantly, to save a near friend from disaster. It was five o'clock in the afternoon, and I sought his aid at his place of business — and it is a large importing house. I explained the grievous circumstances, and that my bank was closed. He simply replied. "I am sorry I can't help you. But you are unnecessarily excited. I guess you can bridge over your worst anticipations tonight. It's not so long to wait until the Bank opens in the morning." Later on a question of moment came up relative

to matters in which we both had an interest. Certain movements of my own had been sat upon in uncharitable judgment by a dozen critics. I had not been present at the assembly; so he wrote me ten pages of gossippy scurrility, trusting "that in spirit life I had advanced beyond the world's superficial judgment", and signed himself a loyal, sincere, and faithful friend. This is an instance of how Universal Brotherhood may be talked most beautifully. But in this sordid, selfish world, cannot each one of us try to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood by practising a material and spiritual philanthropy in our own little circle?

If we are going to drift into the desperate and deplorable cant about our existing as perfect beings emanating from the Divine, and therefore incapable of sickness, sorrow, strife, sin; if we are going to audaciously assert that we today are living in the harmony of a Universal Brotherhood; if we are going to occupy our time straining our spiritual eyes after astral bodies, the joys of DEVACHAN, and the luminous tableaux of NIRVANA; if we are going to find happiness and solace in these thoughts alone; we may as well return to the old and misty creeds of pulpit orthodoxy.

That we are still only sons of God, and not gods unto men, is proved by the fact that we have not shaken off our old conditions of sickness, sorrow, strife, sin. If we were living today a practical universal Brotherhood, we should not have an Alaska St., Philadelphia; a Five Points, New York; a Seven Dials, London; with their struggling, sinning, squalid, starving populations. If we were all awake spiritually, we would gaze clearly, confidently, fearlessly, and without effort, on the astral phenomena crowding the very atmosphere about us; and until the psychic vision is completely unembarrassed, it is as useless to sit in wonder-gazing expectation as to try to read the headlines of the Morning "Press," while the fleshly tissue of the eyelids is still sealed by slumber.

What is Theosophy? Well, Webster and Worcester define it as "Divine Wisdom;" but it is something more. Theosophy appears to me to be that form of philosophy that links God and Nature in man: a human pantheism. If God and Nature be linked in man as the highest expression of Divine power, our work begins with ourselves; that is, the attainment of human perfection through personal effort.

What we want is not to talk Theosophy, but to live it. Live it as the man Jesus did, walking in the ways of Eternal Truth, from which he was surnamed *Christos*.

If Theosophy is to serve any purpose in elevating the ALTER EGO; if Theosophy is to teach man the Divine Wisdom which he may achieve along lines of worldly practice and experience, and so ultimately lift him on to new heights of manhood; then the very beginnings of it are rooted in laws which may apply to the homely worries of every day life, and their practical remedy.

Do not let us regard the argument for the study of cosmogony and the essential nature of man which has come to us under the name of Theosophy, merely as a beautiful poetical picture; not much more than a charming dream of what might be in some intangible state of existence, and in an indefinite, nameless somewhere, quite out of mortal reach.

The Theosophic life is not a mere theoretical speculation. It is neither a species of clap-trap mysticism, nor the dreary scheme of visionary philosophers with the vain hope of delivering themselves from the evils and troubles of life, — from all activity, self consciousness, and personal existence.

The exactions of the Theosophist's life — the *life*, I say, are real. It demands the constant repression of the gross animal passions; the subordinating of fleshly desires and tempers to the higher

spiritual behests: the eradication of selfishness; the fostering of broad, generous sympathies toward our fellow man; the cheerful performance of the duty that lies nearest to us. The Theosophic life requires pure thought, noble aspirations, high and holy ideal for the inner life; it teaches the love of right for righteousness sake; it distinguishes between good and evil by the light that shines within; and it develops the spiritual essence of man by meditation.

You see, it is an arduous, patient, uphill journey that each one must climb for himself; and only by strength of will and grace of holiness may we poor mortal pilgrims hope to attain final glory.

There is no shifting responsibilities; no shirking tomorrow's result of today's action, whether it be good or evil; there are no vicarious atonements. If we would be sound in soul, we must be our own spiritual surgeon and lay the axe to the root of the fungous growth of sin, just as the surgeon of the body lays the scalpel to the cancer on the human breast.

The process of the practical Theosophic life is entirely within ourselves; the motive, the effort, and the consequences being distinctly personal.

If you fail in an undertaking, blame no man. The cause of failure is a deficiency in yourself. Remember the law of the survival of the fittest. All our blunders and suffering in life are the result of our own ignorance or wilful error. For the law of KARMA is the law of life. What ye sow, that shall ye also reap. Byron fully illustrates this order of things when he says, "Love and liquor are both ecstasies; after one the heartache, and after the other the headache." If you plant thistle seeds, are you very surprised if strawberries do not grow? And if you lead a profligate, indolent life, should you be greatly amazed if honor and acclaim do not single you out?

Each one is positively the Truth, the Light, and the Way unto himself. Each one of us is an individual unit, — a fragment of the Great Whole, — travelling over the mountain paths of life, *en route* to the Golden Summit.

The ways are steep and narrow, they are entangled with thorns and thickets and brambles and briars which smart and lacerate. And when we meet a great jagged boulder, which fate seems to have rolled as a test of our strength into our pathway, let us not stand kicking against it, wounding ourselves: it is as useless as when the gentle sea-mist endeavors to caress the cruel rocks, which tear the phantom lover to shreds. Let us not pause in despair before these boulders, and so deter our own progress. Our object is to surmount the obstacle. Climb over it; walk around it; plough through it; only let us be sure to get it behind us.

And let us act. Action is effort, action is growth. Growth is divine pain. All nature travails and groans in growth. Remember, we never stand still; if we do not endeavor to advance, we retrograde. For feelings which end in themselves and do not express themselves by fulfilling a function, leave us feeble and sickly in character, debilitated in mind and soul. Believe me, spiritual excellence and the scheme for human perfection do not come to any one of us in a windfall. Whatever measure of success we may obtain in Theosophic growth is won by unflagging toil and pre-eminent psychic endowments.

Don't be too confident of yourself. Salvation is wrought out in fear and trembling. Seek out the truth; there is no goal higher than truth. But the search is not without its trials; and there are few who are fitted by temperament and research to lift the veil of Isis.

Spirituality is only possible of development by retiring within one's self where lies the higher world of thought, and sympathy,

and instructive culture. The unfoldment of this ineffable life and its marvelous lessons are of gradual growth, but they are everlasting. Spirituality is the culture that issues from discipline, and the courage that springs from the brow of pain, and that dares all dangers.

So we are again brought face to face with the bald fact that the Theosophic life means unshrinking, incessant, untiring desire combined with efficient exercise. Prayer in operation: prayer in operation carried through every movement of our waking day, — every second of our sleeping hours.

You may say this is impossible. I say it is not. You will say it is hard work. Yes! But practical Theosophy wasn't made for lazy people.

When you once come to realize that prayer in operation means only to work for the love of your work, it will not be so difficult. Whatsoever your calling may be, lofty or humble; whether it be to preserve human life or carry a hod; whether you are making the thought of future generations or washing dishes; perform your duty to the utmost measure of your ability, to the glory and satisfaction of your own highest self. There is no such thing as accomplishing great results without work; and spirituality makes no apology for indolence.

Remember:

"The spark divine dwells in thee; let it grow.
That which the upreaching spirit can achieve
The grand and all creative forces know;
They will assist and strengthen, as the light
Lifts up the acorn to the oak tree's height;
Thou has but to resolve, and lo! God's whole
Great universe shall fortify thy soul."

The Path

JUNE — J. C. T.

Theosophy, thou art the truth
 In morning of delightful clay.
Thou art the day itself — thy youth
 Knows no declining nor decay.
Survivor of the vast array
Of creeds in every age and clime,
 Thou dost the centuries survey
In one eternal June of time.

Thou art the universal love
 Which lights and leads men on their way;
Thou art the wisdom from above
 No man may idly disobey.
When Earth in distant lives is gray,
Yet wilt thou rule in golden prime,
 Maintaining thy majestic sway
In one eternal June of Time.

Where Truth's reviving waters play
 And laws of Love and Wisdom chime,
Forever and forever stay
 In one eternal June of Time.

THE FOURTH DIMENSION: II — *F. S. Collins*

(Concluded.)

Suppose a figure of any kind drawn on the plane inhabited by the plane being; all he sees of it are lines and points: and from the number of lines which he can see when he views it from different sides, and from the size of the angle at each point, he determines whether the figure he is considering is a triangle, square, pentagon, etc., etc. He cannot by any possibility see the shape of the figure; we who can do that, do it because we look from another direction. He would say "the only way to get at the inside of a square is to penetrate one of the sides, push it apart, so to say." So we say "you can touch only the surface of a solid: its interior can be reached only by penetrating and pushing apart."

It is well known that clairvoyants can plainly see objects from which they are separated by opaque bodies; and when they are asked to describe how it is they so see, they cannot give any explanation comprehensible to us. They see it, and that is all they can say. Thus a clairvoyant (of course I mean a genuine, and an exceptionally fine clairvoyant) can, on looking at any one's body, see all the interior organs and describe their position, relations, and condition with wonderful accuracy. Must we not conclude this to be by a process similar to that by which we can see and touch a point in the interior of a triangle, without touching or looking through the sides? the simplest of every day operations to us, but one of which no description could give an adequate idea to a plane being.

Suppose a cube is passing through the plane which constitutes the plane being's space: what does he perceive? A square, bounded by the usual four lines and four angles. Suppose this cube to come

from our "above" into his plane, and pass through and below it. To him the process would be this: — a square suddenly appears where before there was none, coming from nowhere in space; it lasts a short time, then disappears as mysteriously as it came. Suppose a cylinder to pass through his plane; he would suddenly see a circle, which after a certain time disappears as the square did. If he saw a point suddenly appear, and then become a minute circle which steadily increased in diameter till it vanished at the time it was the largest, that would mean that a cone had passed through. If the increase in size of the circle was more rapid at first and slower afterward, it would mean a hemisphere; and we might trace in the same way other bodies.

If we have a cylinder around which is traced a spiral line, he would see a circle, around the circumference of which a point revolves, the openness or closeness of the spiral being represented to him by the greater or less speed of the point. A cylinder inscribed with a number of lines would be represented to him by points moving in various ways, at varying rates, about a circle. Some curious features might result from the passage of less regular bodies through the plane. Take a cylinder terminated at each end by a cone; we have a point appearing, then a circle increasing up to a certain size, which persists for a time, then diminishes to a point and disappears. A quite irregular body might give some curious results, as any one can work out at leisure.

Now think what is a human life. We appear in this world, go through various changes in form and place, and then leave this world. Cannot we see an analogy to the last described case? May not the real entity, the true individuality, exist all the time in a higher space of which we know nothing, what we call our life being merely the fleeting appearance produced by its passage through this plane of being, its true existence extending far

beyond. When we compare with our ordinary space and space life the space and life of the plane beings, how insignificant and meagre the latter appear; and the difference is not one of degree, of more or less. No conceivable number of square inches will make a cubic inch; no possible extension of a plane being's experience can give him an idea of space: his universe is a thin film; it and its beings are hardly more than mental conceptions, not realities, to us. The squares, triangles, and other surfaces, which to him are the most absolute of realities, to us are but the surfaces bounding the solid bodies, the only true realities.

So to a being in higher space, our entire universe, all space even beyond the remotest stars, is the merest film on the surface of real being; and our solid worlds no realities, merely mental conceptions of the appearances of real entities.

When a cube rests on a plane, the plane being sees a square and nothing else; by turning the cube in different ways he can be made to see the six squares which bound it, but only one at a time; to him they are separate entities, appearing one after another, and with no connection except that of sequence in time and similarity in size. To us they are the six squares bounding the cube, distinct and independent of each other, but with no independent existence apart from the cube, of which they are but the manifestations. So also, individual human beings appear to us as distinct entities, standing separate and isolated; but seen from the standpoint of the higher life, each is merely a manifestation of the one life. Apart from that one life, each is an unreality, a form of illusion, no more an actually existing thing than is the side of the cube apart from the cube. Yet just as the sides of the cube, considered as squares, are distinct and independent, their unity being not identity one with another but with the cube, so to each human being is given his own individual existence, which only he can fill.

This is no mere fancy, no mere analogy; a little study into higher space laws shows that, once granting the existence of more dimensions of space than are perceived by our five senses, then there *must* certainly be existences, of which all our solid world and its contents are merely partial manifestations, but which existences can be manifested in many other ways, of which we are now totally ignorant. And when we see that our only real being is in a higher one, of which we are but the partial manifestations; that only as our consciousness becomes centred in that higher being has it any real value; that only as we work for the whole has our work any value or permanence; when we once see these things; what more evidence do we need for the fundamental principle of our society, universal human brotherhood?

The Path

THERE IS A TIDE IN THE AFFAIRS OF MEN — J. D. B.

All motion runs in cycles; all creation ebbs and flows. If we listen attentively and observe carefully, we may detect the pulse-beats of the world. The inebriate who waits for his bed to whirl around in order that he may jump in, is, after all, more sane than he who blindly runs counter to destiny, and is forever "kicking against the pricks." He who knows nature's cycles and who waits calmly for the rising tide and takes it at its height, is indeed a magician. Indolence and idleness are like mildew to the soul; and yet is the paradox also true, "He also serves who only waits." Men differ less in the sum of their energy than in their methods of expending and utilizing it. Many persons are both intellectual and spiritual spendthrifts: these far outnumber the parsimonious and imbecile on these two planes of action, the intellectual and the spiritual. In much of the instruction in occultism the word "meditation" should read "concentration." Meditation may lead only to inaction and result in imbecility. Concentration may only give rise to audacity. The one may leave the soul to rust; the other to squandering its energy. Only right knowledge can so blend meditation and concentration, repose and action, as to bring about the highest results.

To act and act wisely when the time for action comes, to wait and wait patiently when it is time for repose, put man in accord with the rising and falling tides, so that, with nature and law at his back and truth and beneficence as his beacon light, he may accomplish wonders.

If these principles are true in the field of action and in the world at large, they are equally true in the life of man and in all private affairs. Ignorance of this law results in periods of unreasoning

enthusiasm on the one hand, and depression and even despair on the other. Man thus becomes the victim of the tides, when he should be their master. The greatest magician, the highest adept, is never divorced from or independent of nature. He steps aside till the tides of evil omen have spent their force and passed; he stoops to conquer, and presently finds his head among the stars, where one ignorant of the signs of the times meets force by force, anger with anger, and is borne away like drift-wood in the swollen tide.

Hundreds of students have started into the study of occultism or theosophy full of enthusiasm. For a time all has gone well with them. They have breathed a new atmosphere, and for a time seemed to inhabit a new-world; but alas! the tides receded, and they have been carried far out on the sea of doubt, blinded by the winds of fate and overwhelmed by the waves of passion. Their enthusiasm was all feeling, their zeal only emotion. The question always arises with those who know these treacherous tides, "*Has he come to stay?*"; and it were well if every seeker would ask of his own soul this question before committing himself to any action. Having once set sail on this ebbing and flowing sea, it would be well to remember that low tide is sure to come. One is apt to imagine at these times of depression that the inspiration is gone forever, and that the rocks thus left bare and the beach strewn with wrecks will never again be covered by the life-giving waves. The searcher must learn to hold steady, and to sit still and wait. Presently he will hear the murmur of the coming tide. It will not meet him far out on the barren shoals and so engulf him all unprepared, for he will have waited its coming, knowing that it responds to law. It is thus that knowledge directs enthusiasm and prevents discouragement. It is thus that the helpless victim of the tides may become indeed their master.

Enthusiasm thus wedded to despair, by real knowledge becomes

intelligent power. Such power is available at all times. It triumphs in the midst of apparent defeat, and in the hour of victory is not puffed up with the winds of pride, but, like a brave ship with the hand of a master at the helm and the compass well in view, baffles both wind and tide.

But for the winds and tides the ocean would be but a stagnant sea of death. Even so with human life. Action without motion would be impossible, and both of these also imply rest. We should not be like dead leaves borne up and down by the tides, but like brave swimmers, borne high by crested wave, grasp firmly the vantage gained and wait patiently the returning tide.

The Path

THE STREAM OF THOUGHT AND QUERIES: I — *Hadji Erinn*

I have watched the stream of thought, the battalions of questions pouring along the channels that reach out from THE PATH and am asked to put a few on these pages with some answers.

WHAT IS RESIGNATION?

"In what way are we to understand this word, as it is used, for instance, on p. 35 of May PATH? If it is used in a special sense, that should be made clear."

This word was not used in a special sense. Theosophists should strive not to strain speech or specially allot terms. The English language has quite enough words to meet most of our present wants. The intention was to give the deepest meaning possible to the term. *Resignation* was used in the sense of a total mental resignation, not a mere appearance or pretence. We must do as commanded by Krishna, resign all interest in the event of things, and be able to say that any event whatever that comes to us is our just due. This is perfect resignation: it is difficult and yet easy to reach. We reach it by reflecting that the object of the soul is union with the Supreme Soul, and that all our desires grow out of our bodily nature alone. It is really the first step: as the author in the May PATH said, it is the one seldom thought of by students.

IS KARMA ONLY PUNISHMENT?

Karma is action. The law of Karma operates to bring about rewards as well as punishment. The man who is now enjoying a life of ease and wealth has obtained it through Karma; the sage who has attained to great knowledge and power reached them through Karma; the disciple drinking the bitter drops from the cup of failure mixed the draught himself through Karma:

Buddha's great disciple Mugallana — greater than any other — was suddenly killed, apparently in the height of his usefulness, by robbers: it was Karma: the happy mother seeing all her children respected and virtuous dies the favorite of Karma, while her miserable sister living a life of shame in the same city curses God by her life because she knows not that it is Karma. The world itself rolls on in its orbit, carried further and further with the sun in his greater orbit, and grows old through the cycles, changes its appearance, and comes under laws and states of matter undreamed of by us: it is the Karma of the world; soon or late, even while revolving in its orbit, it will slowly move its poles and carry the cold band of ice to where now are summer scenes, — the Karma of the world and its inhabitants.

How then shall Karma be applied only to reward or punishment, when its sweep is so vast, its power so tremendous?

PICTURES AND SYMBOLS IN THE ASTRAL LIGHT.

"I have seen pictures and symbols of wonderful beauty in the Astral Light. A beautiful face surrounded with light a head with wings which soon seemed to sink into my brain. Were these seen through the action of manas and buddhi?"

I do not think so. These beautiful things belong to a lower plane and are seen by several senses and departments of senses. Many different causes might have produced them. Today you might see the face of a woman or a child whom you will not meet for the next ten years and have never yet seen; or a long-forgotten and slightly-noticed object in the past of the present life may be suddenly opened to clairvoyant sight; again, there may be deeply laid in your nature mental deposits from long past lives, and these may tinge your visions. I cannot answer individual cases: such is the work of a vulgar fortune teller. Each one must with patience study his own experience through many years, carefully

noting and verifying and eliminating as time goes on. Each person who has clairvoyance has his other own special phase — and there are millions of phases; hence five separate clairvoyants may see five different pictures or symbols, all produced by one and the same cause; or four of them may see four different pictures while the fifth sees the result of a combination of his own with the other four phases.

HOW DID THE SYMBOLS GET INTO THE ASTRAL LIGHT?

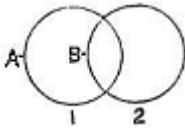
The world is so old that man's acts and thoughts for many millions of years have stamped the Astral Light full of pictures. But the Astral Light itself has cycles, tides, and changes, so those must be allowed for; it is useless to try to explain this, but in the changing of the cycles the symbols sometimes are mixed and interblended. When a class of elementals is fully developed and ready to run its appointed course from the beginning of an Age, there is a symbol for it that can be used until the complete decadence or extinction of that class, but at the change of certain cycles the symbol ceases to have power because that to which it once applied has altered and we know not the new symbol. You ask to know more about these symbols? It is not useful or necessary.

ABOUT THE CYCLES.

"I have heard and read much about cycles and their changes. I believe in cyclic law, and in the greater and lesser cycles, although I know them not. But are the cycles definite in limit, or are they shadowy?"

Much that has been said on this subject is vague except as regards the number of years included in certain cycles. The lunar cycle and some others are known, but it is well to clear up some of the shadows. Many persons think of one cycle beginning, say today,

just as another has ended. This, however, is not correct, for the cycles overlap each other, and before one has really closed another has begun. The best way to understand it is to draw two circles intersecting each other thus.



Now No. 1 is ending within No. 2. Call the beginning of No. 2 at B, and it is seen that it had its inception while No. 1 was finishing. The real point of ending for one and commencement for the other is probably at a point found by drawing a line through where the circles touch at top and bottom, and let the spaces on either side of that line be called the dawn and twilight.

Then, again, there are some important cycles which begin and end wholly within the limits of larger ones, and, in fact, it is these smaller cycles that we notice most, for they are more quickly felt. All of this relates to physical cycles; there are others of a higher and more spiritual nature very difficult to trace and comprehend. It may be partially understood by any one who has observed a man working for several years at some occupation in itself not particularly elevating, but who at the end of the period has altered his mental attitude in such a degree as to vastly change his entire life and development. In his case the occupation represented a cycle of debasement or expiation, and all the while another cycle of a higher character was running its course in his mental and moral nature quite unknown to anyone else and perhaps also to himself. There are also great cosmic cycles that proceed slowly to our comprehension because they cover such stupendous periods, but they powerfully affect mankind and can only be faintly imagined by students.

The ancient Egyptian civilization illustrates the power of one of the greater cycles long since run down. That brilliant civilization

rolled on through a vast stretch of years with no appearance of diminishing glory, but gradually the change took place. We can imagine the hopeless and frantic efforts of her sages to counteract the decay. But they were powerless, and Egypt gradually sank to the place where we find her blazing in the records so far discovered and yet then in her decline; and at last all that remains are sand heaps and degraded ignorant Copts.

But the sweep of that mighty cycle merely moved on to other spheres, and when Earth again meets the same impulse the old civilization will return, the old force revive within a better body. To me the cyclic laws are full of hope and eminently just.

ABOUT BLACK AND WHITE MAGICIANS.

"How is one to recognize a black magician, and how to treat such an one?"

It has been well said by H. P. Blavatsky that "each one has a potential black magician within." The black magician is the fruit and perfection of selfishness; selfishness is the triumph of the lower nature. The black magician is the opposite pole in human development to the white Adept, and the latter is the fruit and perfection of the highest qualities in man conjoined with entire communion with spirit; this is the triumph of all that is best in the human being; it is the conscious union with the divine. The black magician stands for self alone, and therefore for discord, separation, and destruction; the white one is the embodiment of union, harmony, and love. In the words of *Bhagavad-Gita* the white adept "is the perfection of spiritual cultivation," and it must follow that the black one is the perfection of material cultivation. In this question, "black" represents self and "white" the spiritual whole.

The query then arises, "Why are there now only white magicians

and merely embryo black ones?" We think there are but few black adepts existing today, but of the white school there are many. The age and the cycle have not yet come to that point where the black magician has blossomed, and it is easy to understand why there are perfect white ones. The question is answered in *Bhagavad-Gita* where it says, "At the night of Brahma the Jivanmukhtas are not absorbed nor destroyed, but all others are; and at the coming forth of the new creation those Jivanmukhtas (white adepts) come forth intact and conscious." (1) This means that at the preceding pralaya — or dissolution — all the black adepts were destroyed; and as now but the first 5,000 years of Kali Yuga have elapsed, there has not yet been time to evolve enough full black magicians to make a sensible impression upon us. The first part of the question, therefore, — "How are we to treat a black magician" — is premature.

Each one of us may become a black magician if we let selfishness have its course, and hence we should ask ourselves, "How may we prevent the possibility of our becoming black magicians in some future age?"

As to the latter part of the question regarding the treatment to be accorded to these as yet mythical beings, it also is very far ahead of time. If such an adept were to appear to you now, he would laugh your threats to scorn. But the sole and sovereign protection against such things and persons is a pure heart and right motive.

FOOTNOTE:

1. A free translation. ([return to text](#))

INFLUENCE — K. Hillard

In reading an article in *Lucifer* the other day, I was struck by a quotation from Elihu Burritt which ran in part thus: "There is no sequestered spot in the universe, no dark niche along the disk of non-existence, from which man can retreat from his relations to others, where he can withdraw the influence of his existence upon the moral destiny of the world; everywhere his presence or absence will be felt, everywhere he will have companions who will be better or worse for his influence. Thousands of my fellow-beings will yearly enter eternity, with characters differing from those they would have carried thither had I never lived."

The thought ran parallel with the remarks of our President last Tuesday upon the multiplied force of concerted action, in showing that, side by side with what we are *doing*, runs the hidden current of our *being*, slow-moving, perhaps, but nevertheless sweeping on with a resistless force, none the less great for being unsuspected. It is one of the most difficult things in the world to realize, — this force of passive existence, if I may use the expression. To speak, to act, — we can all appreciate as bearing largely upon the character of others; we can all realize the inspiration of a great deed, a noble sentence, but simply to *be*, — what can that do for the world? How far can the *nature* of a man, apart from words and actions, affect the great purpose of the Teachers, how much can *being* help to form the nucleus of Universal Brotherhood? It is the first impulse always to ask What shall I *do* to be saved, and yet what is right action but the fruit of right thought, as that is the blossom of the character from which it depends, as the flower hangs from the tree. The gardener does not try to improve his roses by pulling open the buds and trying to stretch the crumpled leaves to a broader growth, but he turns

his attention to the bush on which they grow, grafts it, waters it, enriches the soil around it, exposes it to the light and air, and the more perfect flowers follow as a natural sequence. And as we cannot think of the perfect rose without its fragrance, so the perfect character cannot be thought of without its *influence*, that perfume of the soul which is as subtle and as powerful as thought itself.

For, after all, what is this influence of which we speak but the aggregate of the man's thoughts and deeds, the real personality which all his tricks of speech and graces of action cannot hide? This is why we are constantly taught that thought is better than action; it is so (as one of the sages has told us) because a man becomes that on which he resolutely and persistently thinks. He puts himself into an attitude of receptivity to a particular influence, and, as the law of force is the same on all planes, that force follows the line of the least resistance, and enters the channel he has prepared for it. We receive those influences that we consciously or unconsciously seek; we give out those influences which are the result of what we have sought. It is useless to forego indulgence in pleasure or in sin while the desire for that pleasure or that sin is still strong in our hearts, because in that case it is but the outside of the sepulchre that is whitened. Kill out the desire for the sin, purify the heart itself, and the body of that sin dies, and its sepulchre, like the fabled tomb of the Virgin, is found full of fragrant roses.

In Longfellow's beautiful poem of Santa Filomena he says:

"Whene'er a noble deed is wrought,
Whene'er is spoken a noble thought,
Our hearts, in glad surprise,
To higher levels rise.
The tidal wave of deeper souls

Into our inmost being rolls,
And lifts us unawares
Out of all meaner cares.

This is the *active* influence, the power we are all ready to recognize, all eager to work for. But there is also the *passive* influence, the "atmosphere" of a person, of which we are all more or less conscious, and which, being a continuous thing and ever abiding with that person, has an even more powerful though less apparent effect. To influence others by the voluntary force of speech or action is comparatively easy, for it is a momentary effort; we poise ourselves for an instant on the topmost heights of our being, and our fellow-men, kindled at the sight, strive, for another moment, to emulate our altitude. But how much harder the task so to inform our inmost souls that they can give out nothing but nobility, nothing but love! It was said of Lady Elizabeth Hastings that to love her was a liberal education, and we have all known men and women whose presence was a benediction, and made the brightest vision of Universal Brotherhood seem a thing to be realized tomorrow. So true it is that, as Burke once said, "Virtue as well as vice can be caught by contact."

For it is precisely by this influence, this tremendous power which we all possess and which we handle as carelessly as children do gunpowder, that that nucleus of Universal Brotherhood is to be formed which, in the language of Walt Whitman, is "to saturate time and eras." We are all occasionally startled by being confronted with some word or deed of our own that we had entirely forgotten, but that, like a chance-sown seed, has borne fruit in some other mind, and now we are told to gaze upon the harvest. It is these occasional glimpses of the far-reaching influences we wield that startle our reluctant souls out of their lethargy, and bring them face to face with the unalterable

realities of their past, the glorious possibilities of their future. This again is the *active* influence of the spoken word: but who confronts us with the results of that other influence that never ceases, that weight of character, that force of personality that is continually creating for the soul "the garment that we know it by"? "The words that a father speaks to his children in the privacy of home," says Emerson, "are not heard by the world, but, as in whispering galleries, they are clearly heard at the end, and by posterity."

But how much more power over the destinies of our fellowmen has the perpetual influence of our nature than the strongest of our spoken words! That which we *say* for good in the course of our lives is very little, that which we *do* still less, but that which we *are* affects every human being with whom we come in contact as we move about the world, and draws within our sphere all the highest forces of the universe to co-operate with us.

This is not a good to be gained by one effort, not a victory to be decided by one battle. It is a long, slow building-up of character, thought by thought, as the coral-insect builds the reef grain by grain. And the work must be done with the good of others as our steadfast aim, with the idea of Universal Brotherhood ever before us as we toil. There is no need that we should sigh for wider fields of action while we wield such possibilities for good or evil as this power breathing from us unawares; but he who works for such a purpose, for the purification of his own soul that others may be benefited, will see ever farther and farther into the heavens. And the task of self-purification will bring with it that beautiful transparency of spirit that enables all men to see and bless the light that shineth from within and enlighteneth all the world.

THEOSOPHY — C. Calhoun

Theosophy and its Philosophy include all the philosophies pertaining to all life and existences, material, moral, and spiritual. Mankind as they stand between two eternities — past and future — commencing to think towards eternal principles — must start from where they stand. We can look back, cannot go back; for good or ill, on we must go towards that one eternal ocean of Divine Essence of which all tangible, thinkable things are but a breath; unthought, unthinkable, the one eternal, incomprehensible whole, the That; however expressed inexpressible which we call God, Deus, Jehovah, Allah, Lord, Omnipotence, Omniscience, Omnipresence, OM. The embodiment of the eternal principles. Yet these principles may be divided and subdivided *ad infinitum*. One God or many Gods, underlying all systems of religious or scientific thought; none wholly right, none wholly wrong, yet upon the whole right, for what is, is right, for it is the legitimate result of a cause, or an eternal chain of causes; positive and negative, objective and subjective; attraction and repulsion, formation and transformation, creation and destruction. Yet in the economy of nature not one atom is lost. Ordination and foreordination, these eternal principles permeate every living, moving thing, each in its degree. "Mean tho' they be, not wholly so, since created by 'That' breath." Even the very insects have these attributes of deity; they are positive and negative, objective and subjective, attract and repel, form and transform, create and destroy, ordain and foreordain.

Will these attributes of Deity be annihilated? In the economy of nature not one atom is lost. This Ego going the eternal rounds of all existences, through its numberless personalities, builds up its individuality, character, Karma. Mankind how fearfully and

wonderfully made; looking up, comparative atoms; looking down, Gods. "Know ye not that ye are Gods?", searching out and laying hold of the secret forces of nature, commanding them to obey and serve. This too on the low material plane, and plane succeeding plane in one eternal chain, with our powers, capabilities, and possibilities enlarging and expanding; most wonderful thought.

And as our knowledge and powers enlarge, in just proportion our responsibilities enlarge. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Is this not an exemplification of the fable of the fallen angels? Surely in this philosophy there is no profitable room for disputation. It should be considered a privilege to help our fellow creatures. To do another a wrong is to wrong ourselves more. To be just, kind, and charitable is the only evidence of a noble soul. Although but an individual atom in the universe, that individuality is everything to us. Having an existence carries with it the right to exist and a duty to preserve and better that existence. To have the power of thought carries with it the right to think and the responsibilities of these thoughts. Having the power of action carries with it the right and duty to act, with its attendant responsibilities. Neglect of duty is a crime. Knowledge and power, void of responsibilities, lead to conflict and confusion, misery and destruction. For good or evil this is Karma. But the most important thought of all to bear in mind is, strict honesty of purpose. Be just in all things, get knowledge and understanding, learn to discriminate. The power of discrimination also carries with it its duties and responsibilities. All actions bring with them their natural and legitimate results, hence the necessity to act honestly and wisely. Cultivate the gift of appreciation; learn to appreciate the sublime, the beautiful, the noble and useful; with appreciation there is no value. Despise not little things.

The moral law is the great governing force of the universe; it demands the most intelligent action with the strictest justice

without the least jot or tittle of allowance. All natural or divine laws are necessary to our existence, consequently blessings. All laws must carry with them their penalties, or they are null and void, therefore these laws with their penalties are blessings. Sin is the violation of laws or the abuse of blessings; the greater the blessing, more subject it is to the greatest abuse. Everything must be considered in degree, for these laws or principles being eternal, must hold good through the eternal planes of existence. All things exist from necessity; this being true, we must always have had an existence somewhere in the eternal chain of existences in the past, and necessarily must continue to exist somewhere in the eternal chain of planes of existences in the future and return to that eternal ocean of Divine Essence from whence we emanate.

The Path

ONE TOUCH OF NATURE — *K. H.*

In the famous speech of Ulysses in the third act of Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* occurs the often-quoted line, "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin." It is a curious fact, and one on the whole redounding to the credit of humanity, that the line is *never* quoted in the sense in which Ulysses uses it. He is speaking of the readiness of mankind to forget past benefits, and to prize the glitter of a specious present rather than the true gold of that which has gone by. "The present eye praises the present object," says the wise old Greek, and there is *one* touch of nature that makes the whole world kin, that is, men's fondness for praising that which is new, though it be gilded dust, rather than that which is ancient, though it be gold that is somewhat dusty. "Then marvel not," he says to Achilles, "that all the Greeks begin to worship Ajax."

Curiously enough, the line is always quoted as exemplifying the sympathy that, once awakened, makes men feel their close relationship to each other. (1) "Nature" is taken as meaning fellow-feeling, one touch of which makes us all brothers. This unconscious misinterpretation, or rather misapplication, of the great poet's words shows us how innate the conviction is of the fact of our universal brotherhood.

We recognise it as our *nature*, and one throb of fellow-feeling brings the truth home to our awakened consciousness. The touch of sympathy, like the spear of Ithuriel, instantly dispels the illusion of the senses; it lifts us from the purely terrestrial plane, the life of every day, with its apparent gulfs and abysses of worldly circumstance set between soul and soul, to that higher region where we see the non-reality of these separations; where

we *feel*, in all those moments that call out the deeper nature of every human being, that the one great pulse of the universe throbs through all our veins. An intellectual conviction of the necessary identity of spirit will never go half so far towards convincing us of the reality of universal brotherhood, as the sudden flush of enthusiasm that follows the words of some great orator, the thrill with which we hear of some noble action, the grief with which we witness another's pain. We read in *Light on the Path* "Kill out all sense of separateness," because "Nothing that is embodied, nothing that is conscious of separation, nothing that is out of the eternal, can aid you." We may endeavor to realize this truth with all the mental power we can bring to bear upon it, meditate upon it for hours, and the sudden swaying of a crowd by some one mighty impulse, or the unexpected revelation of the depths of some human heart, will bring it home to us with a force that makes our intellectual conviction seem a pale and shadowy thing. There was a great spiritual truth in the old myth of the giant Antaeus, who regained his strength whenever he touched his mother Earth. To sway the souls of men the poet must fall back upon our common humanity, must make men feel that he is one with them, must give voice to the inarticulate cry of the masses, must speak *from* the people and not *to* the people. It is this working from a common basis, this appeal from one man to his comrades, that makes the inspiration of Walt Whitman's poetry so great and so far-reaching, the intense conviction, in short, of universal brotherhood, that makes him say, in his *Leaves of Grass*:

"Recorders, ages hence!

I will tell you what to say of me;

Publish my name and hang up my picture as that of the tenderest lover, who was not proud of his songs, but of the measureless ocean of love within him — and freely poured

it forth;" and who wrote to "Him who was crucified:"

We all labor together, transmitting the same charge and succession;

We few, equals, indifferent of lands, indifferent of times;

We, inclosers of all continents, all castes — allowers of all theologies:

We walk silent among disputes and assertions, but reject not the disputers nor anything that is asserted;

We hear the bawling and din — we are reached at by divisions, jealousies, recriminations on every side,

They close peremptorily upon us to surround us, my comrade,

Yet we walk unheld, free, the whole earth over, journeying up and down, till we make our ineffaceable mark upon time and the diverse eras,

Till we saturate time and eras, that the men and women of races, ages to come, may prove brethren and lovers, as we are."

And here the great poet strikes the same note touched upon by our President the last time he spoke to us. Because the realization of this dream of universal brotherhood must needs be a thing of the *future*, because we see how far from this true concentration we are, and must be for many centuries to come, perhaps, therefore there is this need that we should "saturate time and eras," as Walt Whitman puts it, that we should "make our ineffaceable mark" upon the age. For this we come together in societies, that each may have his modicum of power reinforced by contact with others; that the reviving breath of another's inspiration may quicken the flame in our own hearts; that the individual atoms, by their union and common intensity of purpose, shall make up the little mass of leaven that shall one day leaven the whole lump.

But, as was said in one of the papers the other evening, a society can only accomplish what its individual members *will* and *carry out*, and to inspire us to this individual effort I know of nothing more effective than the words of "the good gray poet," among others, these —

"Is reform needed? Is it through you?

The greater the reform needed, the greater the personality you need to accomplish it.

Do you not see how it would serve to have such a Body and Soul that when you enter the crowd, an atmosphere of desire and command enters with you, and every one is impressed with your personality?

Whoever you are! claim your own at any hazard!

These shows of the east and west are tame compared to you;

These immense meadows, these interminable rivers, — you are immense and interminable as they;

These furies, elements, storms, motions of Nature, throes of apparent dissolution, — you are he or she who is master or mistress over them,

Master or mistress in your own right over Nature, elements, pain, passion, dissolution."

FOOTNOTE:

1. Shakespeare wrote: "*One* touch of nature makes the *whole* world kin." We read instead: "One touch of *nature* makes the whole world *kin*." ([return to text](#))

The Path

REINCARNATION AND MEMORY: I — *Harij*

The question is often asked: If the theory of reincarnation be true, why have we no recollection of any previous life?

It may easily be conceived as possible that we have lived before on this earth, and that memory of the events of that existence has been blotted out. This lapse of memory is a frequent experience of every-day life; in fact, of all our varied experiences from youth to old age we really remember only a few of the most vivid, and can never recall all the details of even these. Indeed, we forget far more than we remember of the details of this present life, and the wonder is not so much how we can remember the few things that are partially retained, but how we can forget so much of experience that passes beyond all possible recovery. There is, no doubt, an absolute registration of every incident and experience in life, but nothing known to us as memory can possibly constitute that registry. The essence of what we designate as memory consists in our ability to recall into the sphere of consciousness past conditions and events, and this ability is seldom in any instance more than partial, and is always fleeting and uncertain. There are, indeed, flashes of memory where an event long forgotten is revived with unusual vividness, and we get the impression that nothing is really lost but that a latent or a passive memory contains them all, waiting only the touch of circumstance to recall them into being. So far as any legitimate function of memory is concerned, this is a fallacy. The absolute registration of events already referred to involves far more than can be assigned to the function of memory. This must be borne in mind, and we must accurately apprehend just what the word memory means, before we can intelligently discuss the real question under consideration. In other words, when we have

carefully considered the fact, the function, and the phenomena of memory, we can easily understand why that which but partially records passing events, and never is able to recall them entire, should be unable to bridge the chasm of perhaps a thousand years and recover the incidents of a previous incarnation. It may, moreover, appear presently that all that escapes memory, all that memory appears temporarily to retain but in time loses, is nevertheless retained elsewhere and carried on from incarnation to incarnation. Let us bear constantly in mind that nothing exists without a cause, and that nothing is ever really lost. If this principle, recognized as everywhere true in physics, be true also in metaphysics and in all human experience, then each human being represents in himself and carries with him all previous experience, and is at any moment of his existence an epitome of all his past. It is, however, quite evident that nothing known to us as memory answers to this epitome, even for the present life.

The experiments in hypnotism have shown that consciousness and experience may exist independent of what we know as memory. An act to be performed at a future time and an exact date is fixed in some way on the sensorium, and the act is performed automatically at the exact time, although memory bears no record of the experience that led to the act. In another case memory may be impressed and confined to definite limits, thus showing that memory is relatively free from experience. Such illustrations might be multiplied indefinitely, to show that memory is not commensurate with all human experience, even in the present life.

As an element in man's being, consciousness is far broader and deeper than memory. Consciousness represents the fact of experience; memory the form and the details. Hence, while the fact remains and an experience once had can never be destroyed, the form and details in which it first appeared may pass away.

This fact of experience remains as a precipitated result, and, divested of memory, *i. e.*, of form and details, relations and sensations, constitutes the basic element in Karma. Add to the foregoing considerations the ethical element, or relation to other individuals, giving thus the element of motive, and we have the law of Karma deduced from the elements. In the first instance we have the individual as related to himself; in the second, as related to his fellows.

(To be continued.)

The Path

THE STREAM OF THOUGHT AND QUERIES: II — *Hadji Erinn*

PRACTICING FOR OCCULT DEVELOPMENT.

Several questions have been received on the subject of the best method to be pursued by members of the Theosophical Society for the development of occult powers.

This desire for such development cannot be commended. Such a desire, standing by itself, while seeming to the questioners to be of great importance, is really of the very least consequence for beginners or to the present state of the theosophical movement. The Society was not organized for the purpose of teaching the practise of occult arts, and it has been distinctly stated in a letter from one of the Masters, who are themselves fully acquainted with all the laws of occultism, that our body was never intended to be a hall of occultism or for the training of aspirants to chelaship. But in the face of that declaration and in spite of all that has been said and written in the magazines of the Society, there are numbers of members still thinking that they will be helped in such sort of study and practice, and who have for some time used what leisure they had in endeavoring to cultivate their psychic powers to the exclusion of work upon the lines laid down by the founders of the Society.

Further than this, some of these devoted students have been reading such works upon practical yoga — or Hatha Yoga — as they could procure, and trying to follow the rules laid down, notwithstanding the distinct caution in all such books that the practices should not be pursued by the student unless he has a competent guide and teacher to help and protect him on the way. Now as there are no such guides in the United States — but all here being alike mere tyros, students, or probationers — it is

evident that the very first rules have been violated.

All these practices and studies, so long as they are pursued merely for the powers to be developed, will lead to trouble only and greater ignorance. This is not because there is no truth in practical yoga, but solely from the method adopted and the pure selfishness of the aim before the mind.

WHAT, THEN, IS A SINCERE THEOSOPHIST TO DO? SHALL HE OR NOT PRACTICE YOGA?

We answer by saying that the sincere study of the philosophy and rules of Patanjali's Yoga System may be taken up by any theosophist — on one condition. That is that he shall, as a theosophist, try to carry out the fundamental object of the Society — Universal Brotherhood. In no other way can he receive assistance from any source. Altruism must be made the aim of life, or all practices are absolutely void of lasting effect. We do not speak from a mere theory but from experience; nor do we claim to have perfected altruism in ourselves, but only that, as far as possible, we are trying to make altruism the rule of life.

THE OCCIDENTAL MIND IS NOT FITTED FOR YOGA.

This may be stoutly denied, but what matters it? The fact remains patent to all that among western people there are few persons masters of any part of occult practice. Partial concentration of mind, even — the first step for any practical use of the recondite laws of nature, — is conspicuously absent from our people. Altruism has been for so many centuries a dead letter, and individualism has been so much cultivated, that the soil has become almost barren. Western peoples are not even fitted to attain perfection in Black Magic, which is supposed to be easy to pursue, though in fact not so; but we are able to lay the seeds in this incarnation for further development upon the evil side of our

nature in future lives. The practice of altruism as far as we can is the only way in which to avoid suffering; in the future.

IF STUDENTS BELIEVE THAT ADEPTS ARE BEHIND THE SOCIETY, THEY SHOULD FOLLOW THEIR ADVICE.

Those aspirants for whom these words are written have been laboring under a mistake. They have entered a society formed by Beings in whose existence they profess belief, and have not acted upon the instructions given, but have selected such portion of those as suited them. The Adepts have distinctly said that occult powers can be obtained, but They have also said that the Society, *which has Their protection and assistance*, is not for occult development, and that the latter cannot be forwarded by Them unless members will preach, teach, and practice Altruism. There is therefore no sort of obligation upon either the Adepts, or the disciples who do know, to help members whose chief aim is occult development. We must deserve before we can desire.

While we are endeavoring to understand and practice altruism, and while spreading broadcast the doctrines given out by the Adepts respecting man, his status, future fate, and light way of living, each theosophist can devote some of his time to daily meditation and concentration, and all of his time to extirpating his faults and vices; when he has made some progress in this, the good karma he may have acquired by working for the cause of Humanity, which is the same as Universal Brotherhood, will help him to get ready to begin occult practices.

WHAT IS THE "DAILY INITIATION"?

It is supposed by some that initiation is always and in every case a set and solemn occasion for which the candidate is prepared and notified of in advance. While there are some initiations surrounded by such solemnities as these, the daily one, without

success in which no aspirant will ever have the chance to try for those that are higher, comes to the disciple with almost each moment. It is met in our relations with our fellows, and in the effects upon us of all the circumstances of life. And if we fail in these, we never get to the point where greater ones are offered. If we cannot bear momentary defeat, or if a chance word that strikes our self-love finds us unprepared, or if we give way to the desire to harshly judge others, or if we remain in ignorance of some of our most apparent faults, we do not build up that knowledge and strength imperatively demanded from whoever is to be master of nature.

It is in the life of every one to have a moment of choice, but that moment is not set for any particular day. It is the sum total of all days; and it may be put off until the day of death, and then it is beyond our power, for the choice has then been fixed by all the acts and thoughts of the lifetime. We are self-doomed at that hour to just the sort of life, body, environment, and tendencies which will best carry out our karma. This is a thing solemn enough, and one that makes the "daily initiation" of the very greatest importance to each earnest student. But all of this has been said before, and it is a pity that students persist in ignoring the good advice they receive.

Do you think that if a Master accepted you He would put you to some strange test? No, He would not, but simply permitting the small events of your life to have their course, the result would determine your standing. *It may be a child's school, but it takes a man to go through it.*

LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT! — G. E. W.

Ineffaceably stamped upon the memory are those scenes of childhood connected with religious instruction. The infant on its mother's knee listens not only to the old fashioned lullaby, but now and then to snatches of church hymns and Sunday School songs, and thus, as it were, absorbs their familiar airs among its first recognized impressions. Later, the child goes to church and learns to sing the same tunes and to repeat the same words, which thus acquire that depth of root in the brain enabling them to outlast years of carelessness or wicked living and to come back sooner or later as gentle reminders of the past or monitors of the future. Have we not all read stories of men steeped in crime, to whom have risen up at some supremely critical moment visions of sainted mothers and happy days of infancy, and whose hardened souls have been touched even to tenderness by the recollection of long ago church bells on peaceful Sundays in quiet country places, and the singing of the old, simple, long-forgotten hymns? Such an awakening is not by any means improbable. We must acknowledge the existence in almost every human being of some good impulses. A long course of worldly life, sordid or violent, will go far towards banishing the higher principles and degrading the soul to a lower level, but it is only in rare cases that the spiritual spark is extinguished entirely. Illustrations of the former are all around us. There are plenty of gamblers who are model husbands; there are thieves who love their children; there are drunkards who are otherwise moral; there are swindlers who are honorable in their dealings with their partners; and all of these and others equally reckless and abandoned are quick to respond to charitable appeals. What do these facts teach? That none are so far gone in depravity as to be beyond the reach of the

good; that all — the exceptions are so rare as to be hardly worth noticing — possess some traits that are praiseworthy; that the good impulses, no matter how obscured by disuse, may be reached if only the right chord be touched and the proper moment seized.

The value of early religious training can hardly be over-estimated. There is no question here of creed or form. We might look out from our advanced standpoint of theosophy and say that is better to rear a child outside the church, in order that the child may not become imbued with erroneous opinions. But how many children are there that could comprehend the subtle distinctions of mentality found in the theosophic works? Not one. Children's minds require the simplest ideas clothed in the plainest language. The strongest of mature brains find perplexities in the involved theories of Karma, Reincarnation, and the Planetary Chain. But the mind of a child can grasp the problems of good and evil and of life and death as propounded by the Christian churches. It would seem, in fact, as if the founder of Christianity reasoned from analogy when he preached the gospel first, and, likening the human race to children, adapted his teachings to the comprehension of infancy. Theosophists who have dipped into the lore of ages can, of course, put Christianity aside as being puerile in its dogmatic form, and can demand a scheme of the universe that is more satisfactory and in accordance with the known aspects of science. The least we can do is to separate the original kernels of truth from the outer husk of creed, reserving the former for our use and condemning the latter.

But all this does not give us the right to scoff at Christianity or to revile it as many theosophists are in the habit of doing. Christianity may be likened to a bridge which has carried part of the world over from an epoch of infancy, or at least of ignorance, to an epoch of knowledge. It should therefore not be made the

target of abuse. What if it has been the vehicle of tremendous cruelty and oppression? Nobody denies it — except, possibly, a few prejudiced priests. Let us admit that from the age of Constantine to the age of Victoria the church has only one long record of blood-shed and injustice. The mistake we are apt to make is to charge those crimes to Christianity, when, as a matter of fact, the fault lay in the darkness and degradation of the race. Religion in any other form would probably have evoked the same spirit of malevolence and persecution.

Or, if we were even to admit that the church is as bad as any one has ever claimed it to be, and if we charge all the crimes of the Inquisition directly to the church, that is, as a result of the church's teaching; still we find that these evils have largely corrected themselves with time, and that now a more liberal spirit pervades all denominations. All Theosophists who have examined the various religions must admit that Christianity stripped of dogma is truthful, even to as great an extent as Mohammedanism, Hinduism, and Buddhism are true when deprived of their external forms. It so happens that we in America are brought up in and surrounded by Christianity. It is the religion of all classes without exception, save Jews. If we were living in Constantinople it would be fitting for us to be Mohammedans, and doubtless we would be; if we were in Bengal we would be bound in the chains of caste which the Hindus have forged; if we were in Ceylon we would be followers of Buddha. Thus our external form of religion is determined, as it should be, by the circumstances of birth. Our real religion is what we make it in our daily lives. But I think it most appropriate that, as we are dwelling in a Christian country, we should be to a certain extent Christians. As there are Buddhist Theosophists, as there are Moslem Theosophists, so there can be and are Christian Theosophists. It must be admitted, however, that some members

of the Society have become so irritated against the creeds of the Christian churches that they have lost all patience and continually expend most of their vitality in open abuse of Christianity. Now, it is true that there are many objectionable features to the dogmas — in fact, all are objectionable — but is it not a waste of energy to be crying out against the churches all the time? Does not such a course really obstruct the progress of the truth by arousing the hostility of the church members? If we go out to battle with the sword, immediately the sword is drawn in defense of long-cherished theories, even though erroneous, and they out-number us a thousand to one. Would not far greater success be achieved by exercising a larger spirit of forbearance, by dwelling more upon the words of Jesus and less upon the quarrels of the apostles? A Theosophist of renown has written a book to prove that there was no such person as Jesus Christ, but what has he accomplished by it? Nothing except to induce some Theosophists to quote this imaginary work as a real authority and to excite the sneers of Christians. But the worst feature of this and other such attacks is that they are all the time placing Theosophy in direct antagonism to Christianity. They are giving the enemies of Theosophy weapons to use against us. Admitting the abuses that have crept into the churches, admitting even the exoteric nature of their religion as now taught, admitting all the crimes of the past and the ignorance of the present era, there is still no reason why we should not endeavor to reform Christianity. And to do any effectual work in this direction requires more discreet treatment of the church, or at least of the religion of Jesus, than has been accorded to it from many quarters in the last few years. Does any one expect to convert people from Christianity to Theosophy? The idea is absurd. Can you convert a barn-door into a barn? No, but one can so fit the barn and barn-door that they can henceforth work together in harmony.

But, after all, there is a more important aspect which this question assumes, or should assume, to faithful theosophists. A no small part of duty is to exercise charity towards everybody, not to judge harshly, and to observe the Golden Rule. Our lot is cast in the midst of Christianity. In every city and village the spires denote the devotional tendency of the people. What if many individuals are imperfect and hypocritical? Is it not our duty to endeavor to see their better sides? Should we not exert ourselves to think kindly of these neighbors and friends of ours, even if they may be cherishing beliefs which we have found to be wrong? We admit that all religions are true at bottom, and no exception is made of Christianity. Is it not therefore our part to dwell upon this esoteric side of the national religion, and to think with kindness and charity of its errors, and by so doing and thinking shall we not achieve greater results than by deliberately separating ourselves from the church, and then attacking it as a foreign and hostile power?

The Path

REINCARNATION AND MEMORY: II — *Harij*

II.

In a previous paper certain relations of experience to memory were considered, and Karma was shown to be a resultant of action. These are elementary considerations, yet none the less important. They are derived from the commonest every-day experience, and hence everyone can test them for himself. It might be profitable to observe, in passing, that this deduction of knowledge from experience is the only way of learning. We have within ourselves the elements and conditions of superior knowledge and illumination, but so long as these elements are latent and inactive they are of no practical value. They make a grave, often a fatal, mistake who imagine that those possessed of supreme wisdom can bestow it upon the ignorant as a gratuity or a favor. They have not so received it, neither can they so impart it. The law never changes, and is the same for Adept and neophyte. Most truly says Hadji Erinn in the last *PATH*, "*It may be a child's school, but it takes a man to go through it.*"

This digression seemed necessary in order to show the importance of the simpler primary propositions, and the manner in which they are to be received and tested. We are not dealing with Reincarnation as a dogma, but strictly as a scientific hypothesis. For any intelligent person now-a-days to accept the special-creation theory, with birth into the present life as the beginning of man, is to confess the whole problem of life to be incomprehensible and all its mysteries incapable of solution. With shaded eyes and bated breath all such continually ask, "*What does it all mean?*" The most salient point, the most common objection to the theory of reincarnation, is the lapse of memory. If

we could remember distinctly any existence previous to this, the problem would at once be solved. It would then be a matter of common experience, and no one would doubt it. Therefore memory becomes the point of interest in examining the theory. If we are to estimate with any degree of certainty what memory may or may not do, what it may or may not have done, we must first determine by our own daily experience just what memory is now doing. Every reader, therefore, should pause after every statement, and inquire after every proposition — "Is this true? Is it in accordance with my own experience?" If he does this, and is careful as to the use and exact meaning of words, he will find the latent stores of knowledge beginning to unfold within his own soul, and the meaning of life will begin to appear. This knowledge of the true meaning of life will not depend on his acceptance of the theory of reincarnation as a dogma, though even in that way it is infinitely superior to any other, but the real benefit to the student will come from the fact that he is beginning to *know himself*, and to read correctly the lessons of his own experience. Those who oppose the reincarnation theory almost invariably show utter ignorance of these primary considerations, the very alphabet of the whole subject. The questions involved are so deep, so broad, and in their final application so abstruse, that an error in the beginning leads to endless complications and misconceptions further on. This is because human experience covers such a wide area, and human relations are so complicated; and any theory capable of meeting these experiences at every point must be equally potent and applicable. If, therefore, reincarnation be true, and be thus involved in human experience and capable of explaining the mysteries of life, it must be capable of logical deduction from these same experiences. Its ground of operation is our legitimate ground for investigation. Those who are unable or unwilling to study the subject in this way may accept the theory as a dogma, or deny it altogether, as they please;

though at this point a great deal may be said as to motive and result on human action. From the stand-point of dogma the principle of *Justice*, both human and divine, overwhelmingly supports reincarnation; while every other theory known to modern times is horribly *unjust*; thus favoring priest-craft and king-craft, and rendering the essential Brotherhood of man impossible.

"Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless millions mourn."

The essence of humanity is justice; the essence of all inhumanity is injustice. Wherever exact justice reigns, divine Charity glorifies life with the halo of Divinity.

These preliminary considerations may help to set our subject in its true light, and serve in divesting it of all prejudice. Only in this way can we examine any subject dispassionately, with any probability of arriving at the simple truth.

We may now return to our original inquiry: If the theory of reincarnation be true, why have we no recollection of any previous life? Passing by all those cases where such reminiscence is claimed by certain individuals like Apollonius of Tyana, and certain experiences difficult of explanation on any other ground in the life of many persons, passing by such considerations as favor belief in reincarnation on the ground of Justice, let us consider memory in relation to experience. From the known character of memory deduced from daily experience, is there any reason to expect it to bridge the chasm between two incarnations, provided more than the present incarnation has existed for the individual? If not, why not? Put in another form, our thesis may be stated in this way: Is the absence of memory of a previous life any bar to the acceptance and rational application of the theory of reincarnation?

The terms cause and effect are related to phenomena. The essence of phenomena is motion, or action. Every so-called cause is involved in its effect, and every so-called effect becomes in its turn a cause of further action to be involved in all succeeding effects. Man has sometimes been called "a creature of circumstance." This is a half-truth. Man is also a creator of circumstance. In other words, man bears the same general relation to cause and effect as does every object in nature. If we observe any object in nature we discover it giving rise to or the theatre of phenomena. If we find it acting, we may trace the so-called causes of its present activities. If we find it apparently quiescent, we may discover what activities it will presently give rise to. There is thus a period of activity followed by a period of repose, and this followed by renewed activity. All nature is thus instinct with life, for life is essential action. Thus "the out-breathing and in-breathing of Brahm" involves every atom and every object, no less than every organism.

Life's pulses quiver everywhere,
A solemn rhythm reigns;
A measured tread is in the air,
The ocean throbs with pain.
The solid earth its pulses keeps
While shadows come and go;
Deeps answer always unto deeps,
Glow answers unto glow.
Back of all action there is rest;
Behind all rest the flame
Of life but smoulders in Brahm's breast,
Ready to glow again.

A SONNET TO NIGHT — T. H.

The spicy fragrance of the skies
Falls through the night air on my soul,
From depths where constellations rise,
From depths where suns unnumbered roll:
From star-laid strata—star o'er star
Where God's great lanterns swing and sway,
Behind the "Gates of Light" ajar;
Behind the Barrier of the Day:
And swing, and sway;—and flash their light
Through every crevice of the night.

T. H.

UNIVERSAL APPLICATIONS OF DOCTRINE — *William Q. Judge*

During the last few years in which so much writing has been done in the theosophical field of effort, a failure to make broad or universal applications of the doctrines brought forward can be noticed. With the exception of H. P. Blavatsky, our writers have confined themselves to narrow views, chiefly as to the state of man after death or how Karma affects him in life. As to the latter law, the greatest consideration has been devoted to deciding how it modifies our pleasure or our pain, and then as to whether in Devachan there will be compensation for failures of Karma; while others write upon reincarnation as if only mankind were subject to that law.

And the same limited treatment is adopted in treating of or practising many other theories and doctrines of the Wisdom Religion. After fourteen years of activity it is now time that the members of our society should make universal the application of each and every admitted doctrine or precept, and not confine them to their own selfish selves.

In order to make my meaning clear I purpose in this paper to attempt an outline of how such universal applications of some of our doctrines should be made.

Before taking up any of these I would draw the attention of those who believe in the Upanishads to the constant insistence throughout those sacred books upon the identity of man with Brahma, or God, or nature, and to the universal application of all doctrines or laws.

In *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* it is said: (1)

"Tell me the Brahman which is visible, not invisible, the

atman who is within all?

"This, thy Self who is within all. He who breathes in the up-breathing, he is thy Self and within all. He who breathes in the down-breathing, he is thy Self and within all. He who breathes in the on-breathing, he is thy Self and within all. This is thy Self who is within all."

The 6th Brahmana is devoted to showing that all the worlds are woven in and within each other; and in the 7th the teacher declares that "the puller" or mover in all things whatsoever is the same Self which is in each man.

The questioners then proceed and draw forth the statement that "what is above the heavens, beneath the earth, embracing heaven and earth, past, present, and future, that is woven, like warp and woof, in the ether," and that the ether is "woven like warp and woof in the Imperishable." If this be so, then any law that affects man must govern every portion of the universe in which he lives.

And we find these sturdy men of old applying their doctrines in every direction. They use the laws of analogy and correspondences to solve deep questions. Why need we be behind them? If the entire great Self dwells in man, the body in all its parts must symbolize the greater world about. So we discover that space having sound as its distinguishing characteristic is figured in the human frame by the ear, as fire is by the eye, and, again, the eye showing forth the soul, for the soul alone conquers death, and that which in the *Upanishads* conquers death is fire.

It is possible in this manner to proceed steadily toward the acquirement of a knowledge of the laws of nature, not only those that are recondite, but also the more easily perceived. If we grant that the human body and organs are a figure, in little, of the universe, then let us ask the question, "By what is the astral light

symbolized?" By the eye, and specially by the retina and its mode of action. On the astral light are received the pictures of all events and things, and on the retina are received the images of objects passing before the man. We find that these images on the retina remain for a specific period, capable of measurement, going through certain changes before fading completely away. Let us extend the result of this observation to the astral light, and we assume that it also goes through similar changes in respect to the pictures. From this it follows that the mass or totality of pictures made during any cycle must, in this great retina, have a period at the end of which they will have faded away. Such we find is the law as stated by those who know the Secret Doctrine. In order to arrive at the figures with which to represent this period, we have to calculate the proportion thus: as the time of fading from the human retina is to the healthy man's actual due of life, so is the time of fading from the astral light. The missing term may be discovered by working upon the doctrine of the four yugas or ages and the length of one life of Brahma.

Now these theosophical doctrines which we have been at such pains to elaborate during all the years of our history are either capable of universal application or they are not. If they are not, then they are hardly worth the trouble we have bestowed upon them; and it would then have been much better for us had we devoted ourselves to some special departments of science.

But the great allurements that theosophy holds for those who follow it is that its doctrines are universal, solving all questions and applying to every department of nature so far as we know it. And advanced students declare that the same universal application prevails in regions far beyond the grasp of present science or of the average man's mind. So that, if a supposed law or application is formulated to us, either by ourselves or by some other person, we are at once able to prove it; for unless it can be

applied in every direction — by correspondence, or is found to be one of the phases of some previously-admitted doctrine, we know that it is false doctrine or inaccurately stated. Thus all our doctrines can be proved and checked at every step. It is not necessary for us to have constant communications with the Adepts in order to make sure of our ground; all that we have to do is to see if any position we assume agrees with well-known principles already formulated and understood.

Bearing this in mind, we can confidently proceed to examine the great ideas in which so many of us believe, with a view of seeing how they may be applied in every direction. For if, instead of selfishly considering these laws in their effect upon our miserable selves, we ask how they apply everywhere, a means is furnished for the broadening of our horizon and the elimination of selfishness. And when also we apply the doctrines to all our acts and to all parts of the human being, we may begin to wake ourselves up to the real task set before us.

Let us look at Karma. It must be applied not only to the man but also to the Cosmos, to the globe upon which he lives. You know that, for the want of an English word, the period of one great day of evolution is called a Manwantara, or the reign of one Manu. These eternally succeed each other. In other words, each one of us is a unit, or a cell, if you please, in the great body or being of Manu, and just as we see ourselves making Karma and reincarnating for the purpose of carrying off Karma, so the great being Manu dies at the end of a Manwantara, and after the period of rest reincarnates once more, the sum total of all that we have made him — or it. And when I say "we", I mean all the beings on whatever plane or planet who are included in that Manwantara. Therefore this Manwantara is just exactly what the last Manwantara made it, and so the next Manwantara after this — millions of years off — will be the sum or result of this one, plus

all that have preceded it.

How much have you thought upon the effect of Karma upon the animals, the plants, the minerals, the elemental beings? Have you been so selfish as to suppose that they are not affected by you? Is it true that man himself has no responsibility upon him for the vast numbers of ferocious and noxious animals, for the deadly serpents and scorpions, the devastating lions and tigers, that make a howling wilderness of some corners of the earth and terrorize the people of India and elsewhere? It cannot be true. But as the Apostle of the Christians said, it is true that the whole of creation waits upon man and groans that he keeps back the enlightenment of all. What happens when, with intention, you crush out the life of a common croton bug? Well, it is destroyed and you forget it. But you brought it to an untimely end, short though its life would have been. Imagine this being done at hundreds of thousands of places in the State. Each of these little creatures had life and energy; each some degree of intelligence. The sum total of the effects of all these deaths of small things must be appreciable. If not, then our doctrines are wrong and there is no wrong in putting out the life of a human being.

Let us go a little higher, to the bird kingdom and that of four-footed beasts. Everyday in the shooting season in England vast quantities of birds are killed for sport, and in other places such intelligent and inoffensive animals as deer. These have a higher intelligence than insects, a wider scope of feeling. Is there no effect under Karma for all these deaths? And what is the difference between wantonly killing a deer and murdering an idiot? Very little to my mind. Why is it, then, that even delicate ladies will enjoy the recital of a bird or deer hunt? It is their Karma that they are the descendants of long generations of Europeans who some centuries ago, with the aid of the church, decided that animals had no souls and therefore could be

wantonly slaughtered. The same Karma permits the grandson of the Queen of England who calls herself the defender of the faith — of Jesus — to have great preparations made for his forthcoming visit to India to the end that he shall enjoy several weeks of tiger-hunting, pig-sticking, and the destruction of any and every bird that may fly in his way.

We therefore find ourselves ground down by the Karma of our national stem, so that we are really almost unable to tell what thoughts are the counterfeit presentments of the thoughts of our forefathers, and what self-born in our own minds.

Let us now look at Reincarnation, Devachan, and Karma.

It has been the custom of theosophists to think upon these subjects in respect only to the whole man — that is to say, respecting the ego.

But what of its hourly and daily application? If we believe in the doctrine of the One Life, then every cell in these material bodies must be governed by the same laws. Each cell must be *a life* and have its karma, devachan, and reincarnation. Every one of these cells upon incarnating among the others in our frame must be affected by the character of those it meets; and we make that character. Every thought upon reaching its period dies. It is soon reborn, and coming back from its devachan it finds either bad or good companions provided for it. Therefore every hour of life is fraught with danger or with help. How can it be possible that a few hours a week devoted to theosophic thought and action can counteract — even in the gross material cells — the effect of nearly a whole week spent in indifference, frivolity, or selfishness? This mass of poor or bad thought will form a resistless tide that shall sweep away all your good resolves at the first opportunity.

This will explain why devoted students often fail. They have waited for a particular hour or day to try their strength, and when the hour came they had none. If it was anger they had resolved to conquer, instead of trying to conquer it at an offered opportunity they ran away from the chance so as to escape the trial; or they did not meet the hourly small trials that would, if successfully passed, have given them a great reserve of strength, so that no time of greater trial would have been able to overcome them.

Now as to the theory of the evolution of the macrocosm in its application to the microcosm, man.

The hermetic philosophy held that man is a copy of the greater universe; that he is a little universe in himself, governed by the same laws as the great one, and in the small proportions of a human being showing all those greater laws in operation, only reduced in time or sweep. This is the rule to which H. P. Blavatsky adheres, and which is found running through all the ancient mysteries and initiations.

It is said that our universe is a collection of atoms or molecules — called also "*lives*"; living together and through each the spirit struggles to reach consciousness, and that this struggle is governed by a law compelling it to go on in or between periods. In any period of such struggle some of these atoms or collections of molecules are left over, as it were, to renew the battle in the next period, and hence the state of the universe at any time of manifestation — or the state of each newly-manifested universe — must be the result of what was done in the preceding period.

Coming down to the man, we find that he is a collection of molecules or *lives* or cells, each striving with the other, and all affected for either good or bad results by the spiritual aspirations or want of them in the man who is the guide or god, so to say, of

his little universe. When he is born, the molecules or cells or lives that are to compose his physical and astral forms are from that moment under his reign, and during the period of his smaller life they pass through a small manvantara just as the lives in the universe do, and when he dies he leaves them all impressed with the force and color of his thoughts and aspirations, ready to be used in composing the houses of other egos.

Now here is a great responsibility revealed to us of a double character.

The first is for effects produced on and left in what we call matter in the molecules, when they come to be used by other egos, for they must act upon the latter for benefit or the reverse.

The second is for the effect on the molecules themselves in this, that there are lives or entities in all — or rather they are all lives — who are either aided or retarded in their evolution by reason of the proper or improper use man made of this matter that was placed in his charge.

Without stopping to argue about what matter is, it will be sufficient to state that it is held to be co-eternal with what is called "spirit." That is, as it is put in the *Bhagavad-Gita*: "He who is spirit is also matter." Or, in other words, spirit is the opposite pole to matter of the Absolute. But of course this matter we speak of is not what we see about us, for the latter is only in fact phenomena of matter: even science holds that we do not really see matter.

Now during a manvantara or period of manifestation, the egos incarnating must use over and over again in any world upon which they are incarnating the matter that belongs to it.

So, therefore, we are now using in our incarnations matter that has been used by ourselves and other egos over and over again, and are affected by the various tendencies impressed in it. And,

similarly, we are leaving behind us for future races that which will help or embarrass them in their future lives.

This is a highly important matter, whether reincarnation be a true doctrine or not. For if each new nation is only a mass of new egos or souls, it must be much affected by the matter-environment left behind by nations and races that have disappeared forever.

But for us who believe in reincarnation it has additional force, showing us one strong reason why universal brotherhood should be believed in and practised.

The other branch of the responsibility is just as serious. The doctrine that removes death from the universe and declares that all is composed of innumerable lives, constantly changing places with each other, contains in it of necessity the theory that man himself is full of these lives and that all are traveling up the long road of evolution.

The secret doctrine holds that we are full of kingdoms of entities who depend upon us, so to say, for salvation.

How enormous, then, is this responsibility, that we not only are to be judged for what we do with ourselves as a whole, but also for what we do for those unseen beings who are dependent upon us for light.

FOOTNOTE:

1. III Adh.. 4th Brab. ([return to text](#))

SOME NOTES ON THE MAHATMAS: I — K. H.

In accordance with the suggestion of our President last Tuesday evening, I have tried to collect such evidence as to the nature of the Mahatmas as I could from the Theosophical books I had in my own library, not having had time to go elsewhere. If I rightly understood Mr. Judge on the occasion referred to, he defined *Mahatma*, or *the great souled*, as a purely spiritual existence, and therefore only to be properly spoken of in the singular, as pure spirit is necessarily undifferentiated and therefore one and the same. I have not yet succeeded in finding any definition of "the Mahatma" that implies quite so impersonal an entity. The nearest approach to this idea is in an anonymous article on page 92 of *Five Years of Theosophy*, entitled "Mahatmas and Chelas," which begins thus: "A Mahatma is an individual who, by special training and education, has evolved those higher faculties and has attained that spiritual knowledge which ordinary humanity will acquire after passing through numberless series of reincarnations during the process of cosmic evolution," (provided, of course, that it moves in the right direction). Such a person having, by proper training in successive incarnations, gradually purged himself of the lower principles of his nature, there arrives a time when the entity consists solely of "that higher *Manas* which is inseparably linked to the *Atma* and its vehicle" (the sixth principle). "When, therefore," continues the writer, "people express a desire to see a Mahatma, they really do not seem to understand what it is they ask for. How can they, with their physical eyes, hope to see that which transcends sight? Higher things can be perceived only by a sense pertaining to those higher things; whoever therefore wants to see the real *Mahatma* must use his intellectual sight. The Mahatma has

identified himself with that Universal Soul which runs through Humanity, and to draw his attention one must do so through that Soul."

This definition makes of the Mahatma a purely spiritual existence, and therefore part and parcel of the Divine element of which we all to some extent partake.

But the *Glossary* of the book quoted (*Five Years of Theosophy*) defines "*Mahatma*, a great soul: an adept in occultism of the highest order," and other papers in the book by Ramaswamier, Damodar, and Mohini speak of "the living physical body of the Mahatma" (p. 452), of "the Himalayan Brothers as living men, and not disembodied spirits" (p. 45S), and of the Mahatma Koothoomi "as a living person like any of us."

Mrs. Sinnett's *Purpose of theosophy* (p. 70) says that "the custodians of the secret Knowledge are variously called Mahatmas, Rishis, Arhats, Adepts, Guru Devas, Brothers, etc. The majority of them now live in Tibet. They can defy matter, distance, even death itself, and have in the routine of their training arrived at such perfection that the real spiritual man is independent of and altogether master of the material body. Far above the best of the Yogis stand the Mahatmas. Their existence as human beings has been questioned, but, on the other hand, hundreds of people have not only seen and spoken with them, but some have even lived under the same roof with their own Mahatmas for years together." Mrs. Sinnett also says that it is well-known that "in the formation of the T. S. the founders were acting under the direct wishes of certain of the Mahatmas," and that the Hindus had to be convinced "not of the actual existence of the Mahatmas as living men, *for of this they had ample proof* but that the visible founders of the Society were really their agents."

According to Mr. Sinnett, Arhat, Mahatma, Rishi, are interchangeable terms. (Esot. B. p. 49 *et seq.*) "The Arhats and the Mahatmas are the same men. At that level of spiritual exaltation, supreme knowledge of the esoteric doctrine blends all original sectarian distinctions. By whatever name such *illuminati* may be called, they are the adepts of occult knowledge, sometimes spoken of in India now as the Brothers. The Tibetan Brotherhood is incomparably the highest of such associations. The Mahatmas themselves are subordinate by several degrees to the chief of all" (in the Tibetan organization).

In the book called "Man," we are told that "the Adept hierarchy was established by the Dhyán Chohan to watch over and protect the growing race. That there are seven classes of Adepts, of which five alone are ordinarily spoken of; the last two are understood only by the higher initiates. The heads of the five classes are known in Tibet as the *Chutuktu* or jewels of wisdom."

On the next page the authors tell us that "there are nine grades of Adepts, each grade having seven subdivisions. In the Brahmanical system, the nine-grades are referred to as the nine jewels (*nava nidhi*)."

"Unlike the ordinary man, the Mahatmas live wholly in the spirit. The Mahatmas do not ignore the conditions of daily life; they fully sympathize with the struggling masses of humanity, but the higher cannot stoop to the lower; the lower must see the heights above, and scale them if it will. It must never be thought that the Mahatmas are creators: they are only inspirers and educators. They have undoubtedly a human side to their characters, but it is so inseparably blended with their higher spiritual nature that no one who tries to dissociate the two parts of their being will ever understand either correctly."

In the PATH, Vol. I, No. 9, there is an article on "The Theosophical

Mahatmas" by Mme. Blavatsky, in which she says, "Our MASTERS are not a 'jealous god'; they are simply holy mortals, nevertheless, however, higher than any in this world, morally, intellectually, and spiritually. However holy and advanced in the science of the mysteries, they are still men, members of a Brotherhood, who are the first in it to show themselves subservient to its time-honored laws and rules." In the same article H. P. B. speaks of "the *Paraguru*, my Master's MASTER." I have been unable to find any other article in the first volume of the PATH on the subject, except one on "The Reticence of the Mahatmas," which does not enter into any definition of their nature. In No. 3, vol. II, a letter signed "Julius" says that "the beings spoken of by Edwin Arnold as Mahatmas are not considered '*men*' in the East."

In Vol. II, No. 4, in an article signed "S. B." on the "Reincarnations of Mahatmas," we read: "While the personality of the reincarnated Master is a human being, with all the attributes which make up any other human being, its constitution is naturally of a finer order, so as to make it an instrument adapted to the work for which it has been brought into the world. This idea, that the finer soul naturally falls, in re-incarnating, into a finer body, is expressed in the Wisdom of Solomon, 8:20, "Being good, I came into a body undefiled."

In the *Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 46, Mme. Blavatsky defines *Dangma* as "a purified soul, one who has become a Jivanmukta, the highest adept, or rather a Mahatma so-called." In Vol. II, p. 173, she says that the Third Race "created the so-called Sons of Will and Yoga, or the 'ancestors' (the *spiritual* forefathers) of all the subsequent and present Arhats or Mahatmas." And on p. 423 she speaks of "the great Mahatmas or Buddhas, these *Buddhas* representing, as we are taught, once living men, great Adepts and Saints, in whom the 'Sons of Wisdom' had incarnated, and who were therefore, so to speak, minor Avatars of the Celestial

Beings."

Patanjali tells us in his 3rd Book, Aph. No. 46, that "the ascetic who has acquired complete control over the elements obtains certain perfections: to wit, the power to project his inner-self into the smallest atom, to expand his inner-self to the size of the largest body, to render his material body light or heavy at will, to give indefinite extension to his astral body or its separate members, to exercise an irresistible will upon the minds of others, to obtain the highest excellence of the material body, and the ability to preserve such excellence when attained." And in Aphorism 39 we are told that "the inner-self of the ascetic may be transferred to any other body and there have complete control." The ascetic who has acquired the perfection of discriminative power possesses the "Knowledge that saves from re-birth." That Knowledge "has all things and the nature of all things for its objects, and perceives all that hath been and that is, without limitations of time, place, or circumstance, as if all were in the present and in the presence of the contemplator." This can only mean the virtual annihilation of time and space, and such an ascetic, Mr. Judge informs us, "is a *Jivanmukta*, and is not subject to reincarnation. He, however, may yet live upon earth, but is not in any way subject to his body, the soul being perfectly free at every moment. And such is held to be the state of those beings called in theosophical literature Adepts, Mahatmas, Masters."

Jivanmukta means literally a "liberated life"; Arhat, a "worthy one"; Rishi, "a revealer"; Mahatma, "a great soul." We see that all or any of these appellations may easily be applied to those Beings we also call "the Masters," although the terms themselves may have an individual and distinct meaning. That they *are* thus promiscuously used, the above extracts sufficiently show. They show also, it seems to me, that "the garment that we see him by" is *not* the Mahatma, any more than the Othello we may see upon

the stage this week is the real Salvini. To have obtained that lofty pinnacle of spiritual perfection known as "the great soul" is to have become independent of human conditions, and those who speak of the Masters as "men exactly like ourselves" can only refer to the special personality which for special needs they have chosen to assume for the moment. As well identify a man with his coats, as a being who can "transfer himself to any other body and there have complete control" with *any* form, however perfect in beauty, under which he may make himself visible to our purblind eyes. At the same time, if we are to believe Mme. Blavatsky, they are still individuals, and not pure spirit, for she says "they are simply holy mortals, nevertheless, however, higher than any in this world, morally, intellectually, and spiritually."

The Path

THE LINING OF THE HAND — G. E. W.

An interesting bit of history is found in the word "lining," one of the simplest in the English language. Its origin is strictly occult. And yet how little would anyone suspect a mystic flavor in such a well-worn term, used in every-day conversation in reference to our clothes and household utensils. And in even its daily use it is always applied to the inner, as distinguished from the outer, side of any given object. One might quote a thousand applications of this term, all appropriate and all referring to the inner, as distinguished from the outward, side of any given object.

The origin of this very common English noun may be sought for, and correctly, in the Latin-derived word "line." But what connection is there between a "line" and a "lining"? Apparently none. The latter might have been construed, once upon a time, as a participle of the former, but that does not afford any explanation of the entirely different meanings of the two words as now used. We have seen what a lining is in the popular acceptance of the term, and we are aware that the geometrical definition of a line is that which has length but neither breadth nor thickness. One might search forever for a rational explanation of the variation in the two significations, and would never find it without referring to occultism. In that branch of science known as cheiromancy the lines traced by Nature upon the palm of the hand are discovered to possess certain senses indicative not only of past events but of the probabilities of the future. It may be supposed that in the Middle Ages, when the English tongue was being gradually evolved from the Norman, Norse, and Saxon, and when palmistry was carried across the channel by the gypsies, the lining of the hand was often referred to, strictly within the original meaning of the *lines* of the hand.

Afterwards the same term was applied to other objects, referring to the entire inner side. Later the first sense was forgotten, and would not be readily revived in this exoteric age, — not, at least, by any of the school-men or theologians.

Concerning the lining of the hand there is a great deal to be said and much to be yet learned, notwithstanding the exhaustive labors of John Indagine, Albertus Magnus, Bartholomew Codes, le Sieur de Peruchio, J. Fricasso, and, more than any other, that enthusiastic Frenchman, Adrien Desbarolles. For, whatever may be claimed of cheiromancy, and there is no doubt but that it occupies an important field, it cannot yet be classed as an exact science. In this opinion I am aware that I am going contrary to the dicta of Heron-Allen, Rosa Baughan, and other recent English writers who say that all the important events in the life of any individual can be accurately determined. But it appears to me, after some years of careful investigation and comparison, that it is only rarely that events are so strongly portrayed on the palm as to be seen at a glance and boldly announced. My own experience is that the story of a life is much more intricate. The lines are generally so modified by one another and so inter-related that even a very careful inspection will frequently fail to bring out facts with any degree of exactness. I do not deny that the hieroglyphics are there and that they are mathematically correct, but our knowledge of them is still so limited as to render an interpretation frequently unjust and almost always incomplete. The reason for this must be found in the fact that, as all men and women are different in character and disposition, so much so that no two persons are alike, just in the same manner are all lives different in their details, so that each individual's career is unlike that of any one else. There are millions of contingencies that may happen, and Nature must write the romance of each life on the limited space assigned to her. Our rules of cheiromancy are

derived from the personal observations of a few students. Can it be for a moment supposed that they have seen and recognized more than a mere fraction of the signs taken from Nature's wide vocabulary? It is, of course, the fashion for professional cheiromants to claim everything. Especially is the fashion prominent in the works of recent writers on this subject. The elder authors were more modest, however, and interjected many pious disclaimers and humble confessions of ignorance into their folios. And yet they were men of deep learning — the quintessence of their times.

To illustrate the influence of modifiers on the lining of the hand, the instance might be quoted of a gentleman known to the writer who, according to the lines, should have been divorced, but who is living happily (or was at last accounts) with his family. In his case the divorce line, after standing out with great distinctness for several years, was finally continued up to the mount of Saturn and took on an altogether different signification. I recall also the case of a gentleman who has written several books on occult subjects, and who, according to all the laws of cheiromancy, should have been dead these twenty years past, but who is still enjoying excellent health. There is also another, a physician, whose career ought to have terminated last year, but who awkwardly persists in clinging to this earthly sphere and retaining his "clothes of skin." In the second of these cases there is no apparent modifier, and yet it must be somewhere on the palm to indicate Nature's reprieve. The last-mentioned instance may be simply a case of wrong measurement on the life-line, but more probably there is a modifier, if it could be discovered. Certainly there is no square of protection anywhere near the fatal epoch. It must be some other character employed by Nature than the ones known to modern cheiromants.

In the face of these and similar apparent exceptions to the rules, it

is better not to press too closely the claim for cheiromancy of being an exact science. Let us put it on its proper footing. We may suppose that the Atlanteans were versed in palmistry among other magic arts. Undoubtedly some vestiges of it descended to the Aryans along with the Zodiac and the rudiments of astrology. In that most ancient occult work known as the Book of Job, both astrology and palmistry are clearly indicated. The English priests mistranslated all such passages as much as possible, in order to prevent them from being understood by the masses. In the Vulgate, on the contrary, the sense was very nearly preserved, as in chapter 37, verse 7, where it reads: "*Qui in manu omnium hominum signat ut noverint singuli opera sua*". (He places signs in the hand of every man in order that all may know his works). In connection with this, how ridiculous is the reading of the English Version: "He sealeth up the hand of every man; that all men may know his work!" But this is on a par with other false renderings of the Old Testament, as, for instance, the first word in the first chapter of Genesis.

However, there is no doubt that cheiromancy was known among the earliest tribes of the present human race. If the later initiated were ever more guarded in referring to it than they were in speaking of astrology, the reason is not hard to find. It was comparatively safe for the ancients to compute astrologic directions with some degree of publicity, because by its very nature astrology was so difficult that ordinary minds were totally incapable of comprehending it or its rules. The Chaldean seer had no fear in calculating nativities, because the common people could not rise to his level. Cheiromancy, on the other hand, was simple and could be easily learned, the rules requiring only an effort of memory. Hence it had to be more sacredly guarded from the public, and the candidates for initiation into the mysteries might have been specially cautioned against writing or saying

anything about it publicly. One of the lower caste tribes of India, having fled to escape the atrocities committed by Timour Beg in 1408 A. D., passed through Egypt and reached Europe in 1417. From the circumstance of their having come from Egypt they were mistakenly called Egyptians, which name has since clung to them through nearly 500 years of wanderings. The gypsies appear to have had some leaders who instructed them in the secret art of palmistry. It was the one bequest to them from their progenitors, who may perhaps have derived it from Enoch himself. Among the gypsies there were never any written rules of palmistry, — in fact, there are none even at the present day. The indications were carefully transmitted from mother to daughter, — as the fortune-telling was always monopolized by the females of this nomadic race. Many of these rules have from time to time passed into the possession of curious outsiders, but it is believed that even now the gypsies have a knowledge of certain important hieroglyphs which have never been given to the public, and which are unknown to the writers of our latest works on cheiromancy. After indulging in some criticism on palmistry, based upon a knowledge of what it will not do, there is great pleasure in recognizing the services which it really performs. By the shape of the hand the expert cheiromant at once determines the disposition, character, and probable occupation of the owner of that hand. Physiognomy betrays the ruling planet, although the same result can be attained by an examination of the mounts of the palm. It is thus possible for one sitting in a window on a busy street of a great city to tell at a glance the leading characteristics of every individual in the passing throng, as well as the planet under which each one may have been born. This of itself is no ordinary feat, and borders closely upon the magical.

D'Arpentigny's interpretation of the thumb and fingers comes the nearest to reducing this branch of the art to exactitude of any authority, ancient or modern. In fact, so far as the mere

disposition and capacity of any person are concerned, this may be set down as certainly exposed to the trained eye of the disciple of D'Arpentigny. Cheirognomy is therefore to all intents and purposes an exact science. But when we come to the particular events, past, present, and future, of a particular career, then the honest cheiromant must pause and examine his ground with the utmost circumspection. (1) No doubt there are some people whose lives have been so influenced by one great single passion or purpose as to cause the nature of that leading motive to be infallibly stamped upon the palm. Such fortunes are seen at a glance. But, speaking from experience, I have found that in the great majority of instances the subjects have been living an uneventful career, — that is to say, a career uneventful as seen by an outsider; for to the individual his own career is never uneventful. To the blacksmith in a country village, for instance, every occurrence is of as much importance, apparently, as are the experiences of a soldier in battle, or of a financier in a great city. But the cheiromant is compelled to establish a standard by which all lives are impartially measured. The most difficult fortunes to tell are those of mediocrity, and they are the most common. Given the hand of a talented actress, of a great soldier, of a statesman or poet, and that is most interesting and easy for the practised cheiromant to read. In stupidity and stagnation he is more often confounded.

Some recent writers on palmistry have attempted to separate it from astrology, and in so doing their arguments are as absurdly incongruous as are the efforts of Christian writers to reconcile the two opposing dogmas of free-will and predestination. No unprejudiced thinker can for a moment entertain their ridiculous sophisms. To accept palmistry and reject astrology is simply to accept a limb while rejecting the whole body, or to believe in a part while denying the whole. Cheiromancy is merely a branch of

astrology. As the latter shows us how the careers of men may be indicated by the place of the planets at birth, so the lines of the hand are simply the written word of Nature in corroboration of the astral positions. Or, to be more explicit, they are the direct results of the planetary influences. Whether brought down to earth by the rays of light penetrating space, or whether transmitted through a more incomprehensible medium, there is no doubt that the subtle forces are always at work. The signature of Nature is invariably stamped upon the hand of the infant at birth, as if the child were a coin fresh from the mint. The physiological cheiromants claim that the tendencies of a man's nature are the result of his ante-natal and ancestral circumstances, instead of direct astral influences, and that it is these tendencies that mould the formations of his hands, and that the events of his life may be explained and foretold by a careful study of these causes, based upon experiences which, in these cases, do duty for experiments. (2) But what shall we say of the constant changing of the lines during life-time, or how account for the actual presence of the lines themselves on any such theory? The argument is altogether too weak and unsupported by other circumstances. The full extent of heredity in this science may be easily found to consist in the shape of the palm and fingers. Here Nature performs another of her miracles which would be remarkable if not an every-day occurrence. Just as the features of the face resemble the parents, so does the shape of the hand in many respects resemble that of the parent. And it must do so, of course, in all instances where the child inherits the disposition of its parents, thus proving the law of signature. But the lines on the palm are always different, and never bear any resemblance to the lining of the parent's hand. Here again the law is proved, for the career of the son is seldom or never a duplicate of that of his father. No heredity can possibly influence the lines. In fact, there is no possible escape for us, in seeking a natural

explanation of the causes of the lines, except in the plain logical and *astrological* deductions of ancient cheiromancy.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Note. — The reader will observe the distinction made between the two branches of palmistry, *viz* , cheirognomy and cheiromancy. ([return to text](#))

2. Heron-Allen, *Manual of Cheirosophy*, p. 68. ([return to text](#))

The Path

REINCARNATION AND MEMORY: III — *Harij*

III.

In the further discussion of this subject we need a few terms with definite meanings such as every one can understand. We are looking at the doctrine of re-incarnation from a single standpoint, and for this one view a comprehensive philosophy and exhaustive classification are not necessary. We need only to appeal to common experience and to logical deductions drawn therefrom. The self-conscious center in man we call the *ego*. Experience is the varied relations existing between the ego and all its surroundings or environment resulting in action. Action implies reaction. If the ego in man acts upon his environment, so environment re-acts upon the ego. This action and re-action constitute man's experience. The law of this action, that is, the direct relation between action and re-action, is that of all force, all attraction, all motion everywhere, viz., quantity and quality are both mathematical and rhythmical. Circular motion begets circular motion, like attracts like. For every given impulse sent out a like impulse is returned, both as to form and as to intensity or quantity. The self-conscious center in man, the *ego*, the "I," stands in the center of his "sphere of life," is the center of his environment, and it therefore actually stands between two worlds; the seen and the unseen; the world of action and the world of thought; the world of effects and the world of causes. Now the unseen world of causes, whence come our thoughts, our impulses, the "within" to all of man's outer world, or the center of his sphere, is also the *noumenal* or spiritual world, as contrasted with his phenomenal or physical world. Man's experience, therefore, whether he is aware of it or not, is drawn constantly from these two worlds, though seldom in equal degree. We say of

one, "he is a man of action"; of another, "he is a man of thought." We say of one, "he is spiritually minded"; of another, "he is carnally minded." We say of one, "he lives on a low plane"; of another, "he is high-minded." It may thus be seen that both our observation and common experience have become stereotyped in forms of common expression. The logical deduction thus drawn from common experience and observation leads to the conception that man is a conscious center between an upper and a lower world, or, if you please, that the "sphere" of man's life, of which the *ego* is the conscious center, is composed of two semi-spheres. A perfect sphere is an ideal in nature. It is the design drawn by the *Architect* upon the phenomenal trestle-board of nature. In outer nature the sphere is always imperfect. Every fruit, like an apple, for example, has an actual center just as an ideal sphere which it represents has an ideal center. These ideals only are perfect. The core, or seed-pit of the apple, is its center of life, but the two halves made by cleavage through the core are neither equal nor symmetrical, hence they are imperfect. The design of nature is its ideal. Without this ideal there could be no persistence of form, no such thing as species, no correspondences, no harmony.

Now to return to the life of man, let us observe that, relatively independent of nature's ideals, he has also his own ideals, and that these ideals or aims more or less shape his life. Man's ideals are a compound derived from his appetites, passions, or desires, on the one hand, and his aspirations, hopes, and disappointments, on the other. All these make up the round of his experience, and constitute his sphere of life. As to symmetry man's sphere is thus distorted. With the *ego* as the center, if man's sphere of life is to be rounded to perfection, his experience should be so adjusted that it shall pertain equally to the two worlds of which his consciousness takes equal cognisance. His thought shall inspire

his action, and his action shall again give rise to thought. He will thus act consciously and designedly, rather than impulsively or passionately. Man would thus have a rounded experience and a range of consciousness that would be both extended and clear, and by so adjusting his experience of the two worlds in which his ego abides, by checking one set of experiences with the other, he would have real knowledge of both.

As a matter of fact, there are individuals who in one short life have well-nigh exhausted physical sensuous experience. The aged Faust was exactly in this condition. But in such cases, the development being altogether one-sided and the experience pertaining so largely to the gross and material, the range of consciousness is really very narrow indeed. The vehicle of this experience, the physical body, is cast off at death, and the ego thus released and rounding up its experience on the higher or spiritual plane would find itself confined to very narrow dimensions. With little conscious experience in the higher realm which now constitutes the theatre of its being, and its familiar channels destroyed, with no organ of physical memory like the physical brain, there could remain but a confused precipitate in consciousness by which even the recent experiences of earth-life could be retained, and this must soon fade away. The ego now enters on a new phase of existence, in the world of causes, but where it has to work out, or "experience", the effects of its recent life on earth. When these have run their course and become exhausted, let us say that it returns to life on earth. Nothing remains of its former life save only precipitated results. The former body is destroyed, and the senses of its former life changed beyond recognition. In other words, nothing remains of the former personality. The precipitated results as impulses to new activities belong to the individual life, or to the real ego. Thus the personal and the individual memory differ as do the elements

of a compound from the precipitated result in life's alembic.

The Path

BROTHERHOOD — *J. D. Buck*

A great deal has been recently written in regard to the Brotherhood of Man. It is a frequent theme in many directions, and is liable to repeat the experience so often seen, so seldom understood. "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" is as good a slogan for the mob, the priest, and the gibbet as any other. "Brotherhood" may serve as the slogan of the devil. There is a brotherhood of thieves, of assassins, of *thugs*, no less than of humanity. There is thus both a true and a false meaning to the word "brotherhood," just as there is to every other word. It would perhaps be more accurate to say that there is one true meaning, and that all others, all uses and applications other than that, are false.

Sometimes great reluctance is shown in admitting the fact that all mankind are brothers, and even when a tacit assent is given there are certain explicit qualifications and exceptions. As though the assent or the denial of puny man could alter a fact in nature. Though every being in the universe turned Cain; and though every man's hand were raised against every other, till the earth steamed with blood and rotted with gore; the last survivor of the race in the holocaust of humanity would have to face the fact that every silent victim was and is his brother.

Not only is every human being thus akin, but this kinship is a basic and universal principle in nature, and extends to all life, to every thing that breathes, that walks, or flies, or crawls. Indeed, there is nothing else but life; it is diffused everywhere, and it is *One*.

A mere intellectual assent to this broadest and clearest fact in nature is but the beginning of wisdom. Such assent marks a degree of intelligence, but is in no sense meritorious. It hence

follows that the profession of belief in the Universal Brotherhood of man carries with it no necessary virtue, any more than profession of Christianity makes one necessarily Christ-like. In fact, there is a close similarity in these two cases both as regards nature and results.

The first and only binding principle of the present T. S. is said to be the Universal Brotherhood of man without the least qualification or reservation. "To form a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood" summarizes the entire object and aim of the Society. It is not the mere announcement of the universal fact already referred to that constitutes the motive of the T. S., nor does the admission of the fact by the individual on joining the society constitute him a theosophist. A true theosophist is one who recognizes the fact of brotherhood and who aims continually without the least pretense or self-deception to conform to the principle and requirements of Universal Brotherhood. The measure in which different individuals may succeed in this constant conformity in thought, word, and act will necessarily differ. No one who makes a sincere and determined effort can altogether fail, no matter how great his natural selfishness may be, and no one can make the least honest effort in that direction without being bettered by just so much.

To profess belief in the universal brotherhood of man, therefore, by any fair and intelligent construction involves two things. First, an intellectual assent to brotherhood as a fact; and second, a determined effort to act in accordance with the implied relation at all times and in all circumstances. It does not imply that any one professing such belief has reached the point of perfection; that he is always reasonable, just, and charitable; but it does imply that he is using his best endeavor to become so; and such an one will learn from his own failures and lapses into passion and selfishness how difficult a task he has undertaken. Self-

conquest alone can satisfy the ethical claims of the Brotherhood of Humanity. As a rule, the members of the T. S. understand this principle and exercise it to a far larger degree than a certain class of their critics. Brotherhood does not imply that falsehood may not be exposed, or misstatements denied, for herein lies a large part of the advocacy of truth. It does, however, imply charity toward the faults and mistakes of individuals, even of our enemies and traducers. All that has been said relating to the T. S. and the Brotherhood of man equally applies to Christianity. Pure Theosophy is but another name for genuine Christianity; self-conquest and altruism being the aim in each, and being equally the basis whence arise the regeneration of man and the true illumination of the understanding.

The Path

THE SOCIETY AND ITS OBJECT — *Arthur Gebhard*

The three objects of the Theosophical Society are: 1st., to form a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood without distinction of race, creed, or color; 2nd, the study of religions and the finding of the basic unity underlying them all; 3rd, the development of the inner senses in man.

In reality these three objects are one, *viz.*, Universal Brotherhood; and the longing to attain it constitutes the sole requirement to become a member. If the Society was a mere copy of such societies as the Odd Fellows or the Free Masons, its coming in the world would indeed have been worse than useless. The Theosophical Society must be able to show some inherent superiority, to have any claim for its existence. I think this can be easily shown. Leaving aside the underlying truth of the masonic ritual, we are well aware that all occult vitality long ago left this august body. It is just the claim of occult *life* which makes the Theosophical Society superior to all the rest. If all the members of the Theosophical Society were practical occultists, that is, men whose sole aim was with self-abnegation to develop the inner senses, and through their development to discover the basic unity of all religions and thence to attain to a comprehension of Universal Brotherhood, then indeed nothing farther need be stated than the three objects of the Society. But the founding of the Theosophical Society had evidently a greater scope in view than to be merely a band of the men who had already found the way. It was evidently intended as a nursery for those who, dissatisfied with the explanations from pulpit or professor, were seeking the more deeply-hidden truth. The forming of rules and by-laws, institutions like President, Secretaries, Councillors, and the like, plainly show that the infant occultist has to keep his toys

in order to find the nursery at all attractive. Looking back on myself and on those who joined the Society about the same time with me. I readily admit that, if the Society or its publications had had nothing but true occultism to give, I, like the rest of my friends, would have refused it with scorn. It is to me a renewed proof of the wisdom of those glorious beings who are supposed to be in connection with the Theosophical Society, that they did not throw pearls before swine, for it is the nature of swine to rend. Swine cannot do otherwise, for the pearls are antagonistic to every fibre of their being.

The superiority of the Theosophical Society, then, lies in the fact that it welcomes every seeker, from the infant up to the man who has found the way. It is expressly stated that the third object is not obligatory, which clearly shows that a nursery was intended for the infant; not a nursery as some thought, where crude, antagonistic to truth, full of conceit and self-love, they would be shown the way by which they could attain to the fulfilment of their desires. No! for such, truly, the Theosophical Society never proved a nursery. Those who entered with the short-comings above stated and a thousand others, yet who had a spark of Truth within them, for those the Society has truly proved a nursery, inasmuch as the experience therein gathered brought to them the first degree of self-knowledge, viz., that what they had been seeking was not the Truth, but an idol of the worst sort, which from their judgment-seat they had declared to be the Beautiful, the Good, and the True.

Universal Brotherhood is a spiritual condition. Its realization would be equal to "I and the Father are one;" and that such realization cannot be brought about by a body which needs modern institutions such as voting, etc., seems very clear. Yet in the Theosophical Society there is room for all, from the man who thinks that Universal Brotherhood can be slowly brought about or

even approximated by raising the ethical standard of the community, or the man who sees in charity the fulfilment of the command "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself", up to him who knows that Universal Brotherhood can be attained alone by the practical road of a mystic or yogi. Just so the second object gladly embraces all seekers, from the student of comparative mythology up to the mystic or yogi who finds that God has in all times expressed but one thought, the salvation of man, *i.e.*, to lead the soul to those heights of boundless peace to which it was destined from the beginning, before the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters; — those heights which awe forbids thought to contemplate.

"He beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me; hatred in those who harbour such thoughts will never cease." —

Dhammapada

"Seek in your heart the source of evil." — *Light on the Path.*

I will now venture to speak to those of my brothers who after some years of ardent work have become dissatisfied, as I *was*, with the Theosophical Society. Their hopes and their dreams were not realized. They find that this or the other act of the officers of the Theosophical Society is not to their liking or conflicts with their standards of ethics and morality. They have studied and searched, they have taught others the new doctrines with the conviction and enthusiasm of converts, yet in a day of disappointment and inward examination they find themselves as empty and ignorant as in the first moment when they started. Some, perhaps, have fared even worse. They may feel that their most sacred feelings have been outraged, that where they asked for bread they have received a stone. To these I should like to say, Be of good cheer! Go deeper yet; you have worked well, otherwise you would not have been rewarded with this tribulation.

Examine yourself; was it really a sacred feeling which has been outraged, or was it a pull at the giant weed — the self-will in your heart? My brother, you will have first to learn that the divine Truth is in no way even like your *ideal* of Truth, to say nothing of your *idea* of her; and so long as you pursue the Truth as the madman pursues the goddess Fortune, so long as you pursue the Truth with the intent of possessing her, so long as you pursue Truth with the smallest conception of what she is, by virtue of the spark of divine love within you which is struggling for life, you must be brought to disappointment and pain.

I find this clearly and beautifully expressed in the note to the first rule of *Light on the Path*, where it is said, "The pure artist who works for the love of his work is sometimes more firmly planted on the right road than the occultist who fancies he has removed his interest from self, but who has in reality only enlarged the limits of experience and desire, and transferred his interest to the things which concern his larger span of life." In this simile of an artist we have a very good guide towards understanding what our attitude ought to be. In art as well as in occultism we find three classes represented. The first class is the priest. He is born a priest, his mission is to be a priest, and his influence will be that of a priest, whatever may be the eccentricities or the shortcomings of the visible man. The second class is that of the devotee. He loves his art; he longs to make every act and every breath of his being a sacrifice at its altar. That this is an impossibility for the human creature is a matter of course, but love covers a multitude of sins, and in proportion as his love is great will he advance in his devotion; his self-sacrifice for the sake of its glory will gain strength daily. The outsider may not perceive much advance; he will cavil and criticize as the personality of the devotee is unsympathetic or disagreeable. But the Goddess, who sees the heart, will reward her devotee with

such insight into her glorious beauty as is incomprehensible and in conceivable to the outsider. Such men often pass away unrecognized or die of hunger in a garret, if their talent is not sufficient to allow them to gain a livelihood. But the spark of love which was allowed to be kindled has gained life eternal, and while shedding at mortal death its force over a barren world, it is surrounded by light which darkness cannot comprehend. The third class care for art as a man fancies a dog. They call it love, but they have not a spark of love. Its ranks are generally recruited from those who have great talent, but who seek, through the manifestation of their talent, either riches or the satisfaction of their vanity. They work hard, probably harder than the devotee, and are courted and thought much of by the world, but their work and their energy do not spring from the fountain of love but from the giant weed. So it is with occultists. There are few, if any, of the so-called devotees, certainly none of the disappointed ones, who will not find by self-examination that they have belonged to the third class. And if they have so found, let them go down on their knees and thank their Creator for the first glimpse of self-knowledge, the gift of that spark of love buried in the grave of self.

The Path

POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE FOURTH DIMENSION —

H. T. Edge

In referring to an article on the Fourth Dimension in the April and June numbers of the *PATH*, I give the writer full credit for the able way in which he has expounded Mr. Hinton's views. But I must at the same time point out some fallacies in the usual course of reasoning adopted on this subject. The first mistake is to regard "space" as capable of existing independently of matter. Occult Science teaches that "space" (better called "Extension") is one of the several properties of matter, and cannot exist without it. Three-Dimensionality is an attribute of "extension," and is essential to it, so that there can be no extension except in three directions. Mr. Hinton starts with the assumption that matter is three-dimensional, but if the view of occult science be right as above given, it is not matter, but extension, that has this quality. His inquiry may be translated in two ways: "Are there beings possessing extension in two directions?", or, "Are there beings without the property of extension at all?" The answer to the first question is, No; it is essential to extension that it be in three directions. Mr. Hinton's ideal square is impossible, for who can conceive of a square which has only one side and cannot be turned over?

The answer to the second is, There probably are entities without extension, but they are not matter as we know it, and cannot be visualized in any way.

Mr. Hinton's reasoning is very specious, and his deductions from his premises are very correct; but it must be borne in mind that forms are merely symbolical and not real, and should be relegated to the same category as algebraical expressions. Nobody

regards quadratic or cubic equations as actually existing entities, but simply as symbolical conceptions, and all reasoning with regard to forms should be treated in the same way. One of his deductions is that to a four-dimensional being all points of a solid are equally accessible. This is an attribute of the astral man with his astral senses, and is coexistent with the abolition of extension, not with the presence of a more developed form of it, as Mr. Hinton holds. Certainly, on reading *A New Era of Thought* one is impressed with the conviction that the author has arrived at important occult truths by the application of his method, among which is the idea of the unity of the higher self in all men; but I venture to suggest that by means of this arduous system of mental discipline he is developing his astral senses, and that, instead of being able to travel mentally in four directions, he will find that there is no necessity to travel in any direction at all, extension having been entirely abolished.

In conclusion I will quote *Secret Doctrine*, Vol. 1, p. 251, which your readers will find very suggestive: —

"To begin with, of course the superficial absurdity of assuming that Space itself is measurable in any direction is of little consequence. The familiar phrase ('fourth dimension of Space') can only be an abbreviation of the fuller form — the fourth dimension of *Matter* in Space! But it is an unhappy phrase even thus expanded, because, while it is perfectly true that the progress of evolution may be destined to introduce us to new characteristics of matter, those with which we are already familiar are really more numerous than the three dimensions. The faculties, or what is perhaps the best available term, the characteristics of matter, must clearly bear a direct relation always to the senses of man. Matter has extension, colour, motion (molecular motion), taste, and smell,

corresponding to the existing senses of man, and by the time that it fully develops the next characteristic — let us call it for the moment Permeability — this will correspond to the next sense of man — let us call it 'Normal Clairvoyance'; thus when some bold thinkers have been searching for a fourth dimension to explain the passage of matter through matter, and the production of knots upon an endless cord, what they were really in want of was a *sixth characteristic of matter*.

The three dimensions belong really to but one attribute or characteristic of matter — extension; and popular common sense justly rebels against the idea that under any condition of things there can be more than three of such dimensions as length, breadth, and thickness. These terms, and the term 'dimension' itself, all belong to one plane of thought, to one stage of evolution, to one characteristic of matter. So long as there are foot-rules within the resources of Cosmos to apply to matter, so long will they be able to measure it three ways and no more; and from the time the idea of measurement first occupied a place in the human understanding, it has been possible to apply measurement in three directions and no more. But these considerations do not in any way militate against the certainty that in the progress of time — as the faculties of humanity are multiplied — so will the characteristics of matter be multiplied also. Meanwhile, the expression is far more incorrect than even the familiar one of the 'Sun setting and rising.'"

REINCARNATION AND MEMORY: IV — *Harij*

IV.

Memory as a faculty of man is one of the normal functions of the human brain. It is the record of the process of events, external objects in relation to sensations and feelings occurring in consciousness, instigated by will or desire, or passively experienced or submitted to. The brain is the organ of memory, the physical basis within or upon which is recorded this moving panorama of events. The pictures of memory are associated incidents, brought to consciousness through the channels of perception, feeling, or emotion. In the exercise of the faculty of memory, "recollection," we re-collect these experiences by suggestion; the order of association of events enables us to gather again the links of the chain. Memory is the faculty, re-collection its function, and the brain is the centre to which aggregate and from which radiate this group of experiences. These brain pictures are moving panoramas and concern events, and they can no more be repeated than any two other objects in nature can be duplicated. They may, however, be approximately recovered. Such recovery is at best but a faint, disjointed, and imperfect echo of their originals. The external objects have changed or disappeared: the feelings and emotions have changed or cannot be again experienced. An idea wakens the echo of past experience, and the result is *remembrance*. If by an effort of the will we recover the chain of experiences or emotions, it is *re-collection*. Memory, remembrance, and recollection are all phenomenal in character, that is, they are moving events occurring in time. The brain and its function belong to the same category. Therefore repetition is impossible, and recovery is never more than partial or approximate. All these belong to the

physical side of memory. But memory has another side, viz., the *noumenal*. To illustrate. Let us suppose certain events occurring in time and brought to the individual consciousness, and let us number these 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Sensation experiences these events, and memory records within the brain both the facts and their *order of occurrence*. An idea by association spontaneously wakens the echo of the former events, and we approximately *remember*. We search for these events consciously by an effort of the will and we approximately *re-collect*, always however, with missing links, either as to order or strength of details. Now let us group our numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, =15. We have now the *sum* of the previous experience, the details of which have disappeared. The will can no longer recover the details 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and the sum of these, 15, bears a different relation to consciousness. We have "*forgotten*" the details past all recovery, but an experience once had can never be *as though it had not been*. It has wrought its effect, and if it is ever in any way recovered or recalled it is a *reminiscence*. Physical memory is to reminiscence what the elements of a mixture are to a compound. In one we have separate details, and an orderly sequence of relations. These belong to *time*. In the other we have the precipitate occurring in life's alembic, and this belongs to "*eternity*." The first is phenomenal; the second *noumenal*, upon which time has ceased to act, for it has become part of our very selves. Memory belongs to the personality of time and sense. Reminiscence belongs to the permanent individual. Memory is the field-notes in the realm of thought. Reminiscence is the permanent record in the realm of intuition, the title-deed of the permanent possessions of the soul (*ego*). (See *The Key to Theosophy*, pages 124 & 125.)

Our illustration from the well-known facts of chemistry carries us still further. Reminiscence as compared with physical memory is in no sense a loss, but a far higher result. No knowledge that

could possibly be derived from the study of the uncombined elements oxygen and hydrogen could ever pre-suppose water, and nothing short of analysis would show that water is a union of these two substances. Oxygen and hydrogen seem to have disappeared altogether, and something entirely different to have taken their place. Definite association seems to have brought to light latent properties hitherto unsuspected. They have passed from the plane of elements to that of compounds. Even so are memory and reminiscence related. The details of experience as the result of sensation and consciousness, when precipitated as resultants, become motives, causes, instead of results, and so color all future experiences. These having become part of the ego, are carried along with it; not as accretions, but as essences. Here is the logical basis of intuition, as rational as anything we know of physical memory. In the long journey of the soul, even during one incarnation, it is not lumbered up and loaded down with the accretions of memory. In place of the carloads of ore we have the portable ingots of bright metal. We learn by experience; not by the mere record of its facts, but by the potency of its results. If the record were all, it would soon become, indeed, a lost record of a dead language, a shadow upon a wall, leaving its own trace, but presently so overlaid by other shadows, so confused and blended, as to be past all recovery. Reminiscence is to memory what the spirit is to the physical body, — that which alone gives it life and renders it immortal. Are not these facts and relations common experiences in our present life? Let us see.

The Path

CYCLES — *William Q. Judge*

In advancing these few observations upon the doctrine of cycles, no claim to an exhaustive study of the matter is made. This paper is merely by way of suggestion.

The subject was brought before my mind by our discussion some evenings ago, when the question of the descent upon earth, or ascent from it, of celestial beings or progressed souls engaged our attention. It seemed certain that such ascent and descent were governed by cyclic laws, and therefore proceeded in regular periods. Some sentences from the *Wisdom of the Egyptians* by Synesius in matter furnished me by Bro. Chas Johnston, now of India, read:

"After Osiris, therefore, was initiated by his father into the royal mysteries, the gods informed him * * that a strong tribe of envious and malignant daemons were present with Typhos as his patrons, to whom he was allied and by whom he was hurled forth into light, in order that they might employ him as an instrument of the evil which they inflict on mankind. For the calamities of nations are the banquets of the evil daemons. * * *

"Yet you must not think that the gods are without employment, or that their descent to this earth is perpetual. For they *descend according to orderly periods of time*, for the purpose of imparting a beneficent impulse in the republics of mankind. But this happens when they harmonize a kingdom and send to this earth for that purpose souls who are allied to themselves. For this providence is divine and most ample, which frequently through one man pays attention to and affects countless

multitudes of men.

"For there is indeed in the terrestrial abode the sacred tribe of heroes who pay attention to mankind, and who are able to give them assistance even in the smallest concerns. * * This heroic tribe is, as it were, a colony from the gods established here in order that this terrene abode may not be left destitute of a better nature. But when matter excites her own proper blossoms to war against the soul, the resistance made by these heroic tribes is small when the gods are absent; for everything is strong only in its appropriate place and time. * * But when the harmony adapted in the beginning by the gods to all terrene things becomes old, they descend again to earth that they may call the harmony forth, energize and resuscitate it when it is as it were expiring. * * When, however, the whole order of mundane things, greatest and least, is corrupted, then it is necessary that the gods should descend for the purpose of imparting another orderly distribution of things."

And in the Bhagavad Gita it is said by Krishna:

"When Righteousness
Declines, O Bharata! when Wickedness
Is strong, I rise, from age to age, and take
Visible shape, and move *a man with men*,
Succoring the good and thrusting the evil back,
And setting Virtue on her seat again,"

And

"At the approach of Brahma's day, which ends after a thousand ages, all manifested objects come forth from the non-developed principle. At the approach of Brahma's night they are absorbed in the original principle. This

collective mass of existing things, thus coming forth out of the absolute again and again, is dissolved at the approach of that night; and at the approach of a new day it emanates again spontaneously."

In the foregoing quotations two great aspects of cyclic law are stated.

The latter has reference to the great cycle which includes all cycles of every kind. All the minor cycles run their course within it. When it begins a new creation is ushered in, and when it ends the great day of dissolution has arrived. In Arnold's translation of the Bhagavad Gita the beginning of this great cycle is beautifully called by him "*this vast Dawn*," and of the close he reads:

"When that deep night doth darken, all which is
Fades back again to Him who sent it forth."

The real figures expressing the mortal years included in this period are not given. Each Manwantara, according to the Hindus, is divided into the four Yugas or Ages, with a certain number of years allotted to each. Speaking on this subject in the "Key to Theosophy" (page 83), H. P. Blavatsky gives us a clue thus:

"Take as a first comparison and a help towards a more correct conception, the solar year; and as a second, the two halves of that year, producing each a day and a night of six months' duration at the North Pole. Now imagine, if you can, instead of a solar year of 365 clays, eternity. Let the sun represent the universe, and the polar days and nights of six months each — days and nights lasting each 182 trillions and quadrillions of years instead of 182 days each. As the sun rises every morning on our objective horizon out of its (to us) subjective and antipodal space, so does the Universe emerge periodically on the plane of objectivity,

issuing from that of subjectivity — the antipodes of the former. This is the 'Cycle of Life.' And as the sun disappears from our horizon, so does the Universe disappear at regular periods when the 'Universal Night' sets in. * * "

This is about the best idea we can get of it. It is impossible for the human mind to conceive these periods. No brain can grasp 182 trillions of years, much less if quadrillions are added. Few if any persons can mentally traverse the full extent of even *a million*. But we can make an approximation to the idea by using her suggestion of dividing the year and calling six months a day and six months a night, and then extending each into what is equivalent to infinity with us, since it is impossible to seize such immense periods of time.

And carrying out the correspondence suggested by her, we have at once a figure of the inclusion of all the minor cycles, by calling each day when we rise and night when we sleep as the beginning and ending of minor cycles. Those days and nights go to make up our years and our life. We know each day and can calculate it, and fairly well throw the mind forward to see a year or perhaps a life.

A quotation from Vol 1., at 31 of *Isis Unveiled* will give us the Indian figures. She says:

"The Maha Kalpa embraces an untold number of periods far back in the antediluvian ages. Their system comprises a Kalpa or grand period of 4,320, 000,000 years which they divide into four lesser yugas running as follows:

Satya Yug	1,728,000 years.
Treta Yug	1,296,000 "
Dwapara Yug	864,000 "
Kali Yug	432,000 "

Total 4,320,000

which makes one divine age or Maha yuga; seventy-one Maha Yugas make 306,720,000 years, to which is added a sandhi, or twilight, equal to a Satya yuga or 1,728,000 years, to make a manwantara of 308,448,000 years.

Fourteen manwantaras make 4,318,272,000 years, to which must be added a sandhihamsa or dawn, 1,728,000, making the Kalpa or grand period of 4,320,000,000. As we are now (1878) only in the Kali Yuga of the 28th age of the 7th manwantara of 308,448,000 years, we have yet sufficient time before us to wait before we reach over half of the time allotted to the world."

Further H. P. Blavatsky clearly states that the other cycles are carried out within this greater one, as at 34, vol. 1.

"As our planet revolves once every year around the sun and at the same time once in every 24 hours upon its own axis, thus traversing minor cycles within a larger one, so is the work of the smaller cyclic periods accomplished and recommenced within the great Saros."

Leaving the region of mathematics, we find this great period represents the extension of pigmy man into the vast proportions of the great man, whose death at the close of the allotted period means the resolving of all things back into the absolute. Each of the years of this Being embraces of our years so many that we cannot comprehend them. Each day of his years brings on a minor cataclysm among men; for at the close of each one of his days, metaphorically he sleeps. And we, as it were, imitating this Being, fall asleep at night or after our diurnal period of activity.

We are as minor cells in the great body of this Being, and must act obediently to the impulses and movements of the body in which

we are enclosed and take part.

This greater man has a period of childhood, of youth, of manhood, of old age; and as the hour arrives for the close of each period, cataclysms take place over all the earth. And just as our own future is concealed from our view, so the duration of the secret cycle which shows the length of life of this Being is hidden from the sight of mortals.

We must not, however, fall into the error of supposing that there is but one of such great Beings. There are many, each being evolved at the beginning of a new creation. But here we touch upon a portion of the ancient philosophy which is fully explained only to those who are able to understand it by virtue of many initiations.

The Sandhya and Sandhyahamsa referred to in the quotation taken from *Isis Unveiled* are respectively the twilight and the dawn, each being said to be of the same length and containing the same number of years as the first or golden age — *i.e.* 1,728,000. It is in strict correspondence with our own solar day which has its twilight and dawn between day and night.

In going over the figures of the four ages, a peculiarity is noticed to which I refer at present as merely a curiosity. It is this:

The digits of Satya Yug 1. 7. 2. 8. added together make 18; those of Treta Yug 1. 2. 9. 6 make 18; those of Dwapana Yug 8. 6. 4 make 18; while those of Kali Yug 4. 3. 2 sum up only 9; but if those of the grand total of 4,320,000 be added together they make 9, and that with Kali give 18 again. 18 is a number peculiar to Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, and the poem has 18 chapters in it. If the three 18's and one 9 found as above be added together, the result will be 63, and $3 \times 6 = 18$, and if added make 9, and 18 added gives nine. If we multiply the three 18's and 9 produced from the different

ages, we get 5. 8. 3. 2. which, if treated as before, give 18 again. And in the process of thus multiplying we discover a recurrence of the three eighteens and one 9, only inverted, as: The first 18 multiplied by the second one gives 3. 2. 4, which added results in 9; 324 multiplied by third 18 gives 5. 8. 3. 2, which being added gives 18; and the product of the multiplication of 5,832 by 9, which is the result of adding the figures of Kali Yuga, is 5. 8. 4. 1, which on being added gives 18 again. Now, as the last of these apparently fanciful operations, let us add together the results gained by multiplying the figures which were obtained during the various steps we have gone through and then adding the results.

The first figures are $1 \times 8 =$	8.
The second $3 \times 2 \times 4 =$	24.
The third $5 \times 8 \times 3 \times 2 =$	240.
The fourth $5 \times 8 \times 4 \times 1 =$	160.
These added together give	4.3.2,

which are the digits of Kali Yuga.

Now turning to *Isis Unveiled* at p. 32 of Vol. 1, we find this remarkable paragraph:

"Higgins justly believed that the cycle of the Indian system, of 432,000, is the true key of the secret cycle."

But in the following paragraph she declares it cannot be revealed. However, we may get some clues, for we see in the figures of Kali Yuga, 432,000, and in the great total (leaving out the Sandhis), 4,320,000. What this secret cycle is, I, however, am not competent to say I only desire to throw out the hints.

Having thus glanced over the doctrine of the great cycle which includes all others, let us now devote a little consideration to the cycle referred to in the passages from the *Egyptian Wisdom* first quoted.

This cycle may be called for the present purpose *The Cycle of Descending Celestial Influences*. By "descending" I mean descending upon us.

Osiris here signifies most probably the good side of nature, and his brother Typhos the evil. Both must appear together. Typhos is sometimes called in the Egyptian books the opposer, and later with us, is known as the Devil. This appearance of Typhos at the same time with Osiris is paralleled in the history of the Indian Krishna who was a white Adept, for at the same time there also reigned a powerful Black magician named Kansa, who sought to destroy Krishna in the same way as Typhos conspired against the life of Osiris. And Rama also, in Hindu lore the great Adept or ruling god, was opposed by Ravana, the powerful Black magician king.

In instructing Osiris after the initiation, the gods foresaw two questions that might arise within him and which will also come before us. The first is the idea that if the gods are alive and do not mingle with men to the advantage of the latter and for the purpose of guiding them, then they must necessarily be without any employment. Such a charge has been made against the Beings who are said to live in the Himalayas, possessed of infinite knowledge and power. If, say the public, they know so much, why do not they come among us; and as they do not so come, then they must be without employment, perpetually brooding over nothing.

The instructor answered this in advance by showing how these Beings — called gods — governed mankind through efficient causes proceeding downward by various degrees; the gods being perpetually concerned in their proper sphere with those things relating to them, and which in their turn moved other causes that produced appropriate effects upon the earth, and themselves only coming directly into earthly relations when that became

necessary at certain "orderly periods of time," upon the complete disappearance of harmony which would soon be followed by destruction if not restored. Then the gods themselves descend. This is after the revolution of many smaller cycles. The same is said in Bhagavad-Gita.

But frequently during the minor cycles it is necessary, as the *Egyptian Wisdom* says, "to impart a beneficent impulse in the republics of mankind." This can be done by using less power than would be dissipated were a celestial Being to descend upon earth, and here the doctrine of the influence among us of Nirmanakayas (1) or Gnanis is supported in the Egyptian scheme in these words:

"For there is indeed in the terrestrial abode the sacred tribe of heroes, who pay attention to mankind, and who are able to give them assistance even in the smallest concerns."

"This heroic tribe is, as it were, a colony from the gods established here in order that this terrene abode may not be left destitute of a better nature."

These "heroes" are none other than Nirmanakayas — Adepts of this or previous Manwantaras — who remain here in various states or conditions. Some are not using bodies at all, but keep spirituality alive among men in all parts of the world; and others are actually using bodies in the world. Who the latter are it would of course be impossible for me to know, and if I had the information, to give it out would be improper.

And among this "sacred tribe of heroes" must be classed other souls. They are those who, although now inhabiting bodies and moving among men, have passed through many occult initiations in previous lives, but are now condemned, as it were, to the penance of living in circumstances and in bodies that hem them in, as well as for a time make them forget the glorious past. But

their influence is always felt, even if they themselves are not aware of it. For their higher nature being in fact more developed than that of other men, it influences other natures at night or in hours of the day when all is favorable. The fact that these *obscured adepts* are not aware now of what they really are, only has to do with their memory of the past; it does not follow, because a man cannot remember his initiations, that he has had none. But there are some cases in which we can judge with a degree of certainty that such adepts were incarnated and what they were named. Take Thomas Vaughan, Raymond Lully, Sir Thomas More, Jacob Boehme, Paracelsus, and others like them, including also some of the Roman Catholic saints. These souls were as witnesses to the truth, leaving through the centuries, in their own nations, evidences for those who followed, and suggestions for keeping spirituality bright, — seed-thoughts, as it were, ready for the new mental soil. And as well as these historical characters, there are countless numbers of men and women now living who have passed through certain initiations during their past lives upon earth, and who produce effects in many directions quite unknown to themselves now. They are, in fact, old friends of "the sacred tribe of heroes", and can therefore be more easily used for the spreading of influences and the carrying out of effects necessary for the preservation of spirituality in this age of darkness. We find in our present experience a parallel to this forgetting of previous initiations. There is hardly one of us who has not passed through circumstances in early life, all of which we have forgotten, but which ever since sensibly affect our thoughts and life. Hence the only point about which any question can be raised is that of reincarnation. If we believe in that doctrine, there is no great difficulty in admitting that many of us may have been initiated to some extent and forgotten it for the time. In connection with this we find in the 2nd volume of the *Secret Doctrine*, at page 302,

some suggestive words. The author says:

"Now that which the students of Occultism ought to know is that the third eye is indissolubly connected with Karma.

* * In the case of the Atlanteans, it was precisely the spiritual being which sinned, the spirit element being still the 'Master' principle in man in those days. *Thus it is that in those days the heaviest Karma* of the fifth race was generated *by our Monads.* * * *

Hence the assertion that many of us are now working off the effects of the evil Karmic causes *produced by us in Atlantean bodies.*"

In another place she puts the date of the last Atlantean destruction as far back as 11,000 years ago, and describes them as a people of immense knowledge and power. If we allow about 1,000 years for our period in Devachan, we will have only passed through some eleven incarnations since then; and supposing that many more have been our lot — as is my opinion, then we have to place ourselves among those wonderful though wicked people at the height of their power. Granting that we were guilty of the sinful practices of the days in which we then lived, and knowing the effect of Karma, it must follow that since then we have passed through many very disagreeable and painful lives, resembling by analogy dreadful situations in the years between youth and maturity. No wonder, then, if for the time we have forgotten outwardly what we then learned.

But all these historical personages to whom I have referred were living in a dark cycle that affected Europe only. These cycles do not cover the whole of the human race, fortunately for it, but run among the nations influenced for the allotted period, while other peoples remain untouched. Thus while Europe was in darkness,

all India was full of men, kings and commoners alike, who possessed the true philosophy; for a different cycle was running there.

And such is the law as formulated by the best authorities. It is held that these cycles do not include the whole of mankind at any one time. In this paper I do not purpose to go into figures, for that requires a very careful examination of the deeds and works of numerous historical personages in universal history, so as to arrive by analysis at correct periods.

It is thought by many that the present is a time when preparation is being made by the most advanced of the "sacred tribe of heroes" for a new cycle in which the assistance of a greater number of progressed souls from other spheres may be gained for mankind. Indeed, in *Isis Unveiled* this is plainly stated.

Writing in 1878, Madame Blavatsky says in vol. 1 of *Isis*:

"Unless we mistake the signs, the day is approaching when the world will receive the proofs that only ancient religions were in harmony with nature, and ancient science embraced all that can be known. Secrets long-kept may be revealed; books long-forgotten and arts long-time-lost may be brought out to light again; papyri and parchments of inestimable importance will turn up in the hands of men who pretend to have unrolled them from mummies or stumbled upon them in buried crypts; tablets and pillars, whose sculptured revelations will stagger theologians and confound scientists, may yet be excavated and interpreted. Who knows the possibilities of the future? *An era of disenchantment and rebuilding will soon begin — nay, has already begun. The cycle has almost run its course; a new one is about to begin*, and the future pages of history may contain full proof that

"If ancestry can be in aught believed,
Descending spirits have conversed with man,
And told him secrets of the world unknown."

Now the way to get at the coming on of the period or close of a larger cycle without wandering in the mazes of figures, is to regard the history and present state of mankind as known.

Thus in the darker age of Europe we find India almost unknown and America wholly so. That was a period when cycles were operating apart from each other, for men were separated from and ignorant of each other. In these continents there were great and powerful nations ruling in both North and South America, but they were not in communication with Europe or India.

Now, however, China knows of and communicates with England and America, and even dark Africa has constant visitors from all civilized nations, and to some extent is affected by us. Doubtless in the greater number of towns in Africa the white man and his doings are more or less like fables, but we with larger knowledge know that those fables rest upon the *fact* of our explorations there.

Judging, then, from the appearances in the affairs of men, we can conclude that now some great cycle is either ending or beginning, and that a number of minor circles are approaching each other.

At the same time with these social or material cycles, there are corresponding ones on a higher plane. One is quite easy to trace. It is the influence of Eastern metaphysics upon the Western mind. This higher cycle had been revolving for many years among the Orientals before we came within its power. Our falling under it is due to a physical cycle as a means. That one which is represented in the progress of trade, of science, of means for transportation. In this way the philosophical system of India and Tibet has begun

to affect us, and no man can calculate its course.

Taking into account the spiritual cycles all so intimately connected with Karma and reincarnation, one would be compelled to conclude that this cycle will not be slow or weak. For, if we in Europe and America are the reincarnations of the ancients who formulated this philosophy, we must certainly be powerfully affected upon having it presented to our notice in this life. And as the very air is getting filled with theosophical ideas, and children are growing up every day, the conclusion is irresistible that as the new generation grows up it will be more familiar with theosophical terms and propositions than we were in our youths. For in every direction now, children are likely to hear Karma, Reincarnation, Buddhism, Theosophy, and all these ideas mentioned or discussed. In the course of twenty-five years, then, we shall find here in the United States a large and intelligent body of people believing once more in the very doctrines which they, perhaps ages ago, helped to define and promulgate.

Why not, then, call one of our present cycles the cycle of the Theosophical Society? It began in 1875, and, aided by other cycles then beginning to run, it has attained some force. Whether it will revolve for any greater length of time depends upon its earnest members. Members who enter it for the purpose of acquiring ideas merely for their own use will not assist. Mere numbers do not do the work, but sincere, earnest, active, unselfish members will keep this cycle always revolving. The wisdom of those who set it in motion becomes apparent when we begin to grasp somewhat the meaning of cyclic law. The Society could have remained a mere idea and might have been kept entirely away from outward expression in organization. Then, indeed, ideas similar to those prevalent in our Society might have been heard of. But how? Garbled, and presented only here and there, so that perhaps not for half a century later would they be concretely

presented. A wise man, however, knows how to prepare for a tide of spiritual influence. But how could an everyday Russian or American know that 1875 was just the proper year in which to begin so as to be ready for the oncoming rush now fairly set in? To my mind the mere fact that we were organized with a definite platform in that year is strong evidence that the "heroic tribe of heroes" had a hand in our formation. Let us, then, not resist the cycle, nor, complaining of the task, sit down to rest. There is no time for rest. The weak, the despairing, and the doubting may have to wait, but men and women of action cannot stand still in the face of such an opportunity.

Arise, then, O Atlanteans, and repair the mischief done so long ago!

"Roll on, O Wheel, roll on and conquer;
Roll on forevermore!"

FOOTNOTES:

1. For *Nirmanakayas* see "The Voice of the Silence" and its glossary. ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE WHEEL OF THE LAW — *J. Campbell Ver Planck*

I.

When the great King of Glory saw
The heavenly treasure of The Wheel;
The living splendors of the Law
Which all its blazing spokes reveal,
 He stood, as one
 With awe struck dumb;
Then reverently bent his head
And, sprinkling it with water, said;
"Roll onward; oh, my Lord the Wheel!
My Lord! Go forth and overcome."

II.

Roll onward! Worlds shall come and go;
Races arise, and so depart;
The forces ebb, the forces flow
And Thou alone unchanging art.
 Within thy thrall
 The cycles fall
Till, in the dark and central Space
My Lord shall veil his glorious face.
"Roll onward; oh, my Lord the Wheel.
My Lord! Go forth and conquer all."

YOGA AND COMMON SENSE — *J. H. Connelly*

Simple, straightforward, and beguilingly easy as seems the knowledge presented in the "*Yoga Aphorisms*" of Patanjali — in their American version at least, — it is in solemn fact a pathway of intensest difficulty, indeed almost impracticability, for all but the exceptional few of Western students. Ages of deeply devotional habit, metaphysical training, and passive abandonment to such speculative reflection as Western minds are prone to deem the very antithesis of practicality, have given to the men of the Orient a capacity for such pursuits that we are hardly able to comprehend and certainly cannot emulate. To them, that capacity is an inheritance; for us, it must be a slow and painful acquisition. Our very understanding of the significance of the words employed in conveying that knowledge must be remodelled. "Concentration" does not at all mean, to us, what it does to the Hindu philosophers.

A wise man here and there among us — though knowing nothing of Yoga — has comprehended the advantage of "hindering the modifications of the thinking principle" as an essential to the successful pursuit of knowledge or application of mental energy in scientific or professional labors. Hence the study of mathematics and the game of chess have been highly recommended as means to that end in disciplining the minds of the young. But the purpose entertained, in such artificial development of the power of concentration of mind, has not gone beyond controlling application of the entire mental force to a particular subject — generally upon the material plane, — and those most proficient in this art have had no conception of the possibility of development, through it, of such psychic and spiritual powers as are contemplated by Patanjali, and would, in

all probability, view as extremely undesirable, and perhaps as suggestive of mental alienation, the state which that great philosopher designates as "meditation without a seed." The pressure and thrill of vigorous activity in the physical and mental life surrounding us, and of which we are necessarily a part, tends to cultivate in us a habit of diffuseness of thought, or at best an abnormally vivid perceptivity and a capacity for synchronous pursuit of entirely disconnected and different trains of thought, the very opposite of the "one pointedness" sought in the practice of Yoga. At the same time, if to the observation and comprehension of the mental and psychic results of such "concentration" as has been unconsciously accomplished by our thinkers, as much intelligent effort had been applied as has been bestowed upon the study of the infusoria or calculation of the laws of chance governing recurrence of "hands" at cards, we should generally have recognized, long ere this, how very diaphanous are those barriers to the unseen world through which some of us have been involuntarily stumbling, and perhaps would have sought light for a purposeful direction of our steps thitherward, such as Yoga affords. Ever since Luther, looking up from his deep pondering, saw the devil in his room and hurled an inkstand at him, opinions have been divided as to his action upon that occasion. The credulous devout have said, "he really saw the devil." It is true that beyond that point there has been a still further difference, good Protestants saying "the arch-enemy was properly repulsed," and good Catholics averring "it was a most ungracious reception of his friend," — but the actuality of the devil is denied by neither. Materialistic sceptics, however, who are in the majority, respond "Nonsense! A plague on both your houses! The man was bilious. The "bilious" theory is by far the most popular in these later days of "light and knowledge." Physicians, as a rule, upon that theory treat cases akin to Luther's coming within the range of their practice and — if possessed of a

fair degree of skill — are sufficiently successful to feel confirmed in the hypothesis. In so doing they are like one who, being annoyed by the persistent ticking of a clock, stops it, — by plugging up his ears. He ceases to hear, but the clock goes on ticking all the same. So they accomplish their end of putting a stop to the psychic impressions, at least while the patient is under treatment, and do not trouble themselves with reflection upon the possibility that they have simply interfered with the conditions through which demonstrations of super-sensual realities were practicable.

A case recently brought to my knowledge is happily illustrative of the psychic effects of unconsciously-applied "concentration", and as such I deem it worthy of mention. A gentleman who is a highly accomplished mathematician and accustomed to such intent application in mathematical operations, in conjunction with astronomical studies, that he at such times quite loses consciousness of his surroundings, became annoyed and finally alarmed by finding that from time to time, when he was so applying himself, pictures of persons, events, and landscapes — not reproductions from memory — forced themselves upon his consciousness and seemed to be vividly apparent to his corporeal sight. He also observed that, in what seemed to him an astounding way, he at times had clear perceptions of the contents of letters before he opened them, and knowledge — subsequently proved accurate — of the personalities of their writers, who were wholly strangers to him. He had sense enough to know that he was not bilious, and the alarming alternative presenting itself to him, by way of explanation, was that his mind was becoming affected. The thought of the astral light did not occur to him, but if it had he would probably have contemptuously dismissed it as a mere fantasy unworthy of serious consideration; for he is a very positive, hard-headed, big fellow, with not much respect for

things that are not susceptible of mathematical demonstration. He carried his trouble to his doctor. Most physicians, upon hearing a statement of his case, would have said: "You need rest and tonics: Take vigorous open-air exercise, abundance of highly nourishing food, and regular doses of iron: Let up altogether on mathematics, and pretty much on all mental effort of an engrossing nature, for a time: try to become as far as you possibly can a perfectly healthy animal, and you will be all right." That treatment would probably have speedily banished the pictures and the psychometric impressions, and he would always afterward, when the remembrance of the affection recurred to him, have congratulated himself upon his narrow escape from "losing his mind." But, as it happened, he went to a physician possessed of the unprofessional and iconoclastic habit of thinking; one who ventured to believe there were things affecting man that had not been taught in his school. And that man, having heard him, replied complacently: "Yes; I guess you are all right. Your mind is in no danger from that cause. I have kept the fact to myself, as a majority of people are asses and would probably think me crazy if it were known — which might interfere with my practice, — but I have had plenty of such experiences myself and happen to know a good deal about them." That physician, by years of "concentration" upon his favorite studies, had achieved the same results as had been attained by the mathematician, and was fortunately capable of recognizing the cause and the true character of the consequent state of being.

While there are undoubtedly many such cases, they are in the aggregate but an infinitely small minority in society, and can only be looked upon as mere indications of the possibilities attainable by even unconsciously-applied and consequently ill-directed "concentration;" and it may not be too pessimistic a view to take of the situation, to believe that few men entering upon this

practice — however purposefully and intelligently directed — are justified in expecting much more than such indications, mere outcroppings of the inexhaustible mine to be developed hereafter. For the vast majority of us, particularly such as have reached middle age and established mental habits that are, to say the least, not conducive to rigidly restricted abstract meditation on the radiations of the unthinkable and the like, there is little hope that we will achieve any appreciable success in real "concentration", on the Yoga basis, during our present incarnations. Happily, however, we know that we are not limited to our present earth-lives, and that every step of progress we take in this corporeal existence will be so much positive gain in our next. However long it may take us to reach the goal, our opportunities will not cease until it is attained, and, if our endeavor is earnest, each successive stage on the way will be easier and the advance proportionately greater than in that preceding. And the prize to be won is worth continuous effort through a long series of personal existences, being nothing less than enfranchisement of the Ego; liberation from "the wheel of life."

This reflection is a reminder of another difficulty confronting the Western student of Yoga. Although Patanjali does not so explicitly and emphatically as Sankaracharya or the Bhagavad-Gita enjoin renunciation of desire for the legitimate fruits of good works, yet that is here also expressed with sufficient clearness to be understood as a necessary requirement. But the Western mind, which is nothing if not practical according to its lights, says; "What is the use in doing anything if there is no object in view? and, if the object in view is desirable, how is it possible to intelligently work for its attainment without desiring it?" Comprehension of the sublimely paramount requirement of conformity to duty for its own sake, and unquestioning

acceptance of the truth that *all desire is hindrance*, must necessarily be stumbling blocks for most of us in a long time to come, but, like many another hard lesson, must be learned. That renunciation is one of the most important elements of Yoga, one that by its inherency of pure devotion elevates the soul beyond the psychic to the spiritual plane of consciousness.

"Hindering the modifications of the thinking principle," though far short of that Dispassion which is "indifference regarding all else than soul," will confer much greater power than the average man possesses — both in mental labors and such glimpses of another plane as have already been spoken of as attained by the mathematician and the physician, — and that is comparatively easy. One does not need to be very good, or even to have good ends in view, but only a strong will and capacity for sustained effort, to reach that point. Indeed, there are those who, by reason of their peculiar organization, without any particular will or much endeavor, may readily attain the astral plane through self-hypnotization, but their ability is by no means desirable. That plane abounds in real dangers for the untrained and unguided explorer, and can afford little real gratification to one in such a state, since his consciousness is only upon that plane and lacks the permanency of retention as knowledge attainable by the concentrated mind of the Yogin, which does not lose its continuity of consciousness upon any plane that he is able to reach.

It is to be hoped that no member of the Theosophical Society is cultivating strabismus by concentrated contemplation of the tip of his nose, in the vain hope of speedily attaining the superhuman powers spoken of in the third book of Patanjali; or fancying that the adumbrations of his own conceits in the luculent depths of some crystal ball are true visions on the planes of super-sensuous existence. Let us "make haste slowly" If in our present lives we learn to walk firmly in the first four "good levels" of the "eight-

fold path," we will do much; all, indeed, that we can reasonably expect. So far as we may, without illusive hopes and self-deceivings, let us follow the guidance of Patanjali, but with the ever-present remembrance that we are, in our present incarnation, only planting seed that Karma will develop into blossom and fruit in more propitious existences hereafter.

The Path

ZODIACAL CHRONOLOGY — G. E. W.

Among the Chinese a knowledge of astronomy existed at a very early date. The Shoo King or the Historical classic is justly regarded as being the most ancient authentic record of the annals of the Chinese Empire. This was compiled by Kung-fu-tze (Confucius) about the year 500 B.C. from materials which existed in the temples in his time. In the year 220 B.C. during the reign of Che-hwong-te, all the books in the empire were ordered to be burnt and the literary men buried alive, a proceeding which caused as great a loss to the Chinese civilization as the destruction of the Alexandrian library several centuries later caused to the West. Fortunately this sanguinary monarch was succeeded by one of a different character. In 178 B.C. Wan-te ascended the throne, and his first effort was to restore learning. As no copy of the Shoo King was to be found, he had recourse to an old man of ninety years, who in the reign of Che-hwong-te had been one of the chief literati, and who to escape death had put out his own eyes and feigned idiocy. (1) This sage had the Shoo King so firmly imprinted upon his memory that he was able to repeat it word for word. A scribe was appointed by the emperor to take it down, and thus the sacred book was recovered. A remarkable confirmation of the accuracy of Fuh-Sang occurred a few years later, when the residence of Confucius was pulled down and a copy of the Shoo King was found hidden in the wainscot, written in the ancient character, which copy was almost literally the same as the book then in use.

The Shoo King is an authentic history of China, commencing with the reign of Yaow, B.C. 2356. It is a sober, careful narration of events, and bears internal evidence of its truth. According to this, Yaow was a wise and meritorious sovereign. He appointed two

officers of state named He and Ho to superintend the calendar and astronomical instruments and make known the time and seasons. In the words of the text, "he then commanded He and Ho in reverent accordance with the motions of the expansive heavens to arrange by numbers and represent by instruments the revolutions of the sun and moon and stars with the lunar mansions, and then respectfully to communicate to the people the seasons adapted for labor. He then separately directed He's younger brother to reside at Yue, where he might respectfully hail the rising sun, adjust and arrange the eastern or vernal undertakings, notice the equalization of the days, and whether the star culminating at nightfall was the middle constellation of the Bird in order to hit the center of mid-spring. He further commanded He's third brother to reside at the southern border and to notice the extreme limit of the shadow when the days attain their utmost length and the star in the zenith is that denominated Fire, in order to fix the exact period of midsummer. He also commanded Ho's brother to dwell in the West and notice the equalization of the night, and see whether the culminating star was Emptiness (Beta in Aquarius) in order to adjust mid-autumn. And he directed Ho's third brother to dwell in the north and see whether, when the days were at the shortest, the culminating star was the White Tiger (Pleiades), in order to adjust mid-winter."

It has been estimated that the Bird (or Cor Hydra) really did appear on the horizon at night-fall of the vernal equinox in the time of Yaow, and that by the precession of the equinoxes something more than 4000 years would be required to bring this star into its present position, thus verifying the accuracy of the Shoo King. The close of Yaow's reign was B.C. 2254, which added to 1889 would be 4,143 years.

Without going into further details, of which a great deal more is

given in the Shoo King and other Chinese canons, sufficient has doubtless been given to prove that astronomy was actually in use at as early a date as 2350 B.C. The lunar zodiac of 28 houses is often referred to in the classics. (2)

It may also strike the investigating reader that these astronomical references in the Shoo King are given, not as something new at that epoch, but as something that was well understood, as already existing, and as a part of the ordinary business of the realm. If that be so, and we find astronomy already brought to some degree of perfection in China two thousand years before Christ, the question naturally arises, — how long previously was the human race in discovering the principles that govern the heavenly bodies? How many thousands of years were passed in acquiring even that degree of knowledge, in growing up from savagery and absolute ignorance to a condition of comparative civilization? These are questions which are necessarily embarrassing to the bigot. Formerly it was customary for religious writers to claim that Man was endowed with scientific knowledge by the Deity which made him, but the discovery and subsequent adoption by intelligent people generally of the law of evolution rendered that assertion no longer valid as an argument. The disposition now among the clergy is to ignore all chronology, or to treat it as a non-essential. They certainly will not discuss it with any degree of fairness or honesty, I will therefore only add, in passing, that the period comprised in the books of the Shoo-King, commencing B.C. 2,356 and running down to B.C. 769, covers the time to which is generally referred the Flood of the Hebrew Scriptures. Assuredly there is no mention of the Flood in the Shoo-King. And all passages which have been quoted by Christian writers as corroborating the Biblical narrative are certainly references to what were merely local inundations.

Hence there is only one conclusion: that the generally accepted

date of the Flood 2348 B.C. is erroneous. There is one other reflection that inevitably occurs to every thinking mind in this connection, and that is that, at this date, besides the presumably ante-diluvian nomadic tribes mentioned in the book of Genesis, there were vast empires, densely populated and brought to a fair degree of civilization, which appear to have already run their cycle of greatness and to have begun their decline. These nations were all proficient in many features of the science called astronomy, and certainly they all employed the symbolic figure of the heavens known to us as the Zodiac.

Hindu astronomy has found numerous commentators, mostly critical, in the West, but it can afford to wait in patience for a recognition of its just claims. Perhaps the best example of the Hindu Zodiac is that one found in the vault of the pagoda of Salsette (Elephanta), the construction of which dates back to 1192 B.C. The Zodiac itself, however, far antedates the temple, and although numerous attempts have been made by European astronomers to discredit its antiquity, none of these have yielded satisfactory proofs. There is no denying the stubborn fact that the summer solstice is marked as occurring in Virgo, which by easy calculation can be shown to have been the case nearly 20,000 years ago. (3)

From time immemorial the Brahmins have been acquainted with the precession of the equinoxes, and even calculated the rate at 54 seconds per annum, which was very close. And as for the Zodiac itself, they even gave the signs the same names which we now employ, and arranged them in exactly the same order. But that is no more surprising than the fact that the Hindus have the same period of the week that we have, divided into seven days, dedicated to the same planets, and in the same order as ours. When these awkward coincidences were discovered some years ago, it was claimed that the Hindus had copied from the Greeks,

and much ado was made over the claim that Alexander the Great had carried astronomy into India at the time of his invasion. Now, however, there are few Western scientists, even among the professed champions of orthodox religion, who care to repeat that threadbare tale. The lunar zodiac of 28 mansions undoubtedly gave rise to the division of time which we call the week, or one-quarter of the moon's journey, and the lunar zodiac is universally allowed to have preceded the solar zodiac by many ages. Although there may be no means of knowing just what tribe of the human family first produced the zodiac, it is a fair hypothesis to suppose that the Aryans were the inventors, as they and their descendants, even down to the Americans of the nineteenth century, have always shown the greatest versatility and capacity for progress. Let us now turn to Chaldea, where, according to Josephus, the wandering Sheik Abraham was instructed in astronomy and astrology, which he subsequently taught to the Egyptians. Here we are on even more solid ground. The labors of George Smith, Layard, Lenormant, Rawlinson, and others have opened up to us a long vista of history which was formerly classed as prehistorical. Following is the text of one of the creation tablets as given in the "Beginning of History:"

"Excellently he made the mansions, twelve in number, of the great gods.

He assigned them stars, and he established fixedly the stars of the great Bear.

He fixed the time of the year and determined its limits.

For each of the twelve months he fixed three stars

From the day when the year begins until its end.

He determined the mansions of the planets to define their orbits by a fixed time

So that none of them may fall short and none be turned aside.

He fixed the orbits of Bel and Ea near his own.
He opened also perfectly the great gates of heaven,
Making their bolts solid to right and to left:
And in his majesty he made there himself steps.
He made Nanna the moon to shine, he joined it to the night.
And he fixed for it the seasons of its nocturnal phases
which determine the day, etc."

The above tablet, according to a further inscription, was the property of Asser-bani-pal, the Sardanapalus of the Greeks, who reigned 670 B.C. It was undoubtedly a copy of an earlier inscription, probably Accadian, which descended along with other legends of the Creation, from the most remote times. It is sufficient to show that astronomical knowledge existed among the Chaldeans at a vastly ancient period. Many of these cuneiform inscriptions date back to more than 2,000 B.C., and they show a surprising degree of knowledge to have been common long previous to that period. In George Smith's "Chaldaean Account of Genesis" it is stated that, judging from the fragments discovered, there were in the Royal Library at Nineveh over 10,000 inscribed tablets, treating of almost every branch of knowledge existing at the time. These inscriptions, being traced upon clay tablets which were then baked, formed a record which outlasted all other methods except monumental, of perpetuating human thought. The letters could not be effaced by time, although, as unfortunately happened, the tablets were liable to be broken.

About 2,000 B.C., there was a famous monarch in Babylon called Sargon. He was a patron of learning as well as a conqueror. He established a great library at Agane, and caused a work in astronomy and astrology to be compiled which remained the standard authority on the subject up to the end of the Assyrian Empire. It was called the "Illumination of Bel," and was in 72 books. The Izbudor Legends, containing the story of the Flood and

the history of Nimrod, were probably written at least as early as 2,000 B.C. These legends were in 12 parts corresponding to the 12 signs of the Zodiac, and, in fact, are supposed to have described allegorically the passage of the sun through the Zodiac, just as the adventures of Osiris in Egypt and the labors of Hercules in Greece depicted the same idea. At any rate it is a natural question for us to ask; if the Chaldaeans 2,000 years B.C. were so enlightened and amassed such enormous libraries, how many thousand of years before that were they employed in laboriously achieving this literary eminence? Knowing how gradual were the changes in national thought in those earlier ages, we can hardly estimate too long a time for that process of self-evolution.

Among other interesting mementoes of long by-gone ages, there is preserved in the British Museum the fragment of a celestial planisphere whereon may be read "Month of arahshannan, star of the Scorpion." Not less positive evidence is the astronomical inscription which makes the "star of the Goat" preside over the month of tobit, and the "star of the Fishes of Ea" over the mouth of Addar. (4) Macrobius is authority for the statement that, according to the Chaldee astrologers, at the very day and hour when the motions of the heavenly bodies began the Sun was in Leo. Now, the very latest date when the position was attained at the vernal equinox was 10,000 years ago, and the entire circle of precession might have been travelled around many times previously for all that we know. Whether or not the chronology of the Chaldean priest Berosus was correct cannot of course be determined. He enumerates the following:

Antediluvian period	432,000	
	years.	
Reigns of Evechvos and Chomasbelos	5,100	"
First Chaldaean dynasty	34,080	"

Latan dynasties

1,758 "

472,938 "

The planisphere at Dendera, Egypt, has been much discussed, and many astronomical writers who should know better have claimed it as a comparatively recent production. Yet here is the translation of the inscription on the temple: "King Thothmes III has caused this building to be erected in memory of his mother, the goddess Hathor, the lady of An. The great ground plan was found in the city of An, *in Archaic drawing on a leather roll*, of the time of the successors of Horus; it was found in the interior of the brick wall on the south side of the temple in the reign of King Pepi."

It is evident from this inscription that the zodiacal architecture of the Dendera temple originated in the remotest antiquity, as it was only unearthed in the reign of King Pepi of the sixth dynasty, being at that time an object of antiquarian interest. Subsequently in 1600 B.C. Thothmes III restored the temple, and Ptolemy in 120 B.C. again restored it, and doubtless at that time introduced the Greek characters which have proved such a stumbling-block to modern investigators. (5) Regarding Egyptian history Dr. Brugsch, one of the most careful of commentators, says: "Only of late have the monuments, once again brought to light and awakened to new life, torn aside the deceitful veil revealing the truth, and furnishing the evidence, that in the times of classic antiquity the history of the ancient Egyptians was already an uncomprehended book like that of the seven seals. The "table of Kings" of Saggiarah and Abydus, both containing a selection of the Egyptian monarchs from the first Pharaoh, Mena, onwards, give us the most authoritative evidence, now no longer to be doubted, that the primeval ancestors of the Egyptian dynasties, the Pharaohs of Memphis, must be recognized as real historical personages, and that King Ramses II, about 1350 B.C. the Sesostris of the Greek

falulous history, was preceded by at least 76 legitimate sovereigns; that is to say, in other words, there were so many generations of men who lived during a space of time which was greater than the sum total of the years that have elapsed from Ramses II down to the present day." (6)

Nor does this include the dynasty of the gods which preceded the Kings. Previous to the reign of Menes, the Papyrus of Turin and other documents assign a period of 5613 years to twenty-three reigns, to which is prefixed a still further period of 13820 years during which the later Egyptian gods figured as rulers.

Gerald Massey says: "When first seen, Egypt is old and gray, at the head of a procession of life that is inimitably vast. It is as if it always had been. There it stands in awful ancientness, like it own pyramid in the dawn, its sphinx among the sands, or its palm amid the desert. (7)

Bunsen, in his great work, "Egypt's Place in Universal History," arrived at the conclusion that the earliest zodiac in use in Egypt was at the time when the sun was in Scorpio at the vernal equinox. By a simple computation we learn that that position was occupied by the sun about 17,000 years ago.

He also gives the following table as representing the first cycle of history:

Appearance of mankind in Central Asia	20,000 B.C.
Inorganic language formed	15,000 "
Catastrophe in Central Asia	10, 000 "
Separation of East and West Asia	5,000 "
Era of Babylonia Empire	3,784 "
Era of Uenes	3,059 "

Lest all the above evidence be rejected too hastily by those people

who are inflexible in their determination to record the year 4004 B.C. as the date of Creation, I will close this necessarily brief summary with a reference to the geological testimony of the antiquity of man. In an interview held only a few weeks ago with Sir Richard Owen, that distinguished scientist is reported to have said: "My own opinion is that the oldest evidence that bears upon the question of man's antiquity dates back his existence to the Tertiary period, 18,000 years ago. Weapons and the like have been found. There is no method of authoritatively interpreting what might seem to be older evidence. I have spared no pains to justify this opinion by personal inspection." We see here the effort of the scientific writer to be conservative in his statements. He regards the date of 18,000 years ago as settled by satisfactory evidence; beyond that there are many indications of man's existence, but the exact data are still wanting. Sir Charles Lyell in his "Antiquity of Man" hesitated to name any exact dates: he assigned his specimens of human bones and weapons to certain geological periods in the remote past. Yet in regard to the Natchez skeleton he admitted that it might lead to the conclusion that America was peopled more than a thousand centuries ago by the human race. In another work he remarked that "if all of the leading varieties of the human family sprang originally from a single pair, a much greater lapse of time was required for the slow and gradual formation of such races as the Caucasian, Mongolian, and Negro, than was embraced in any of the popular systems of chronology." (8)

Prof. Agassiz estimated the age of the skeletons found in the coral reef of Florida at 10,000 years. The skeleton beneath the fourth cypress forest of New Orleans must, it is said, have been buried there at least 50,000 years ago. (Dowling). Works of Egyptian art have been dug up from soils which must have been submerged 30,000 years ago, and bricks are found 60 feet deep under layers

which would require 14,000 years to cover; yet, says Lesley in his "Origin of Man," "these are mere modern matters in comparison with the diluvium of Abbeville. My own belief," he says, "is but the reflection of the growing sentiment in the whole geological world, that our race has been upon the earth for hundreds of thousands of years." In his chapter on "Early Races of Mankind," Edward Clodd estimates the rate of growth of the stalagmites in the Torquay caverns to be one foot in 44,640 years. As some of these are five feet in thickness, they would require 223,200 years to acquire their present state of formation. Yet underneath those, there is a layer of charred wood, called the "black band," which yielded hundreds of flint tools, a bone needle, burnt bones, remains of hyenas, oxen, bears, etc. There is the cave-earth with relics of a like kind, and then we come to the lower bed of stalagmite, which contained bones of the cave-bear only, and which is in some places more than double the thickness of the upper bed, and requiring at least 500,000 years for its formation. It is underneath these that in the solid mass called breccia there were found, mingled with immense numbers of teeth and bones of the cave-bear, Hint implements which without doubt were shaped by the hand and skill of man."

In the light of these astounding results of scientific investigation, the chronologies of Berosus and Syncellus in Chakkea, and of Simplicius, Laertius, and Capello in Egypt do not appear so mythical as they have been heretofore generally supposed.

And if we take an enlightened view of the subject, we must see that hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of years must have been required by the human race in the process of its evolution from the lower types to even the most ancient of civilized races, even if only to the point where a knowledge of the motions of the planets through the Zodiac was first acquired. And we know that many thousands of years have since then elapsed.

FOOTNOTES:

1. The Shoo King, Translated by W. H. Medhurst, Shanghae, 1846. ([return to text](#))

2. Note — It is fully established that the Chinese possessed a lunar year which they regulated by the solar year of $365\frac{1}{4}$ days (Ideler, 214). Regarding their mythology, the tradition is that Pu-an-Ku, the primeval man, came out of the mundane egg and lived 18,000 years. Then came the reigns of heaven, the reigns of earth, the reigns of man during myriads of years; and it is said that Sui-Shin, one of these old rulers, discovered fire, took observations of the stars, and investigated the five elements. (Bunsen, Vol. IV.) ([return to text](#))

3. Note — The process of calculation is as follows: We know that at the present day the sun is in the constellation Pisces at the spring equinox (March 21). As there are twelve signs of the Zodiac comprising the entire circumference of the heavens, and the sun makes the whole circuit in one year (viz: the earth goes round the sun in that time), it follows that he apparently passes through one sign each month. Hence he must be in the constellation Gemini at the summer solstice (June 21) corresponding to the sign Cancer, which is usually given in the almanacs. But in the Salsette Zodiac the sun is represented as being in Virgo, which is three signs distant, and, according to the rate of precession of one sign in 2156 years, there would be required 6,480 years to arrive at this position. ([return to text](#))

4. Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia, Vol. III. ([return to text](#))

5. Note. — Sir William Dummond made a minute examination of the zodiac at Esne, Egypt, and calculated from the vernal equinox being between Gemini and Taurus, and therefore giving a

retrogression of three signs from their present places, that the age of this zodiac would be 6450 years from the time he wrote or 6528 years from the present time. ([return to text](#))

6. History of Egypt under the Pharoahs. ([return to text](#))

7. A Book of the Beginnings, by G. Massey, London, 188; 2 vols. ([return to text](#))

8. Principles of Geology, page 600. ([return to text](#))

The Path

TO THOSE WHO SUFFER — *Jasper Niemand*

Last night I saw in dream, a man. He was weak, poor, an exile; his feet were torn, his wounds bled, his heart bled also. He cried out to heavens that were brass; they sent forth a dull reverberation, a sullen thunder, in reply. Around him was blackness; in his soul was a grim despair. This wretched, hunted, abandoned creature gazed wildly about him, finding nothing upon which Hope might rest, not even Death, for he knew he could not die before his time. All Life passed before him as he stood at bay, and mocked him in every tongue.

I heard a sigh as if some one beside myself grieved at this piteous spectacle and, turning, I saw One who seemed to be a guide of the country, and to whom the sufferer appeared to be known. Of him I made inquiry.

"Can no one help that man?"

"Oh yes. There is one who can help him."

"Who is that?"

"Himself!"

"Why does he not help himself, then?"

"Because he suffers so much. His suffering engages all his attention."

"What, then, is the cause of this great suffering?"

"Himself," said the guide, and smiled. This smile revealed a divine pity, more tender than tears. It opened my heart, so that I said:

"Teach me more of this strange Self which is at once his persecutor and his Savior."

"Nay," replied that guide; "thou shalt ask thyself that question, for that self is thee also, and every other man as well."

Then I awoke, understanding very well that we suffer from ourselves, And I could see, too, how each man was the sharer of the experience of others, for is there not that rare, tenuous aether in which every human sphere is suspended, feeling every current, every thought, every struggle of all its neighbors, of the whole vibrating mass, and translating every vibration into thoughts of its own quality in the wonderful mechanism of the human brain? Could I not see well how these thoughts, in their dynamic and formative energy, moulded that aether into pictures which lived, moving along currents that were baleful or beneficent in their action upon other spheres, according as they caught the tone of the mass, or failed to reach it? This tone was given by the Great Law Itself as the appointed chord to and by which all spheres should be regulated, in order to vibrate in unison, and, where any sphere failed to do so, vibrating at its own choice and out of time and tune, the whole aether was violently agitated, its current of light rendered turbid, its melody disturbed, destroyed. Well I saw that what was mainly required for the restoration of harmony was that each human sphere should accept without resistance the great currents of the Law as these impinged upon it. Of course at first, many of them would suffer internal confusion from this sudden change of motion; they would experience Pain, and even disintegration in some parts. Let those who had the courage so to suffer for the restoration of general harmony would soon find a new and higher form of organization crystallizing within themselves, just as the music of the master's bow causes the sand particles to thrill and to range themselves in ordered patterns of beauty, or as at the magnet's mysterious message iron filings range themselves in the same polarized lines as those of the human brain. Yes; what was imperatively needed was that every

human creature should stand still long enough to feel the currents of Law sweeping through his life, and then think with and obey them. In other words, the first step is Resignation.

In the year whose last sands slip by as I write, many cries have fallen upon my heart. That heart suffers like every other. This truth gives to each heart the divine right to understand all the rest. We hear the cry of the exile, and out of our own experience we respond to him. There are so many cases. There are the comrades who wish much to do and to be. They desire greatly to work in the Altruistic Cause. Karmic circumstance fetters them. So they devise plans whereby they may be made richer, or stronger in body, or more free from care and duty, or to gain more ample time in which to work. But that Karma which they themselves have made, and which is their only judge, refuses them these things. Then a deep sadness falls upon them with the failure of their plans; their energies are sapped and wasted by the thousand allies of doubt and despair. They forget that their plan is not needed. What is greatly needed is Harmony. This is only attained by submission. When we accept Karmic Environment and go calmly to work to take an inventory of ourselves as we now are, both externally and internally, in all our mental states and Ever Changing Motives, and then ask earnestly what such a man, in such a given condition of life, can do, just where he stands and as he is, to help Humanity, we do find an answer somewhere. We do find some work to our hand. It may be only in Right Thought that we can help, but in that dynamic power we work silently along with silent nature and the Great Vibration, whose melodies are real, are profound, and heard by the inner ear alone. In thus spreading the fluidic far reaching energies of harmonious thought upon the ambient aether, we create currents in accord with those of that Universal Mind whose grand totality is "Angels and Archangels and all the Powers of Heaven." Is this a

small power? Not so. By its means we change our whole mental environment; and that in turn will order future Karmic circumstance so that in the next life, or perhaps even in this, we shall be placed where we can help our fellows more. That help is their due and our privilege. But I think we place undue stress upon material help. The heart of man is at the bottom of every circumstance. It moulds every event, builds up all societies, determines the character of every age. Reforms that do not reach that strange and hidden heart are built upon the sand. Nothing can reach it but Right Thought, and it is in the gift of every person to turn that reconstructive power loose upon the wild turmoil of our time. This is the Light that stills the waves. Instead of chafing at our limitations and our failures, let us then accept them with harmonious serenity and use them as our instruments. Thus I know a sick person who uses the sympathy, evoked by that sickness as a means of gaining the attention of others to higher thoughts. I know a comrade in great poverty who realizes that this very poverty gains the ear of those likewise suffering, and of those too who think much of the material gifts they can bring, and so this brave soul drops a true brave word here and there on the thorny way. By acceptance of Karma we learn great and wonderful things, and a master has said: "Karma is the great teacher. It is the wisest of guides and the best."

This does not mean that we should sit down supinely and think only. It means that we should accept the inevitable in material life, and gather what spiritual riches we can find, in order to give them all away.

Then, again, come the sufferers through Love, the hearts that cling to the personal sweetness, the strong human ties, the thousand endearing tendencies often cemented by a long, though unknown, Past. Death, separation or Life, sweeps between. Or the Beloved suffer, and we cry out. We cry in ignorance. Our Love is

never lost. Every Universe makes for Love: that Love is Harmony, is Justice. Not one vibration of it is ever lost. Out of our deep spiritual nature this yearning Love comes pouring, an eternal fountain. Our personal mind translates its meaning in many perverse ways. We take it to mean all kinds of personal desire or hope. That we belie our nature is evident because, when these desires are gratified, the heart is never content with that, but goes on to new desire. It is the sacred truth that, in the very ground of our natures, a spark burns ever in the vibration of the highest Love. All our small personal affections are simply the straying tendrils of this one great root, and ought to draw us inward to it. Our Love rests in the highest bond. We do really desire the highest fulfilment of the loved one's Being. We can, if we will and if we seek, find ourselves consciously reaching up in hope to the perfection of those beloved natures. It is really the Higher Self, the great Ideal One, that we love. The man or woman, Its faint reflection, is there to lead us to this blessed Truth. Alas! We find self far too much in so called love, but I believe, — in all conscience I can attest it — that once we get a glimpse of this truth, that our inner natures yearn to help our Beloved to greater heights, we will make a mighty effort to continue in that higher, holier hope. From thus loving one, to loving all, we proceed gradually through the pure overflow, or the natural gravitation of Love, until we know nothing of Separation. For all starved natures there is then this hope. We are not to love less, but to love more. To expand to fuller conceptions; to realize deeper meanings; to find within the self of flesh and sense, and all the selfish corruption of our natures, these germs of living truths; these meanings we have indeed perverted, but which we are powerless to destroy, because they are germs of that Truth which is One and indestructible, the "Law which makes for Righteousness", the Harmony which is Love.

Those who suffer will find at the very root of their suffering, no matter of what kind, some revolt against this Eternal Law of Love. We have only to turn round and obey it. We have only to cease desiring to put it to personal use, or to grind personal comforts out of it, and all its blessings and powers are ours. It lives in every heart; it gilds and glorifies every atom; it "stands at the door and knocks;" it is Life, it is Light, it is Peace, for it is Eros, the one Ray, it is universal, divine Love. Oh! My suffering comrades; accept it, embrace it! Live by it, at any cost; die by it if needs be, for so only shall we find Life eternal, only by receiving and acknowledging the Law: only by living in the thought of all beings, in harmony with all and with Love.

The Path

VELOCITY AND MOTION — *E. A. Williams*

The modern student of physics, when asked what is meant by velocity, answers from his prompt memory, "Velocity is space divided by time." The answer is quite characteristic of the present age of science. "Take that to the calculators", was the contemptuous reply which Faraday made when somebody proposed a question for him to solve which called for no discernment of any hidden principle but was merely one of quantitative determination. The practical aspect, the quantitative aspect, the material aspect, — that is what the world is now chiefly concerned with. But to come to a right way of looking at things is an exercise in which this age does not show much talent; it has not quite been able to realise the value of so doing. Perhaps in its future development science will become a little more metaphysical and a little less materialistic. Surely the purely physical mania has fairly had its turn by this time; it has long been in possession, and might now well give place to something better. It is time for people to recognize that what is abstract and invisible is not therefore unreal, but on the contrary a degree more real and substantial than what is outward and palpable.

The teaching given to a science student whence springs the reply cited above is of a simple kind, and such as may be explained to all comers in a few words. Velocity, so termed in technical phraseology, is the same thing as speed, and is said to be the relation between *space* or distance traversed by the moving object and the *time* occupied in so doing. The relation between *one mile* of space or distance and *one minute* of time is accordingly the velocity of an express train going, as they say, "a mile a minute". Sixty miles an hour would be just the same ratio otherwise expressed. But the express train making ahead at full

speed is not the only type of motion and velocity. There the speed is regular, uniform, and unvarying; at least it is so as far as we can perceive. But the motion of a stone dropped from the roof of a house has quite a different character; in this case the motion is not uniform and unvarying, and the only element of regularity in the movement is the way in which it becomes continually *faster and faster*. This being so, to ask "What was the speed or velocity of that falling stone?" would be an unreasonable question unless some particular instant were denoted to which the question should apply. It would, however, be quite an intelligent question if one asked, "At what velocity was it moving *at the instant when it struck the ground?*"

Now let us reflect a little upon the foregoing considerations. An instant is to time exactly what a geometrical point is to space; indeed an instant is often called a *point of time*. Like the geometrical point, it has "no parts or magnitude"; all notion of *how long* is entirely foreign to it. How is it, then, that we can speak of the velocity of a falling stone *at that instant* when it touches the ground? Assuredly, *at any instant*, no actual motion whatever takes place; no space is passed through, neither is any time occupied. The difficulty before us is this. The scientist declares that velocity is "the space divided by the time", and yet here is a case in which we are forced to recognize velocity though neither space nor time (in that sense) enters into the question at all. This is what Dr. O. Wendell Holmes called "sticking a fact" into the lecturer; and it is a very sharp-pointed fact too. It shows that amid the enlightenment of this age (to the wise it is notorious as the Dark Age) there exists some want of reflection among scientists on the subject of velocity and motion; it shows that the philosophy of the modern scientist is of a sort that does not go to the bottom of things.

There are some persons, generally of the number of the learned

whose heads are "replete with thoughts of other men", who have great difficulty in grasping this idea of an absolute instant, simple as it is in itself. These people give one a great deal of trouble in discussion; they insist on regarding an instant as an "infinitesimally short *period*" of time. It is as bad as if they told the geometer that his mathematical point was not an element of *no* magnitude, but an element of *infinitesimal* magnitude. But in truth a geometrical point is absolutely devoid of magnitude, and similarly an instant is not a "period" of any sort or description. To sum up this parenthesis, an instant is not anything *during* which either motion or any other change can occur. "*During* an instant" would be a self-contradictory phrase; an instant does not endure.

Let us now pause to review the position and examine the conclusions with which we are confronted. From the case of the falling stone it is made evident that a moving object has a velocity *at* an instant (when such elements as distance traversed and time occupied can have no existence); and also, in this example at least, it is found that velocity cannot be conceived of at all *except* as existing at this or that instant. For the velocity of the stone changes within the smallest fraction of a second; whatever it is at one moment, it will not be that at any succeeding moment. What, then, is to be the next step in our reasoning? If it has been established that velocity does exist at an instant, shall we imagine that it has a different character in the case of the express train maintaining an even speed? Or would it not be much reasonable to hold that velocity was the same sort of thing in all moving objects, whether their movement was uniform or accelerated? Surely nobody can hesitate to accept this latter view together with its consequence, *viz.*, that velocity is *not* "the space divided by the time", but has an existence where these two elements are altogether excluded. In other words, velocity is an inherent condition of the moving object itself, and is not in any sense a

dependency of motion. Indeed, this is borne out by the use of language; for we discuss the velocity *of a bullet* (not that of a bullet's *motion*.)

Here perhaps some more subtle representative of the age will tell us that he would never make the assertion that velocity was identically the ratio of the space traversed to the time occupied; he would prefer to say that velocity was *measured by* this ratio. That certainly would be an accurate statement. But it leaves an empty gap; because now we have no prescribed answer (for the student to learn by heart) upon the question, What *is* velocity in itself? Do examiners never ask the question, "What is velocity?" Or do professors never explain how such a question should be answered? It is very odd if they do not, because velocity is such an elementary topic; and it is the boast of the really able professor, as opposed to the charlatan, that he thoroughly understands the very roots of his subject, and lays the foundations of knowledge in his pupils so that the vast superstructure shall not totter.

Another scientist might say, perhaps, that velocity was a quality, attribute, or property of motion; for motion may be quick or slow.

Would anyone have the courage to say that velocity was the *principle* of motion, the *cause* of motion? Will anyone dare to say that velocity is something internal and hidden, of which motion is the outward and visible sign? If present science does not say so, peradventure future science, more metaphysical than its predecessor, will have the boldness.

Physical science, emphatically physical and non-metaphysical, cares too little for that *INSTANT* in which no change ensues, but in which some thing *is* and *tends*. Paradoxical as the statement may seem, that instant is a better realisation of eternity than the most gigantic sweep's-brush of centuries jointed together within the

imagination. But apart from this, it is the right aim of science to pass from effects to the recognition of their hidden causes; and the scientist who aspires to a higher wisdom should make a study of an instant, to find in it what is causal. A wonderful theme, in truth, is that instant, planted in the midst of time and yet itself no portion of time, a zero containing in itself the principle and cause of what passes in time. Assuredly we have not yet come to an end of man's store of meditable matter.

The Path

OF STUDYING THEOSOPHY — *William Brehon*

It is often asked: How should I or my friend study theosophy?

In beginning this study a series of "don'ts" should first engage the student's attention. Don't imagine that you know everything, or that any man in scientific circles has uttered the last word on any subject; don't suppose that the present day is the best, or that the ancients were superstitious, with no knowledge of natural laws. Don't forget that arts, sciences, and metaphysics did not have their rise with European civilization; and don't forget that the influence of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle of ancient Greece is still imposed upon the modern mind. Don't think that our astronomers would have made anything but a mess of the zodiac if the old Chaldeans had not left us the one we use. Don't forget that it is easy to prove that civilization of the highest order has periodically rolled around this globe and left traces great and small behind. Don't confuse Buddhism with Brahmanism, or imagine that the Hindus are Buddhists; and don't take the word of English or German Sanskrit scholars in explanation of the writings and scriptures of eastern nations whose thoughts are as foreign in their form to ours as our countries are. One should first be prepared to examine with a clear and unbiased mind.

But suppose the enquirer is disposed at the outset to take the word of theosophical writers, then caution is just as necessary, for theosophical literature does not bear the stamp of authority. We should all be able to give a reason for the hope that is within us, and we cannot do that if we have swallowed without study the words of others.

But what is study? It is not the mere reading of books, but rather long, earnest, careful thought upon that which we have taken up.

If a student accepts reincarnation and karma as true doctrines, the work is but begun. Many theosophists accept doctrines of that name, but are not able to say what it is they have accepted. They do not pause to find out what reincarnates, or how, when, or why karma has its effects, and often do not know what the word means. Some at first think that when they die they will reincarnate, without reflecting that it is the lower personal I they mean, which cannot be born again in a body. Others think that karma is — well, karma, with no clear idea of classes of karma, or whether or not it is punishment or reward or both. Hence a careful learning from one or two books of the statement of the doctrines, and then a more careful study of them, are absolutely necessary.

There is too little of such right study among theosophists, and too much reading of new books. No student can tell whether Mr. Sinnett in *Esoteric Buddhism* writes reasonably unless his book is learned and not merely skimmed. Although his style is clear, the matter treated is difficult, needing firm lodgment in the mind, followed by careful thought. A proper use of his book, *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Key to Theosophy*, and all other matter written upon the constitution of man, leads to an acquaintance with the doctrines as to the being most concerned, and only when that acquaintance is obtained is one fitted to understand the rest. Another branch of study is that pursued by natural devotees, those who desire to enter into the work itself for the good of humanity. Those should study all branches of theosophical literature all the harder, in order to be able to clearly explain it to others, for a weak reasoner or, an apparently credulous believer has not much weight with others.

Western theosophists need patience, determination, discrimination, and memory, if they ever intend to seize and hold the attention of the world for the doctrines they disseminate.

The Path

CULTURE OF CONCENTRATION: II — *Ramatirtha*

PART II.

[PART I APPEARED IN JULY, 1888, PATH, p. 116.]

It is now over one year since I sent in Part I to the Editor of the PATH. Since then I have heard that some students expressed a desire to read Part II, forgetting to observe, perhaps, that the first paper was complete in itself, and, if studied, with earnest practice to follow, would have led to beneficial results. It has not been necessary before to write No. II; and to the various students who so soon after reading the first have asked for the second I plainly say that you have been led away because a sequel was indicated and you cannot have studied the first; furthermore I much doubt if you will be benefited by this any more than by the other.

Success in the culture of concentration is not for him who sporadically attempts it. It is a thing that flows from "a firm position assumed with regard to the end in view, and unremittingly kept up." Nineteenth Century students are too apt to think that success in occultism can be reached as one attains success in school or college, by reading and learning *printed words*. A complete knowledge of all that was ever written upon concentration will confer no power in the practice of that about which I treat. Mere book knowledge is derided in this school as much as it is by the clodhopper; not that I think book knowledge is to be avoided, but that sort of acquisition without the concentration is as useless as faith without works. It is called in some places, I believe, "mere eye-knowledge." Such indeed it is; and such is the sort of culture most respected in these degenerate times.

In starting these papers the true practice was called Raj Yoga. It discards those physical motions, postures, and recipes relating solely to the present personality, and directs the student to virtue and altruism as the bases from which to start. This is more often rejected than accepted. So much has been said during the last 1800 years about Rosicrucians, Egyptian Adepts, Secret Masters, Kaballah, and wonderful magical books that students without a guide, attracted to these subjects, ask for information and seek in vain for the entrance to the temple of the learning they crave, because they say that virtue's rules are meant for babes and Sunday-schools, but not for them. And, in consequence, we find hundreds of books in all the languages of Europe dealing with rites, ceremonies, invocations, and other obscurities that will lead to nothing but loss of time and money. But few of these authors had anything save "mere eye-knowledge". 'Tis true they have sometimes a reputation, but it is only that accorded to an ignoramus by those who are more ignorant. The so-called great man, knowing how fatal to reputation it would be to tell how really small is his practical knowledge, prates about "projections and elementals", "philosopher's stone and elixir", but discreetly keeps from his readers the paucity of his acquirements and the insecurity of his own mental state. Let the seeker know, once for all, that the virtues cannot be discarded nor ignored; they must be made a part of our life, and their philosophical basis must be understood.

But it may be asked, if in the culture of concentration we will succeed alone by the practice of virtue. The answer is No, not in this life, but perhaps one day in a later life. The life of virtue accumulates much merit; that merit will at some time cause one to be born in a wise family where the real practice of concentration may perchance begin; or it may cause one to be born in a family of devotees or those far advanced on the Path, as

said in Bhagavad-Gita. But such a birth as this, says Krishna, is difficult to obtain; hence the virtues alone will not always lead in short space to our object.

We must make up our minds to a life of constant work upon this line. The lazy ones or they who ask for pleasure may as well give it up at the threshold and be content with the pleasant paths marked out for those who "fear God and honor the King." Immense fields of investigation and experiment have to be traversed; dangers unthought of and forces unknown are to be met; and all must be overcome, for in this battle *there is no quarter asked or given*. Great stores of knowledge must be found and *seized*. The kingdom of heaven is not to be had for the asking; it must *be taken by violence*. And the only way in which we can gain the will and the power to thus seize and hold is by acquiring the virtues on the one hand, and minutely understanding ourselves on the other. Some day we will begin to see why not one passing thought may be ignored, not one flitting impression missed. This we can perceive is no simple task. It is a gigantic work. Did you ever reflect that the mere passing sight of a picture, or a single word instantly lost in the rush of the world, may be basis for a dream that will poison the night and react upon the brain next day. Each one must be examined. If you have not noticed it, then when you awake next day you have to go back in memory over every word and circumstance of the preceding day, seeking, like the astronomer through space, for the lost one. And, similarly, without such a special reason, you must learn to be able to go thus backward into your days so as to go over carefully and in detail all that happened, all that you permitted to pass through the brain. Is this an easy matter?

But let us for a moment return to the sham adepts, the reputed Masters, whether they were well-intentioned or the reverse. Take Eliphas Levi who wrote so many good things, and whose books

contain such masses of mysterious hints. Out of his own mouth he convicts himself. With great show he tells of the raising of the shade of Apollonius. Weeks beforehand all sorts of preparations had to be made, and on the momentous night absurd necromantic performances were gone through. What was the result? Why only that the so-called shade appeared for a few moments, and Levi says they never attempted it again. Any good medium of these days could call up the shade of Apollonius without preparation, and if Levi were an Adept he could have seen the dead quite as easily as he turned to his picture in a book. By these sporadic attempts and outside preparations, nothing is really gained but harm to those who thus indulge. And the foolish dabbling by American theosophists with practices of the Yogis of India that are not one-eighth understood and which in themselves are inadequate, will lead to much worse results than the apochryphal attempt recorded by Eliphas Levi.

As we have to deal with the Western mind now ours, all unused as it is to these things and over-burdened with false training and falser logic, we must begin where we are, we must examine our present possessions and grow to know our own present powers and mental machinery. This done, we may proceed to see ourselves in the way that shall bring about the best result.

The Path

OUR SUN AND THE TRUE SUN — *Mattanda*

Considering how little is known of the sun of this system, it is not to be wondered at that still more is this the case respecting the true sun. Science laughs, of course, at the mystic's "true sun," for it sees none other than the one shining in the heavens. This at least they pretend to know, for it rises and sets each day and can be to some extent observed during eclipses or when spots appear on it, and with their usual audacity the 19th century astronomers learnedly declare all that they do not know about the mighty orb, relegating the ancient ideas on the subject to the limbo of superstitious nonsense. It is not to the modern schools that I would go for information on this subject, because in my opinion, however presumptuous it may seem, they really know but little about either Moon or Sun.

A dispute is still going on as to whether the sun *throws out heat*. (1) On one hand it is asserted that he does; on the other, that the heat is produced by the combination of the forces from the sun with the elements on and around this earth. The latter would seem to the mystic to be true. Another difference of opinion exists among modern astronomers as to the distance of the sun from us, leaving the poor mystic to figure it out as he may. Even on the subject of spots on our great luminary, everything nowadays is mere conjecture. It is accepted hypothetically — and no more — that there may be a connection between those spots and electrical disturbances here. Some years ago Nasmyth discovered (2) objects (or changes) on the photosphere consisting of what he called "willow leaves," 1000 miles long and 300 miles broad, that constantly moved and appeared to be in shoals. But what are these? No one knows. Science can do no more about informing us than any keen sighted ordinary mortal using a fine telescope. And

as to whether these "willow leaves" have any connection with the spots or themselves have relation to earthly disturbances, there is equal silence. To sum it up, then, our scientific men know but little about the visible sun. A few things they must some day find out, such as other effects from sun spots than mere electrical disturbances; the real meaning of sun spots; the meaning of the peculiar color of the sun sometimes observed — Such as that a few years ago attributed to "cosmic dust", for the want of a better explanation to veil ignorance; and a few other matters of interest.

But we say that this sun they have been examining is not the real one, nor any sun at all, but is only an appearance, a mere reflection to us of part of the true sun. And, indeed, we have some support even from modern astronomers, for they have begun to admit that our entire solar system is in motion around some far off undetermined centre which is so powerful that it attracts our solar orb and thus draws his entire system with him. But they know not if this unknown centre be a sun. They conjecture that it is, but will only assert that it is a centre of attraction for us. Now it may be simply a larger body, *or a stronger centre of energy*, than the sun, and in turn quite possibly it may be itself revolving about a still more distant and more powerful centre. In this matter the modern telescope and power of calculation are quickly baffled, because they very soon arrive at a limit in the starry field where, all being apparently stationary because of immense distances, there are no means of arriving at a conclusion. All these distant orbs may be in motion, and therefore it cannot be said where the true centre is. Your astronomer will admit that even the constellations in the Zodiac, immovable during ages past, may in truth be moving, but at such enormous and awful distances that for us they appear not to move.

My object, however, is to draw your attention to the doctrine that there is a true sun of which the visible one is a reflection, and that

in this true one there is spiritual energy and help, just as our own beloved luminary contains the spring of our physical life and motion. It is useless now to speculate on which of the many stars in the heavens may be the real sun, for I opine it is none of them, since, as I said before, a physical centre of attraction for this system may only be a grade higher than ours, and the servant of a centre still farther removed. We must work in our several degrees, and it is not in our power to overleap one step in the chain that leads to the highest. Our own sun is, then, for us the symbol of the true one he reflects, and by meditating on "the most excellent light of the true sun" we can gain help in our struggle to assist humanity. Our physical sun is for physics, not metaphysics, while that true one shines down within us. The orb of day guards and sustains the animal economy; the true sun shines into us through its medium within our nature. We should then direct our thought to that true sun and prepare the ground within for its influence, just as we do the ground without for the vivifying rays of the King of Day.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Among great scientists such as Newton, Secchi, Pouillet, Spaeren, Rosetti, and others, there is a difference as to estimated heat of the sun shown by their figures, for Pouillet says 1,461° and Waterston 9,000,000° or a variation of 8,998,600°! ([return to text](#))
2. See *Source of Heat in the Sun*, K. Hunt, F. R. S. (Pop. Sc. Rev. Vol. IV, p. 148. ([return to text](#)))

IS KARMA ONLY PUNISHMENT? — *Hadji Erinn*

The following query has been received from H. M. H.: "In August PATH Hadji Erinn, in reply to the above question, stated that 'those who have wealth, and the happy mother seeing all her children respected and virtuous, are favorites of Karma'. I and others believe that these apparent favors are only punishment or obstacles, and others think that the terms *punishment* and *reward* should not be used."

I cannot agree with this view, nor with the suggestion that punishment and reward should not be used as terms. It is easy to reduce every thing to a primordial basis when one may say that all is the absolute. But such is only the method of those who *affirm* and *deny*. They say there is no evil, there is no death; all is good, all is life. In this way we are reduced to absurdities, inasmuch as we then have no terms to designate very evident things and conditions. As well say there is no *gold* and no *iron*, because both are equally *matter*. While we continue to be human beings we must use terms that shall express our conscious perception of ideas and things.

It is therefore quite proper to say that an unhappy or miserably circumstanced person is undergoing punishment, and that the wealthy or happy person is having reward. Otherwise there is no sense in our doctrine.

The misunderstanding shown in the question is due to inaccurate thinking upon the subject of Karma. One branch of this law deals with the vicissitudes of life, with the differing states of men. One man has opportunity and happiness, another meets only the opposite. Why is this? It is because each state is the exact result bound to come from his having disturbed or preserved the

harmony of nature. The person given wealth in this life is he who in the preceding incarnation suffered from its absence or had been deprived of it unjustly. What are we to call it but reward? If we say *compensation*, we express exactly the same idea. And we cannot get the world to adopt verbosity in speech so as to say, "All this is due to that man's having preserved the cosmic harmony."

The point really in the questioner's mind is, in fact, quite different from the one expressed; he has mistaken one for the other; he is thinking of the fact so frequently obtruded before us that the man who has the opportunity of wealth or power oft misuses it and becomes selfish or tyrannous. But this does not alter the conclusion that he is having his reward. Karma will take care of him; and if he does not use the opportunity for the good of his fellows, or if he does evil to them, he will have punishment upon coming back again to earth. It is true enough, as Jesus said, that "it is difficult for the rich man to enter heaven," but there are other possessions of the man besides wealth that constitute greater obstacles to development, and they are punishments and may coexist in the life of one man with the reward of wealth or the like. I mean the obstruction and hindrance found in stupidity, or natural baseness, or in physical sensual tendencies. These are more likely to keep him from progress and ultimate salvation than all the wealth or good luck that any one person ever enjoyed.

In such cases — and they are not a few — we see Karmic reward upon the outer material plane in the wealth and propitious arrangement of life, and on the inner character the punishment of being unable or unfit through many defects of mind or nature. This picture can be reversed with equal propriety. I doubt if the questioner has devoted his mind to analyzing the subject in this manner.

Every man, however, is endowed with conscience and the power to use his life, whatever its form or circumstance, in the proper way, so as to extract from it all the good for himself and his fellows that his limitations of character will permit. It is his duty so to do, and as he neglects or obeys, so will be his subsequent *punishment or reward*.

There may also be another sort of wealth than mere gold, another sort of power than position in politics or society. The powerful, wide, all-embracing, rapidly-acting brain stored with knowledge is a vast possession which one man may enjoy. He can use it properly or improperly. It may lead him to excesses, to vileness, to the very opposite of all that is good. It is his reward for a long past life of stupidity followed by others of noble deeds and thoughts. What will the questioner do with this? The possessor thus given a reward may misuse it so as to turn it, next time he is born, into a source of punishment. We are thus continually fitting our arrows to the bow, drawing them back hard to the ear, and shooting them forth from us. When we enter the field of earth-life again, they will surely strike us or our enemies of human shape or the circumstances which otherwise would hurt us. It is not the arrow or the bow that counts, but the motive and the thought with which the missile is shot.

The Path

REINCARNATION AND MEMORY: V — *Harij*

(*Concluded.*)

"Time is but the space between our memories; as soon as we cease to perceive this space, time has disappeared. The whole life of an old man may appear to him no longer than an hour, or less still; and as soon as time is but a moment to us, we have entered upon eternity. Time is, then, the successive dispersion of being."

— (*Auriet's Journal page 2*).

From birth to prime the faculties of man unfold; from prime to old age the faculties wane. In the natural order this unfolding and waning are really a transmutation. In early life the sensuous sphere predominates, and both the intellectual and spiritual are in abeyance. In adult and more advanced life the sensuous sphere wanes and the higher faculties take control. This is the natural order, and it is seldom seen, for there are few natural lives. The follies of youth are more often the harvest of age, dead-sea apples in place of the ripe fruit of the tree of life, while repentance and remorse embalm the living corpse of a wasted life and slighted opportunities. These are unnatural lives, and the real faculties of man are never thus realized. Mediocrity — the slumber of the soul — is, at best, the result of unnatural lives, and old age even, when reached, is miserable beyond description. What is called talent is usually a partial and unsymmetrical awakening of the soul from the dominion of the senses. Talent does with ease that which mediocrity accomplishes with great difficulty if at all. In the ordinary life of the world nothing short of real genius carries man out of himself and suggests the real nature of his being. Genius does with ease that of which mediocrity never even

dreams, and of which no mere talent is capable. Genius dreams of the true, and gets glimpses of the essential being. Mediocrity follows; talent commands; genius knows and seldom stops to reason; it is beyond reason. "Time is the supreme illusion." "To escape by the ecstasy of inward vision from the whirlwind of time, to see oneself *sub specie eterni*, is the word of command of all the great religions of the higher races."

Mediocrity has little of either reminiscence or intuition, but may develop physical memory very largely. Talent has flashes of intuition, but is rather bias than illumination, a withdrawal of perceptions and faculties from other realms, to concentrate them on one sphere. Genius is another name for reminiscence, an ecstasy of inward vision, the essence of many memories, the synthesis of former experiences.

Physical memory is the record of passing events, but it is not the preserver of experience. Physical memory is but the outer husk of experience. Experience relates to feeling and consciousness; memory to time and sense. Memory relates solely to the past, to that which was, or rather seemed, and is not; and is, at best, the record of an illusion. Past, present, and future, — what illusions! The past is dead, the future is not, and these constitute the present as a fleeting unreality. Never until consciousness is severed from time and liberated from sense, does man realize that he *is*. In the outer sphere of man's life his faculties are related to the panorama of events, and these he perceives only in detail and in succession. In the inner sphere of man's being he knows *all at once*. This is true even in dreams, where the events of years pass in review in a moment of time. Memory grasps at the days and attempts to hold the slow-plodding years. Reminiscence has dissolved all these in the waters of oblivion, only to preserve their essence as motors, intuitions for future guidance. These are but logical deductions from our present experience, without

assuming any future life. If, however, in the present life man is able to free his consciousness from the illusions of sense and time, he comes to know of essential being, and only then does he begin to correctly interpret the things of time.

All that we know of the brain shows it to be the organ of physical memory, and shows, moreover, that any change of its structure or perversion of its function impairs or obliterates memory. Cases of disease have been known from which individuals have recovered with complete oblivion of nearly all the past. Adults previously well-educated have forgotten even how to read, and have had to begin all over again like children. In some cases there has been a slow and gradual recovery of the past. In others there has been little recovered of the past. The normal function of the brain has been arrested in the middle of a sentence, memory has been thus entirely suspended, and insanity or imbecility has supervened; after the lapse of months memory and consciousness have returned, perhaps from a surgical operation, and the broken sentence has been completed. Similar cases often occur in the annals of surgery.

The forgetfulness of old age is proverbial. The tablets of memory first refuse to record new impressions. The things of yesterday are forgotten, and the memories of youth return, mere glimpses of a summer day or a night of sorrow. These also in turn disappear, and insensibility and imbecility often supervene. The man again becomes a helpless child leaning toward the great mother's breast, longing for rest and sleep.

If this is so often the record of the life of man whom "three score years and ten" reduce to imbecility, and with memory already departed, how can it be possible that, when the brain is decomposed and resolved back to its original dust, it should still perform a function which it so often loses before death? If

memory fades as the brain decays, and consciousness displays itself on an entirely different plane after death, and for a thousand years, as we count time, lives a subjective life, the former records of memory are not only barred by "death," but even the bias given to consciousness must fade also. If, therefore, reincarnation should occur, there would not be the least reason to suppose that the memory that derived its form and experience from the contour and development of the brain and the circumstances of its environment, and that has been decomposed a thousand years previously, should adhere to the ego now embodied in another race and time with a new brain and a renewed consciousness. So far as memory is concerned, this is a new creation; and so far as individual consciousness is concerned, the former personality has been annihilated.

What we call memory, therefore, as a function of the organized brain perishes with the body.

If memory is the temporary record of passing events, and both the events and the record belong to time, is there not something in man that records memory itself, thus bridging the chasm of "death" and anchoring every experience of the soul to the real *ego*? This is precisely the nature of experience of which memory is the matter side, related to sense and time, and of which reminiscence is the spirit side related to essential being. And here again it is unnecessary to assume a life beyond the present, for our present experiences prove this to be so. It is but the subjective side of our present every-day experiences, and belongs to our *mode of consciousness*. In order to realize this in any large degree, it is only necessary to withdraw our consciousness gradually and persistently from the illusion of the senses to the ecstasy of inward vision, that is to gradually elevate the plane of consciousness. Man may thus come to *know* the super-sensitive world precisely as he knows the things of sense and time, viz. by

experience. He may furthermore realize that the latter are pure illusions, while the former are the only realities. The evidence of things unseen will end thus in fruition; the unseen and the unknown become the things seen and known. Human experience on this superior plane is also fortified by analogy and by the orderly processes of nature. If we assume the continued existence of the soul (*ego*), we have also to assume the continuance of its *method of knowing*, else we annul consciousness itself. The consciousness of the ego and its real method of knowing, viz. by experience, are all that enable us to predicate continued existence. If consciousness is now displayed on both the objective plane through the medium of the senses, and on the subjective plane through intuition, reminiscence and the like, then the ego having already experience on both planes in unequal degree, often almost exclusively here on the lower plane, may display itself almost exclusively on the subjective plane, and this often occurs in trance and related conditions. This is the key to the higher consciousness and the diviner life.

One third of our present life is practically divested of memory. When the plane of consciousness is shifted in sleep, memory reveals its true character as belonging to matter and time, and as in no sense essential to existence, experience, or consciousness.

Man's immortality is therefore within his grasp, his destiny is within his own hands, and he may recover the substance of all his past while he realizes his birth-right even now.

"He who has not even a knowledge of common things is a brute among men: He who has an accurate knowledge of human concerns alone is a man among brutes: But he who knows all that can be known by intelligent energy is a god among men."

The Path

MAHATMAS — K. P. Mukkerji

A HINDU'S VIEW.

I have read with great interest in November *PATH* the article headed "Some Notes on the Mahatmas." The word *Mahatma* is but roughly translated "a great soul"; it means literally "High Self" — that is, our Higher Self. In the *Key to Theosophy* you will find that this Higher Self is called "Manas taijasi", our three higher principles, or Atma-Budhi-Manas, which are yet undeveloped in us. Every one of us has therefore the germ of the Mahatma in him.

As an individual, we Hindus call only him a Mahatma who, having brought his lower self completely under control, has transferred his individual consciousness to the Divine consciousness. He acts in unison with it, and can therefore commit no sin. He may or may not have a body (physical or astral); in the former case we call him "Jivan Mukta", meaning literally "Living Liberated", in the latter case "Nideha Mukta", or "Bodiless Liberated".

Mukti with us does not necessarily mean Nirvana, which is but its highest aspect. A Mukta Purusha, or liberated individual, therefore can and often does remain in our Loka or sphere to assist us morally and spiritually until the last particle of his Karma or Vasana is exhausted, when he goes into Nirvana.

It is written that there are seven ways or seven Paths for an Upasaka; the first (or lowest and most primary) is the intellectual appreciation; the second is self restraint (self sacrifice); the third is a Spirit of humility and veneration for those who have reached the goal; the fourth is a feeling of nearness, close connection, or

friendliness; the fifth, a feeling of attraction (compared to the attraction of a mother to her son); the sixth is love; the seventh (last and greatest) is one-ness — " Soham." Upasaka! choose for thyself and proceed.

The Path

SOME NOTES ON THE MAHATMAS: II — K. H.

(See *PATH* for Nov., 1889.)

After collecting the notes printed in the paper referred to above, I came across some more extracts on the same subject which seemed to me to throw some additional light upon the matter. The first of these was taken from the "Seclusion of the Adept", part of the commentary on the *Light on The Path*, published in *Lucifer*, (Vol. I. p. 380) and reads as follows:

"Here in London, as in Paris and St. Petersburg, there are men high in development. But they are only known as mystics by those who have the power to recognise; the power given by the conquering of self. Otherwise, how could they exist, even for an hour, in such a mental and psychic atmosphere as is created by the confusion and disorder of a city? Unless protected and made safe, their own growth would be interfered with, their work injured. And the neophyte may meet an adept in the flesh, may live in the same house with him, and yet be unable to recognise him, and unable to make his own voice heard by him. For no nearness in space, no closeness of relations, no daily intimacy, can do away with the inexorable laws which give the adept his seclusion. No voice penetrates to his inner hearing till it has become a divine voice, a voice which gives no utterance to the cries of self. Any lesser appeal would be as useless, as much a waste of energy and power, as for mere children who are learning their alphabet to be taught it by a professor of philology. Until a man has become, in heart and spirit, a disciple, he has no existence for those who are teachers of disciples."

Here the adept is referred to as still capable of growth, while in the same volume of *Lucifer*, p. 257, we read: "The occult idea of

Mahatmahood is a soul of higher rank in the realms of life, conceived to drink in the wealth of spiritual power closer to the fountain-head, and to distil its essence into the interior of receptive souls. In harmony with this idea, Emerson writes: "The will of the pure runs down from them into other natures, as water runs down from a higher into a lower vessel; this natural force is no more to be withstood than any other natural force. A healthy soul stands united with the Just and the True, as the magnet arranges itself with the pole, so that he stands to all beholders like a transparent object betwixt them and the sun, and whoso journeys towards the sun, journeys towards that person."

In the *Key to Theosophy*, lately published, Mme. Blavatsky again uses the terms *Adept*, *Initiate*, *Master*, and *Mahatma* in the same sense. She says (p. 289) that "the word *Mahatma* means simply 'a great soul' great through moral elevation and intellectual attainment. We call them *Masters* because they are our teachers. They are men of great learning, whom we call *Initiates*, and still greater holiness of life." And on p. 293 she continues: "They have no right, except by falling into Black Magic, to obtain full mastery over any one's immortal Ego, and can therefore act only on the physical and psychical nature of the subject, leaving thereby the free-will of the latter wholly undisturbed. Hence, unless a person has been brought into psychic relationship with the Masters, and is assisted by virtue of his full faith in and devotion to his Teachers, the latter, whenever transmitting their thoughts to one with whom these conditions are not fulfilled, experience great difficulties in penetrating into the cloudy chaos of that person's sphere."

This extract suggests that all communication with the Masters must be upon higher planes than that of the purely physical, and explains why we cannot expect to make them hear till we too speak with "a divine voice." Nevertheless, there is nothing in it to

lead one to interpret the word *Mahatma* (at least as it is ordinarily used) as meaning only "*the* great soul," and therefore rendering it impossible to speak of "*a* Mahatma." There still remains the idea of individuality. While it is very possible to think of *Mahatma* as the great Soul with whom all spiritual existences are at one, in that sense it becomes a condition rather than an individuality, and all sense of human relations dependent upon that individuality is lost. Considered in the abstract, light is one and indivisible, but to our physical eye is individualised in every star of the firmament, every lamp of the earth. No matter how lofty our idea of "*a* Mahatma" may be, it must have limitations and qualifications, and cannot therefore be the same as the idea of *the* Great Soul, which is the Infinite and Unlimited. When the ascetic has arrived at the point spoken of by Patanjali in the Aphorisms quoted in the former paper, he stands even then upon the threshold only of that higher state called *Isolation* or *Emancipation*. Till then his individuality persists, as we may see by the 4th and 5th Aphorisms of *Book IV*, where the *mind* or *ego* of the ascetic is spoken of as controlling the various minds acting in the bodies which he voluntarily assumes.

In an article on the "Sevenfold Principle in Man," by Mme. Blavatsky, (*Five Years of Theosophy*, p. 153) she tells us that from the first appearance of life up to the state of Nirvana, the progress is, as it were, continuous and by imperceptible gradations. But nevertheless four stages are recognised in this progress, where the change is of a peculiar kind:

1. Where life makes its appearance.
2. Where the existence of mind becomes perceptible in conjunction with life.
3. Where the highest state of mental abstraction ends, and *spiritual consciousness* begins.

4. Where spiritual consciousness disappears, leaving the 7th principle (Atma) in a complete state of *Nirvana* or nakedness; (defined further on as the condition of final negation, negation of individual, or separate, existence, or, in other words, complete identification with the Absolute.) *Atma* is here used as the emanation from the Absolute called "the seventh principle," but, properly speaking, no principle, being identical with the Absolute.

It seems, then, that until spiritual consciousness disappears in *Nirvana*, we have a right to consider that the individuality persists, and, while that continues, the highest adept is not yet lost in the Universal Soul. So that the phrase "a Mahatma," used as an equivalent to the expression "a Master," is the use of a word in a restricted sense, which might be kept, as the Aryan Society has suggested, to its higher meaning as a condition rather than an entity, but which, *in its general acceptance*, has no such restricted signification. We might as well refuse to say "Bring me a light," because light is an abstract and general term and cannot be individualised.

It certainly would be a good thing if the terminology of Theosophy were more accurate and well-defined, and especially that the many Sanskrit terms which have no exact English equivalents should be officially defined, once for all, and then accurately employed. Theosophy has the advantage over all other metaphysical systems, of the possession of a vocabulary drawn from the subtlest of languages; and it is a pity to lose this advantage through our own ignorance or carelessness. Any discussion, therefore, which tends to throw light upon the precise meaning of an important word, cannot be considered as lost time.

THE ALLEGORICAL UMBRELLA — *William Brehon*

In the Buddhist stories there are numerous references to umbrellas. When Buddha is said to have granted to his disciples the power of seeing what they called "Buddha Fields," they saw myriads of Buddhas sitting under trees and jewelled umbrellas. There are not wanting in the Hindu books and monuments references to and representations of umbrellas being held over personages. In a very curious and extremely old stone *relievo* at the Seven Pagodas in India, showing the conflict between Durga and the demons, the umbrella is figured over the heads of the Chiefs. It is not our intention to exalt this common and useful article to a high place in occultism, but we wish to present an idea in connection with it that has some value for the true student.

In the Upanishads we read the invocation: "Reveal, O Pushan, that face of the true sun which is now hidden by a golden lid." This has reference to the belief of all genuine occultists, from the earliest times to the present day, that there is a "true sun," and that the sun we see is a secondary one; or, to put it in plainer language, that there is an influence or power in the sun which may be used, if obtained by the mystic, for beneficent purposes, and which, if not guarded, hidden, or obscured by a cover, would work destruction to those who might succeed in drawing it out. This was well known in ancient Chaldea, and also to the old Chinese astronomers: the latter had certain instruments which they used for the purpose of concentrating particular rays of sunlight as yet unknown to modern science and now forgotten by the flowery land philosophers. So much for that sun we see, whose probable death is calculated by some aspiring scientists who deal in absurdities.

But there is the *true centre* of which the sun in heaven is a symbol and partial reflection. This centre let us place for the time with the Dhyan Chohans or planetary spirits. It is all knowing, and so intensely powerful that, were a struggling disciple to be suddenly introduced to its presence unprepared, he would be consumed both body and soul. And this is the goal we are all striving after, and many of us asking to see even at the opening of the race. But for our protection a cover, or umbrella, has been placed beneath IT. The ribs are the Rishees, or Adepts, or Mahatmas; the Elder Brothers of the race. The handle is in every man's hand. And although each man is, or is to be, connected with some particular one of those Adepts, he can also receive the influence from the *true centre* coming down through the handle.

The light, life, knowledge, and power falling upon this cover permeate in innumerable streams the whole mass of men beneath, whether they be students or not. As the disciple strives upward, he begins to separate himself from the great mass of human beings, and becomes in a more or less definite manner connected with the ribs. Just as the streams of water flow down from the points of the ribs of our umbrellas, so the spiritual influences pour out from the adepts who form the frame of the protecting cover, with out which poor humanity would be destroyed by the blaze from the spiritual world.

The Path

ASTRAL AND PHYSICAL LAW — *H. S. B.*

This article was suggested by reading "To Those Who Suffer," in the January number of the *PATH*, and an article on "Physical Fields," in *Science* for Dec. 27th, 1889.

The writer in *Science*, one of the leading scientists in the matter of physical research, formulated a common law governing the different classes of "fields." The article referred to reads as follows:

"When the physical state of a body re-acts upon the medium that surrounds it so as to produce in the medium a state of stress or motion, or both, the space within which such effects are produced is called the "field" of the body. When a body is made to assume two or more physical states simultaneously, each state produces its own state independent of the existence of the others; hence two or more fields may co-exist in the same space. For instance: if a magnet be electrified, both the magnetic and the electric fields occupy the same space, and each as if the other did not exist.

PROPERTY OF VARIOUS FIELDS.

I. *The Electric Field.* — Suppose a glass rod be electrified with silk or cat skin. It is experimentally known that other bodies in its neighborhood are physically affected by its mere presence without contact, and various motions result which are commonly attributed to electric attraction and repulsion. The phenomena are explained as due to the stress into which the neighboring ether is thrown by the electrified body, the stress re-acting upon other bodies, and moving them this way or that as the stress is

greater here or there. Suppose an electrified mass of matter remote from any other matter, in free space. The field, or the stress that constitutes it, is found to vary in strength inversely as the square of the distance from the body in every direction about it, which shows that the effect upon the ether is uniform in all directions, and that for such a stress under such conditions the ether is isotropic. If this assumed electrified mass of matter were the only matter in the universe, then its electric field would be as extensive as the universe, and any electric change in the mass would ultimately re-act upon the whole of space, and be uniform in every direction. If, however, there be another mass of matter in proximity to the first, the disposition of the stress is altogether different; for instead of being disposed radially, as in the first case, the field is distorted by the re-action of the stressed ether upon the second body. The so-called "lines of force" bend more or less toward the second body, and the field stress becomes denser between the bodies at the expense of the field more remote. If this advancing stress in the ether from an electrified body be called radiation, and it seems to be an action of this kind, then it appears that the direction of such radiation depends upon the existence of other bodies in the ether. It is truly rectilinear no further than the shortest distance between the two bodies.

The electric field thus produced, and thus re-acting upon another body, develops in the latter an electrical condition, that is to say, it electrifies it; and the process we call "electric induction," to distinguish it from the transference of the electrification by contact, which is called "conduction." In the process called induction there are two transformations: in conduction there is simply a transference, and no transformation. The experimental fact is this: an electrified body sets up in the ether a stress of such a nature that, by its re-action upon another body, the latter is brought into a condition similar to that of the first; that is, it

electrifies it."

II. The author then describes a *magnetic field*, and says; "A magnet then sets up such a condition in the ether that its re-action upon another body brings the latter into a condition similar to that of the first; that is, it magnetizes it."

III. Of a *thermal field*, he says that "in a similar way the first body heats the second."

IV. Of an *acoustic field*, he remarks that "a sounding body sets up in the medium about it such a physical condition as, by its re-action upon another body, brings the latter into a state like the first." He concludes with the generalization, "when a mass of matter acts upon the medium that is about it, the latter is thrown into such a physical condition or state that its re-action upon another body always induces in the second body a state similar to that of the first body. This has a much wider application than most physical laws; for it embraces phenomena in mechanics, heat, light, electricity, and magnetism."

To these four examples, why not add a fifth; the *Psychic Field*? While not so tangible, nor so readily observed by the students of modern physical science, it seems none the less to follow the same law.

V. *The Psychic Field*. — Suppose a person's psychic organism is in a state of Love, in the higher sense, or else of Anger. It is experimentally and otherwise known that other psychic organisms in its neighborhood are psychically affected by its mere presence without contact, and various emotions result which are commonly attributed to attraction or repulsion. One often hears the phrase "such a person attracts me," or *vice versa*. These phenomena may be explained as due to the stress into which the neighboring ether (Astral Light) is thrown by the acting

organism, the stress re-acting upon other organisms and moving them this way or that as the stress is greater here or there. Suppose such an organism to be alone in space. The field, or stress that constitutes it, would extend uniformly in every direction and occupy the whole of space. *If*, however, another organism be brought into proximity with the first, the "lines of force" are distorted as in the case of an electric field. This would offer an explanation of why, as sometimes stated in occult works (see "Occult World"), persons communicating psychically often find such communication difficult, or even impossible for a time; the radiation is no longer rectilinear, but twisted, or even interrupted.

The point in view is; that a psychic organism always sets up such a condition in the surrounding ether (Astral Light), that its reaction upon another organism brings the latter into a state similar to that of the first, that is, it psychologizes it.

By extending the same considerations to the behavior of the Spiritual Organism in the Celestial Light, we have a sixth field; that is the *Spiritual Field*. Many other points of coincidence will suggest themselves, and it is not difficult to recognize a fragment of the Great Law of the Universe — the Unity of all Beings.

The Path

APPARENT FAILURE — *Katharine Hillard*

There is no sentiment more constantly re-iterated in the poetry of Robert Browning than the deceptiveness of that illusion that we call success, or of that other illusion that we call failure; and I think one of the great causes of Browning's triumph as a poet of humanity has been his ability to inspire courage in other men, not only to teach them, but to make them realise that there are other elements in every struggle than those the world sees, and that what our short-sighted eyes call defeat is very often to the vision of the Gods a victory. To fail in the pursuit of an ideal is the common portion of humanity; why then should any one of us be exempt? So in "The Last Ride Together," the poet comforts himself with this thought:

"Fail I alone, in words and deeds?
Why, all men strive and who succeeds?
We rode; it seemed my spirit flew,
Saw other regions, cities new,
As the world rushed by on either side.
I thought, All labour, yet no less
Bear up beneath their unsuccess.
Look at the end of work, contrast
The petty Done, the Undone vast,
This present of theirs with the hopeful past!"

And in the next verse he hints at one reason of this failure.

"What hand and brain went ever paired?
What heart alike conceived and dared?
What act proved all its thought had been?
What will but felt the fleshly screen?"

Here he seems to realise how hard it is for the physical man to carry out the dictates of the spiritual man. It is the same lesson that Patanjali teaches when he says that the obstacles in the way of him who desires to attain concentration, or union with the Divine, are sickness, languor, doubt, carelessness, laziness, and so forth. It is easy to account for most of our failures in the little struggles of every-day life by one of the obstacles just mentioned without going on to the end of the list. The greatest obstacle of all is the one from which all our evils spring, Ignorance. The little things of life present themselves so often in a disguise that we fail to penetrate; we realize only when the opportunity is past that it was an opportunity, and then we say "If I had only known!" It is only experience that can teach us, only repeated stumbles that can teach us how to walk, only losses from oversight that can teach us how to see. When the trumpets sound for battle we gird up our loins and are ready for the fight; but when the enemy steals upon us in friendly guise and we have but to shut the door upon him, how often we are betrayed!

The only way to treat failure is to make it a stepping-stone to success.

"I hold it truth with one who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things."

And what are "our dead selves" but our failures to be or to do what we ought to be or to do? Every time that we fail, whether from ignorance or from carelessness or from any other cause, we should have learned at least this lesson, never to do *that* again. And so we may painfully stumble through the alphabet of life, and though we never get beyond our letters, yet if our progress be always in the right direction, we shall yet hear, when the end

comes, the Voice of the Silence saying "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Nor can we always measure failure and success. The conditions are so complex that only omniscient eyes can read them aright. The very thing we are most proud of may prove to have a secret flaw; the task we had despised may turn out to be a glorious achievement. The soldier who fights and dies on the losing side is as brave as he who falls on that of the victors, and the losing side is sometimes the right side in the eyes of Truth. It was of such as these that Walt Whitman was thinking when he wrote his stirring hymn to the vanquished.

"With music strong I come — with my cornets and my drums; I play not marches for accepted victors only — I play great marches for conquered and slain persons. Have you heard that it was good to win the day? I also say that it is good to fall — battles are lost in the same spirit in which they are won. I beat and pound for the dead; I blow through my embouchures my loudest and gayest for them. Vivas to those who have failed!

And to those whose war-vessels sank in the sea!

And to those themselves who sank in the sea!

And to all generals that lost engagements! and all overcome heroes!

And the numberless unknown heroes, equal to the greatest heroes known!

In an article on "Awakening" in the last number of *Lucifer* the writer has italicised these words: "*Never is the aspirant in such danger of falling as the moment after he has successfully resisted temptation.*" And here we see the greatest danger of success, in

that spiritual pride that blinds our eyes and makes us lose our balance, that inspiring us with confidence causes us to relax our guard and renders us a easy prey to the thousand insidious evil influences that hover about us.

We must take courage, then, and learn that it is not for us to judge of the measure of our successes or our defeats; that must be left for wiser intelligences than ours. And if we cannot make a right estimate of our own victories, how much less can we do so in the case of our neighbor, of whose real nature and of whose real temptations we are so hopelessly ignorant. The man we think fallen among the slain may be really mounting to a higher sphere, whence he can survey our harsh judgment with the pitying eyes of a wider knowledge; the conqueror we see flushed with victory may have gained the whole world to lose his own soul. So, to quote Browning again:

 "Not on the vulgar mass
 Called "work" must sentence pass,
Things done that took the eye and had the price;
 O'er which, from level stand,
 The low world laid its hand,
Found straightway to its mind, could value in a trice;

 But all the world's coarse thumb
 And finger failed to plumb,
So passed in making up the main account;
 All instincts immature,
 All purposes unsure,
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's
amount:

 Thoughts hardly to be packed
 Into a narrow act,
Fancies that broke through language and escaped;

All I could never be,
All, men ignored in me,
This I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped.

We certainly cannot judge of the comparative success or failure of others; we can hardly judge of our own; but we can take courage when we seem to be beaten, and try to discover the flaw in our armor that we may be better prepared for another fight. And we can study that lesson which is set us every day, but which we so often fail to learn, that in the little things of every day life are our opportunities for conquest over ourselves. If we neglect these tasks, how can we expect to have harder lessons set us?

"Would- but some fairy lend to me her charm!"

Lately I cried, in a despairing hour;

"Some mighty spell to nerve my weary arm,
Some Open Sesame of magic power!

Or, better still, show but the time and place
Where a brave heart might win itself a name,
And fall, perchance to benefit the race,
Winning the blossoms of a deathless fame!"

Then as I mused a beldame crossed my way,
Tottering along, with shrouded, earth-bent brow;
She stretched a lean hand from her mantle gray,
And said, in shaking whispers, "Here, and now!"

"O poor delusion!" then I cried in scorn;
"Not thus are godlike powers to mortals given;
The Helpers come clad in the strength of morn,
Bright with the ling'ring radiance of heaven!

Nor this the place or hour for mighty deeds,
On this lone way, beneath this tranquil sky;
No foe is here, no hapless victim bleeds;

We are the only passers, thou and I!"

Silent she tottered on, but having past,

A sudden glory seemed to light her way;

White angel-wings sprang from her shoulders vast,

And fair she shone as shines the god of day.

A noble scorn shot lightnings from her eyes,

As fleeing still she turned her lovely head;

"The gods sent me in answer to thy cries,

But once repulsed, I am forever fled!

Learn to know Fortune ere she pass thee by;

Seize on her coming, for she will not wait!

And know by all thy ways divine things lie,

And every place and hour holds thy fate!"

The Path

**THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF A UNITARY RULE OF CONDUCT IN THE
MANIFESTED WORLD OF DUALITY — *J. M Pryse***

The inquiry so frequently made in the Theosophical Society as to what constitutes the duty of a Theosophist in any particular instance, as, for example, when he encounters the victims of poverty and suffering, shows a peculiar lack of apprehension of the higher Theosophical teachings. A call for a simple rule of action that may be applied in every case at once shows that the person from whom the call emanates has not grasped the fundamental teaching of Occultism, that everything in the manifested world is necessarily dual in its nature. A unitary rule of conduct is no more possible than a stick with only one end. In all things we perceive duality, the "pairs of opposites", as the Hindus say; thus we speak of subject and object, cause and effect, pleasure and pain, light and darkness, spirit and matter, good and evil, etc. In seeking by any intellectual process to resolve even the most abstruse philosophical or ethical questions into their ultimates, we can go no farther than the "pairs of opposites." Take, for an instance, the doctrine of karma. It includes both free-will and predestination, the "pairs of opposites" for that subject. For if each individual reaps only the effects of causes set in motion by himself, and thus may create his own future, he evidently has perfect freedom of will, and his destiny is held in his own hands. But, again, since each thought and motive he has is the result of preceding thoughts and motives, and these again of others, he is evidently proceeding inevitably upon a line marked out in the beginning. If we inquire when was this beginning, we come to a consideration of time and eternity — another "pair of opposites". Could we penetrate this duality and realize the underlying unity of nature, we would thereby escape

the curse of reincarnation and pass from the world of illusion into the realm of reality; but so long as we are *Baddhas*, souls in the bondage of illusion, and not *Jivanmuktas*, souls emancipated, this duality forever confronts us, and nowhere is it more apparent than in the subject under discussion this evening — the application of Theosophy to daily life.

No system of thought attaches less importance to physical existence than does Theosophy, which declares it to be only a passing illusion, a shadow thrown upon a screen. The Neoplatonists spoke of their bodies as "images"; and the Theosophists of the present century attach far less importance to the physical organism and the actions of the material plane than they do to the mental attitude and intellectual activities. As said in a private letter of H. P. B., "To yield to personal *physical* weaknesses and passions is a lesser crime in Occultism than to yield to mental and intellectual weaknesses. To prostitute one's body is to desecrate only an old rag, an evanescent principle. To prostitute *one's thought*, even the *lower* Manas, connected with and emanating from the Higher Manas or Ego, is to pollute *that which is immortal*." Constantly we are urged to estrange ourselves from the objects of sense, and to attain to such freedom from all worldly desires that they will awaken in us only a feeling akin to disgust.

To attempt to put in practice these teachings only, disconnecting them from the whole body of Theosophical doctrines, would result disastrously; and for a majority of any race to do so would bring about an era of ignorance, filthiness, laziness, and depravity such as Europe was plunged into during the Dark Ages from the same Cause. For, mark well, this is but one of the "pairs of opposites", and the other is even more distinctly inculcated in Theosophical teachings, which insist rigorously upon the performance of every worldly duty, upon active participation in

the world's work, and upon the most scrupulous moral and physical purity. Theosophy holds out no hopes of advancement to those who do not work for the cause of Humanity right here in this work-a-day world, and regards as a species of imbecility the mental condition of those who seek "interior illumination", or "soul unfoldment" as they term it, by abandoning their worldly duties and devoting themselves to psychic rhapsodies and visionary speculations, yielding, in fact, to their mental and intellectual weaknesses, and thereby, as H. P. B. declares, polluting immortal *thought*.

It is therefore no contradiction in theosophical doctrines that all things are declared illusory, unreal, and yet a course of action insisted upon seemingly making this the world of reality. It is but a recognition of the duality of manifested life, the polarity of existence or being, and the further recognition of the fact that it is not by following either pole alone that we can pass beyond the confines of duality and illusion to the realm of unity and truth, but by diligently considering both poles of existence we may make of the duad a unit, pass from time to eternity, from mortal to immortal, from being into be-ness. Consequent upon this duality, the life of a man is a process of unfoldment from within, and also of infoldment, or adjustment, from without. No unitary rule of action can be framed for a being who is himself a duad; for, being thus dual in his nature, he must follow a dual course, and in a question of action he must while acting remain inactive. One part of his nature acts, the other remains inactive; and when the lower and higher nature of man become one, then action and inaction must also become one. Says the *Bhagavad-Gita*, "He who perceives action in inaction, and inaction in action, is wise among mankind." And in that old book, itself an equilibrium of opposites, so profound in its simplicity, so homely in its grandeur, so ancient in its newness, as applicable to the care-worn Western man of

modern times as it was to the quiet Eastern people of olden days, — we find no single rule of action, but this dual course of action laid down clearly and with exactness. Perform conscientiously every duty encountered in this busy world, but have no interest in the results, leaving them to the Supreme; as said in Christian Scriptures, "Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's, and unto God that which is God's." And the more a man separates the two worlds, that of the material from that of the spiritual, the more closely they come together, tending to merge into one, the light of the spiritual shining down into the material, so that even in the personality of the man may be seen a shimmering of the divine light, making his every action nobler and truer; whereas he who ignorantly seeks to confound the two worlds, rendering unto God that which is Caesar's, and unto Caesar that which is God's, say, by healing his body through the powers of his soul, as some do in this age, or tortures his body as a sacrifice to his soul, as do some Eastern zealots, finds the two worlds grow wider and wider apart. This is no contradiction; it is the necessary polarity and duality of manifested life.

The Path

THE SEVENFOLD DIVISION — *Eusebio Urban*

WHY NOT CHANGE THE DESIGNATION?

Mr. Sinnett's book *Esoteric Buddhism* has done a great deal towards bringing before the West the Eastern philosophy regarding man and his constitution, but it has also served to perpetuate the use of a word that is misleading and incorrect. In that work on p. 61 he states, "Seven distinct principles are recognized by Esoteric Science as entering into the constitution of man", and then gives his scheme of division thus, The *body*, Vitality, Astral Body, Animal Soul, Human Soul, Spiritual Soul, and seventh, Spirit or Atma. Now if Spirit be, as the whole philosophy declares, in all and through all, it is erroneous to call it one of the series. This very early led to the accusation that we believed in seven distinct spirits in man. It always leads to misconception, and directly tends to preventing our understanding fully that the Atma includes, and is the substratum of, all the others. In India it caused a protracted and, at times, heated discussion between the adherents of the rigid seven-fold classification of *Esoteric Buddhism* and several learned and unlearned Hindus who supported a four-fold or five-fold division. During that debate the chief Hindu controvertor, while holding to a different system, admitted the existence of "a real esoteric seven-fold classification," which of course cannot be given to the public. Mr. Sinnett also evidently made a mistake when he said that the first mentioned division is the esoteric one.

Now it would seem that many of these misconceptions and differences could be prevented if a word were adopted and invariably used that would clearly express the idea intended to be conveyed. As the prime declaration of theosophy is that all these

so-called bodies and appearances are for the purpose of enabling the ONE — the Atma — to fully comprehend nature and "bring about the aim of the soul", why not denominate all that it uses for that purpose as *vehicle*? This name is strictly in accord with all parts of the philosophy. It is in effect the same as *Upadhi*, or basis, foundation, carrier. By its use we make no error when we say that theosophy declares there is Atma, which works with and through six *vehicles*. Strictly, the body is a vehicle for the astral body, it for the next, and so on up to Atma, which is therefore seen to be all and in all, as is clearly declared in *Bhagavad-Gita*.

This change, or to some other than "principles," should be adopted by all theosophists, for every day there is more inquiry by new minds, and theosophists themselves, indeed, need to use their words with care when dealing with such subjects. Or if greater clearness is desired, let us say that there is *one principle* which acts through *six vehicles*. The scheme will then stand thus: *Atma* (spirit), one principle, indivisible.

Its vehicles are,

- Buddhi*.....Spiritual Soul
- Manas*.....Human Soul
- Kama Rupa*.....Animal Soul
- Linga Sharira*.....Astral Body
- Prana or Jiva*.....Vitality
- Rupa*.....The Body

Names have power, and if we go on talking of 7 principles when in truth there is but one, we are continually clouding our conception of theosophic truth.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR RIGHT AND WRONG ACTION — *Exeter*

Look not mournfully into the Past. It comes not back again.
Wisely improve the present. It is thine. Go forth to meet the
shadowy Future, without fear, and with a manly heart. —
Hyperion.

A fundamental teaching of Theosophy is man's responsibility to himself alone for his actions, good, bad, or indifferent. It is at once a wise and truthful teaching, and calculated to inspire one with lofty thoughts and higher aspirations. It presupposes a positive knowledge on the part of man of the difference between good and evil in their relative capacities. Even the lower strata of humanity, surrounded by every form of vice and wickedness, *know* from observation and intuition that there is a higher degree or form of life on the plane of humanity, although they may choose to walk in the path of animalism and wrongdoing. The dulled life they lead is theirs from choice; it cannot be said, however, that by a superhuman effort the criminal, the debauchee, or the self-imposed outcast from society may not lift himself by degrees from his low station to one of truth, refinement, and spirituality.

Because of the teachings of Theosophy on this point Theosophists are perhaps more than any others, unusually receptive to the voice of the Higher Self. The study of Theosophy is well calculated to lend to the individual an enlargement of comprehension in respect of humanity that is unattainable through any other process of reasoning. Individual opinion as to what is right and what is wrong will ever be the rule, and the *intention* the guide of judgment. A man may, with the hope of future reward, do right; a man may, because of some apparent timely advantage of right

over wrong, do right; or he may be a passive doer of right for the sake of appearances and because right action is reputable and the aim of the majority. But the Theosophist, provided always that he is consistent, will look upon the question of right and wrong from a higher standpoint, — from the standpoint of Universal Brotherhood. For the good of humanity: for an example; because right is right, not because it is customary, will the Theosophist walk in the higher round.

Now, because of this teaching of responsibility, the idea arises of a still equally important phase of the question, and that is, every man is a law unto himself. Taken as it stands, this conception is, it must be admitted, startling; but it is nevertheless true. The laws of Karma and reincarnation demonstrate its truthfulness:

* * * * each man's life

The outcome of his former living is;
The bygone wrongs bring forth sorrows and woes,
The bygone right breeds bliss.

That which ye sow ye reap. See yonder fields!
The sesamum was sesamum, the corn Was corn.
The silence and the darkness knew!
So is a man's fate born.

He cometh, reaper of the things he sowed,
Sesamum, corn, so much cast in past birth;
And so much weed and poison-stuff, which mar
Him and the aching earth.

If he shall labor rightly, rooting these,
And planting wholesome seedlings where they grew,
Fruitful and fair and clean the ground shall be,
And rich the harvest due.

If he who liveth, learning whence woe springs,

Enduring patiently, striving to pay
His utmost debt for ancient evils done
In Love and Truth always;

If making none to lack, he thoroughly purge
The lie and lust of self forth from his blood;
Suffering all meekly, rendering for offense
Nothing but grace and good;

If he shall day by day dwell merciful,
Holy and just and kind and true; and rend
Desire from whence it clings with bleeding roots,
Till love of life have end:

He — dying — leaveth as the sum of him
A life-count closed, whose ills are dead and quit,
Whose good is quick and mighty, far and near,
So that fruits follow it." (1)

To draw a line of demarcation between right and wrong will not be a difficult task for the student of theosophy; and if the faculty of closely distinguishing the spurious from the true is latent in the student, the still smooking ember may be set a flame by a touch from the torch of Karma. The doer of good for the sake of good itself — he who sees wherein good may be evolved from presumptive evil, (for the two are at times closely allied); he who, for the sake of the good that is embedded therein, walks boldly into the monster's lair, caring nothing for physical or mental scars and unheeding the scoffings of the super-holy in order to extract the true and put away the false, is surely working on the Theosophic plane.

When men are led to a conception of responsibility to self, when men come to see *by the light of future events* that he who sows shall surely reap — not a vicarious reward or punishment, but —

a just proportion of praise or blame consistent with his present life, then will come *to him* the crowning day of theosophic effort. When the millions of rich and poor realize that man is *a law unto himself* in respect of spiritual things, then will Universal Brotherhood become a universal factor in the mundane sphere.

But the world moves. The progress of the past few years in the theosophic arena shows sense of increase an hundred fold before the cycle is ended. Man's spiritual nature is slowly but surely developing in a degree in proportion to the development of the race. It is with no pessimistic eye that the members of the Theosophical Society need view the future. Theosophy is an accepted fact, and the practice of altruism is forming a light in the background that will eventually envelop humanity in one grand brotherhood for the glorification of good and the deification of man.

FOOTNOTE:

1. The Light of Asia. ([return to text](#))

The Path

MEANS TO THE END — *J. H. Connelly*

An esteemed correspondent makes a suggestion that is doubtless good, concerning practical aids in purifying the lower nature, which, as he justly observes, is "easier said than done." He recommends that each one truly desirous of such purification should, for himself, jot down in convenient form for frequent reference such passages from books and articles that he reads, bearing upon what he knows to be his especial faults, as will be helpful in knowing and overcoming them.

It is perhaps hardly necessary that a conscientious Theosophist shall load up his diary with such entries for daily reference as: — "Monday: *Mem.* Mustn't lie, steal, get drunk, commit adultery, or kill anybody today." The great laws of abstention from overt acts of conspicuous evil will doubtless be so firmly fixed in his innermost being that a special mnemonic device concerning them will be superfluous. But grievous faults, working woe not only to the doer but to others, lie deeper than manifestation in wicked deeds, and are perhaps oft-times productive of more far-reaching ill effects than what the penal code recognizes as crimes. And against these, by every means, he will do well to guard himself, who wishes to walk in the right path.

They are evil thoughts, the seeds sown by Desire, that soon or late bear fruit objectively in proportion to the energy of their conception; and they are deeds also, the wanton speech, the inconsiderate unkind act, the customary seeking of one's selfish gain and personal good even at others loss, and indifference to the weal or woe of our fellow-creatures. But not even when these are abstained from is duty done. Good consists not in the negative virtue of refraining from evil. Purposeful thoughts for the

betterment of existence for all that suffer life, and the concretion of such thoughts into action to the utmost of our individual abilities, are no less demanded of us than avoidance of positively evil deeds, and will have a beneficial effect, even upon this material plane, well worth all the sacrifice that may be involved in such thinking and doing. Man, for himself, makes benign or malign the astral photosphere surrounding him, and the basis of a true wisdom in the ordering of his relations to the Universe must be an altruism that impels him to right action without regard to his personal harvesting of the fruits thereof.

If the Theosophist finds in his reading passages that so impress themselves upon his mentality as to direct, encourage, and strengthen him in such realization of duty in both its negative and positive phases, of course he will do well to fix those excerpts in his mind and, by meditation upon them, make their thoughts a part of his own being.

One good way for this, doubtless, the correspondent has adopted. He makes up a page of such apposite selections for each day of the week, and devotes a specified time each morning to reading and contemplation upon one of those pages. Others may find superior advantages in different methods, according to their mental training, natural perceptivity, occupation, and personal requirements, and certainly each must make his selections for himself. The same words do not always mean the same things to different persons, or equally impress each of even those minds that have a common comprehension of their meaning.

Well worthy of constant remembrance by those who seek "the perfect way" is the opening of the sixteenth chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, thus beautifully presented in Edward Arnold's metrical translation of that inspired work:

"Fearlessness, singleness of soul, the will

Always to strive for wisdom; opened hand
And governed appetites; and piety
And love of lonely study; humbleness,
Uprightness, heed to injure nought which lives,
Truthfulness, slowness unto wrath, a mind
That lightly letteth go what others prize;
And equanimity, and charity
Which spieth no man's faults; and tenderness
Towards all that suffer; a contented heart,
Fluttered by no desires; a bearing mild,
Modest, and grave, with manhood nobly mixed
With patience, fortitude, and purity;
An unrevengeful spirit, never given
To rate itself too high; such be the signs,
O Indian Prince! of him whose feet are set
On that fair path which leads to heavenly birth!
Deceitfulness, and arrogance, and pride,
Quickness to anger, harsh and evil speech,
And ignorance, to its own darkness blind, —
These be the signs, My Prince! of him whose birth
Is fated for the regions of the vile."

Another golden excerpt, from the second chapter of the same book, is also worthy of firm regard as a law of life:

"Find full reward
Of doing right in right! Let right deeds be
Thy motive, not the fruit which comes from them.
And live in action! Labor! Make thine acts
Thy piety, casting all self aside,
Contemning gain and merit; equable
In good or evil: equability
Is Yog, is piety!"

The Path

NOTES ON DEVACHAN — X.

Devachan is not, cannot be, monotonous; for this would be contrary to all analogies and antagonistic to the laws of effects, under which results are proportionate to antecedent energies.

There are two fields of causal manifestations: the objective and the subjective. The grosser energies find their outcome in the new personality of each birth in the cycle of evolving individuality. The moral and spiritual activities find their sphere of effects in Devachan.

The dream of Devachan lasts until Karma is satisfied in that direction, until the ripple of force reaches the edge of its cyclic basin and the being moves into the next area of causes.

That particular one *moment* which will be most intense and uppermost in the thoughts of the dying brain at the moment of dissolution, will regulate all subsequent moments. The moment thus selected becomes the key-note of the whole harmony, around which cluster in endless variety all the aspirations and desires which in connection with that moment had ever crossed the dreamer's brain during his lifetime, without being realized on earth, — the theme modelling itself on, and taking shape from, that group of desires which was most intense during life.

In Devachan there is no cognizance of time, of which the Devachanee loses all sense.

(To realize the bliss of Devachan or the woes of Avitchi you have to assimilate them as we do.)

The a priori ideas of space and time do not control his perceptions; for he absolutely creates and annihilates them at the

same time. Physical existence has its cumulative intensity from infancy to prime, and its diminishing energy to dotage and death; so the dream-life of Devachan is lived correspondentially. Nature cheats no more the *devachanee* than she does the living physical man. Nature provides for him far more *real* bliss and happiness *there* than she does *here*, where all the conditions of evil and chance are against him.

To call the devachan existence a "dream" in any other sense than that of a conventional term, is to renounce forever the knowledge of the esoteric doctrine, the sole custodian of truth. As in actual earth life, so there is for the Ego in Devachan the first flutter of psychic life, the attainment of prime, the gradual exhaustion of force passing into semi-consciousness and lethargy, total oblivion, and — not death, but birth, birth into another personality, and the resumption of action which daily begets new congeries of causes that must be worked out in another term of Devachan and still another physical birth as a new personality. What the lives in Devachan and upon earth shall be respectively in each instance is determined by Karma, and this weary round of birth must be ever and ever run through until the being reaches the end of the seventh round, or attains in the interim the wisdom of an Arhat, then that of a Buddha, and thus gets relieved for a round or two, having learned how to burst through the vicious circle and to pass into Para-nirvana.

A colorless, flavorless personality has a colorless, feeble devachanic state.

There is a change of occupation, a continual change in Devachan, just as much and far more than there is in the life of any man or woman who happens to follow in his or her whole life one sole occupation, whatever it may be, with this difference, that to the Devachanee this spiritual occupation is always pleasant and fills

his life with rapture. Life in Devachan is the function of the aspirations of earth life; not the indefinite prolongation of that "single instant", but its infinite developments, the various incidents and events based upon and outflowing from that one "single moment" or moments. The dreams of the objective become the realities of the subjective existence. Two sympathetic souls will each work out their own devachanic sensations, making the other a sharer in its subjective bliss, yet each is dissociated from the other as regards actual mutual intercourse; for what companionship could there be between subjective entities which are not even as material as that Etherial body — the Mayavi Rupa?

The stay in Devachan is proportionate to the unexhausted psychic impulses originating in earth life. Those whose attractions were preponderatingly material will sooner be drawn back into rebirth by the force of Tanha.

The reward provided by nature for men who are benevolent in a large, systematic way, and who have not focused their affections on an individual or speciality, is that if pure they pass the quicker for that thro' the Kama and Rupa lokas into the higher sphere of Tribuvana, since it is one where the formulation of abstract ideas and the consideration of general principles fill the thought of its occupant.

The Path

HYPNOTISM — MESMERISM — *Rodriguez Undiano*

SCIENCE TAKES A STEP

The encyclopaedias are not yet out of print which have classed mesmerism among the foolish superstitions of the ignorant played upon for profit by the quick-witted impostor, nor are the learned doctors dead who have published articles in support of the encyclopaedias, yet today the most eminent physicians in Europe declare that Mesmer was right and that mesmerism is not a superstition, but that it is necessary for reputations to adopt a new name, — so mesmerism is rechristened Hypnotism. In this way those doctors who laughed at and derided what has long been known to the common people may now learnedly discuss phenomena which some years ago they ignored under its old name. In the March number of *Scribner* Dr. William James writes upon this subject under the name of the "Hidden Self", and the April *Forum* admits an article by the eminent Dr. Charcot upon "Hypnotism and Crime."

This step, though taken late, is in the right direction. But the eminent physicians who make this advance cannot claim to be the leaders of the people, for the latter have for generations known quite as much about the matter as the licensed practitioners, except that they used no high-sounding name to call it by. It is well known to many members of the Theosophical Society that there are perhaps thousands of people in the United States who forty years ago pursued the same investigations and made similar experiments to those of Dr. Charcot and others. In the year 1850 a certain Dr. J. B. Dods gave lectures about the country and taught what he called *Electrical Psychology*. This was then so well known that it attracted the attention of certain U. S.

Senators, among them Daniel Webster, John Hale, Theodore Rush, Sam Houston, Henry Clay, and others, who invited Dr. Dods to lecture before them in Washington. He delivered his lecture, went on with his experiments, and published a series of Lectures upon the subject. In these are to be found, together with other things, the directions so loudly proclaimed and appropriated now by physicians who would have hooted at Dr. Dods. And even on the point of the necessity of precaution and of keeping hypnotism out of the hands of unprincipled persons, Dods was not silent. In 1850 he said in his Introduction that, although he had taught more than one thousand individuals whom he had put under solemn pledge not to reveal his methods to impure or immoral persons, yet some were so unprincipled as to violate their pledge and hawk the "science" about everywhere.

Dr. Charcot in the April *Forum* pleads for legislation that will prevent just such unprincipled persons from dealing with subjects, not solely on the ground that crime may be easily and safely committed with the aid of hypnotism, but rather that sensitive persons may be protected from the recurrence of hysteria or catalepsy, and ventures the opinion that crime will probably not find any aid or safeguard in hypnotism. While we thoroughly agree with Dr. Charcot as to the need for placing safeguards around this budding science, it is from a conviction that crime can be aided and hidden by the use of such a practice, and is today thus aided and hidden. We do not care to commit hypnotism solely to the doctors, as he asks, just for their sake, but we would wish to place restrictions upon even those gentlemen, and to limit the number of them who may be allowed to use it.

The chief value to the Theosophist of this new step of the schools is not, however, in the likelihood that rules and methods may be published, but that before long time the erstwhile materialist who can be convinced of a fact only when an Academy endorses it will

be the more easily convinced that there is a soul. In the March *Scribner* article above spoken of, we have a public admission that the facts of hypnotism prove a Hidden Self. Dr. Charcot does not go as far as this, but the variety and peculiarly occult character of numerous facts daily brought to light by other investigators will raise such a mountain of proof that hardly any one will be able to overcome it or deny its weight. Once they begin to admit a Hidden Self, — using, indeed, the very words long adopted by many Theosophists and constantly found in the ancient Upanishads, they allow the entering wedge. And so not long to wait have we for the fulfilment of the prediction of H. P. Blavatsky made in *Isis Unveiled* and repeated in the *Secret Doctrine*, "* * * and dead facts and events deliberately drowned in the sea of modern scepticism will ascend once more and reappear upon the surface".

The Path

THEOSOPHY IN RELATION TO OUR DAILY LIFE — *Katherine Hillard*

TRIFLES

When Mr. Judge spoke on this subject some weeks ago, I was forcibly impressed by the truth of what he said as to the minor opportunities of life to the most of us.

There are few to whom come chances for grave decisions, for great sacrifices, for evident heroism; most of us have to learn that difficult lesson, not to despise the day of small things. What we need is, to learn to apply theosophy to the *trifles* of our daily life, to find nothing too small to be done in the best possible way; and as the Christian would say, "do all things to the glory of God", so we must do all things to the glory of that higher Self that represents to us the Deity. If old George Herbert felt it not beneath his clerical dignity to assert that

"Who sweeps a room as by God's laws,
Makes that and th' action fine",

certainly we need not be behind him in humility. And however humble our duties, however small our temptations, however narrow our sphere, there are at least three things which we can all ponder upon; things wherein we may perhaps find something to improve. Faithfulness in our work, helpfulness of others, and the preservation of a cheerful and gracious mood, are three things which concern everybody, women as well as men. There is a beautiful old story of a lady who said that she knew her servant had experienced religion, and when asked why, replied "Because she sweeps under the mats!" Now *that* is the sort of thing that George Herbert was thinking of when he spoke of "sweeping a

room as by God's laws;" it is not only doing a thing and doing it at the proper time, but doing it with the thoroughness of divine law itself, not superficially and slightly, but with all the perfection that we are able to give it, for then alone can it be said to us, "*Well done, thou good and faithful servant.*" It is not too much to say that every task, no matter how trivial, wrought out conscientiously and with a sense of duty, with not a detail neglected or slurred over, reacts upon the character with a power that it is difficult to estimate. Aristotle defined virtue as a habit of doing the right thing; and every time that we not only do the right thing, but do it in the right way, we increase the strength of that habit, and make it so much the easier to do it again. The men who have succeeded (I do not mean in the eyes of the world, but in the attainment of some lofty ideal) have been men who did things *thoroughly*, who obeyed the Scripture injunction, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might," not half-heartedly, nor passably, but "with *all* thy might." Such conduct carries its reward with it, not only in the sense of satisfaction that follows when we have done our very best (and then alone), but also in the *unconscious* uplifting of our faculties to a higher plane. Let us never indulge ourselves with thinking "It does not matter *how* we do this, provided it is done"; it *does* matter, and most of all to ourselves; *we* are the ones upon whom the carelessness will fall most heavily, even though it seem to come upon others.

And most of all we need to feel that nothing done with the desire to help another is a trifle. It is impossible for us to estimate the far-reaching consequences of our lightest word, nor to tell how what seems to us a little thing, to another may be fraught with the gravest consequences. A child of twelve, whom I know, had her life saved by a little bunch of purple hyacinths. A long and severe illness had brought her to that point of apathy where she was slowly drifting out of life into death, when a friend brought her in

these flowers. Their beauty and sweetness roused her fainting spirit and won her back to life, and she knew it herself, child as she was, for she said, "I think those hyacinths have cured me." No one was more astonished than the friend who did the little kindness; "such a trifle", she thought. There is no better rule, it seems to me, than Charles Reade's favorite maxim, "Put yourself in his place," to teach us how to treat our neighbor. There are so many little courtesies that we omit, so many little acts of kindness that we leave undone, because we *don't* put ourselves in his place. In the hurry of our daily life, we neglect many little graces that, if practised, would make the wheels move much more smoothly. The first thing that one notices after returning home from a residence in Italy, for instance, is the roughness of everybody, the want of courtesy in high and low. In Italy, if you enter a shop, you are greeted with a pleasant smile and a cheerful "good morning," you are waited upon with attention, but without servility, and saluted as you go out with another "good morning," and a hope that you will come again. Here, if you say "good morning" on entering, as perhaps you do from force of habit, the much befrizzed and be-decorated shop-girls stare at you as if you had just escaped from a menagerie of curious animals, and hardly deign to give you what you ask for, they are so busy talking to each other of tonight's ball or yesterday's wedding. If you are travelling in Italy, the commonest man will beg your pardon, or ask your permission, if he has occasion to pass you in a railway carriage, and no one gets out without wishing "a pleasant journey" to those who remain. All these things are trifles, but then we know that trifles make up the sum of daily life. I noticed in an "Elevated Railway" car the other day, a young man rise to give a lady his seat, but instead of doing it as most gentlemen do, with a bow and a smile, and thus paying her a compliment in resigning his place, he rose with a sulky expression, turned his back on her, and strolled up the car. The lady looked uncomfortable; — she

could not shout "thank you" to his back, and she was thus placed in a false position, and made unable to return a courtesy. Not far off was "a gentleman of the old school" (as we somewhat scornfully say), who gave up his seat over and over again, but always with such a gracious and beaming courtesy that every lady felt personally complimented by the deference paid her sex.

There are few women, as there are few men, who do not have an opportunity every day of imitating the ideal of James Russell Lowell, of whom he wrote —

"She doeth little kindnesses
That most leave undone or despise;
For naught that sets one heart at ease,
Or giveth happiness and peace,
Is low esteemed in her eyes."

The trouble with American life is its *hurry*; we are so afraid that these minor courtesies will consume a little of the time that is so precious to us all; — but that is a mistake, if we could only bring ourselves to think so. Everything that saves friction expedites motion, and the engineer that had no time to oil his machine would soon find that he had to take time to have it mended.

And when we have exhausted the possibilities of putting ourselves in the place of another, and thereby seeing what we should do for him, when we have lubricated the wheels of life to the best of our ability, there still remains the power to cultivate in ourselves that serene and unperturbed cheerfulness of mood that "makes a sunshine in a shady place." Such a mood spreads itself like oil upon the troubled waters, and insensibly the ruffled waves sink to rest. If we keep our minds fixed upon the eternal verities, of what consequence to us are the little irritations and vexations of our daily lives? They are mere straws upon the stream, to be swept past us in a moment, not worthy to ruffle its

placid surface, not capable of breaking its serenity if it move with any strength and volume upon its destined way. Remember the saying of the Eastern sage, which was of equal power to admonish in prosperity and counsel in adversity: — "All these things pass away!" When I was a little girl of seven, my old English nurse used to say to me, when I hurt myself and bemoaned the pain to her, "Never mind, it will be all well before you're twice married": and I remember that a certain sense of the vastness of time struck my childish imagination so forcibly that I cheered up at once. And what a little child can do, we ought to be able to do too; to realize the smallness of our daily vexations compared with the great sweep of the years, and learn to smile serenely at our passing troubles. Cheerfulness is something we can all practice, even when we find no other chance to help others, and when all our duties have been well and faithfully done. A teacher once told me of a pupil of hers who wrote a composition on "Perseverance," which recounted the experiences of a little girl who "persevered and persevered, until she came to the end of that virtue," and it would be well if we could treat cheerfulness in the same way.

And now, to give this paper a little value, I should like to add some words of John Morley's, spoken at Manchester Town Hall. In speaking of the *average* individual, he says that the chances for the gifted few are highest where the *average* interest, curiosity, capacity, are highest. "The moral of this for you and for me," he adds, "is plain. We cannot, like Beethoven or Handel, lift the soul by the magic of divine melody into the seventh heaven of ineffable vision and hope incommensurable; we cannot, like Newton, weigh the far-off stars in a balance, and measure the heavings of the eternal flood; we cannot, like Voltaire, scorch up what is cruel and false by a word as a flame; nor, like Milton or Burke, awaken men's hearts with the note of an organ-trumpet;

we cannot, like the great saints of the churches and the great sages of the schools, add to those acquisitions of spiritual beauty and intellectual mastery which have, one by one, and little by little, raised man from being no higher than the brute to be only a little lower than the angels. But what we can do — the humblest of us in this hall — is by diligently using our own minds and diligently seeking to extend our own opportunities to others, to help to swell that common tide, on the force and the set of whose currents depends the prosperous voyaging of humanity. When our names are blotted out, and our place knows us no more, the energy of each social service will remain, and so too, let us not forget, will each social dis-service remain, like the unending stream of one of nature's forces."

The Path

MISLEADING TERMS — *N. & Alexander Fullerton*

I. THE SOUL

In studying the complex nature of man, nothing has created greater confusion in my mind than the loose use of terms, and particularly the use of one word or phrase to express different things or ideas. And probably no word has been more perplexing than *Soul*. In ordinary language *Soul* is generally used as synonymous with *Spirit*. Sometimes it stands for the *Higher Self*, and at others for the *Ego*. In Sinnett's classification we find it in three forms, as Animal Soul, Human Soul, and Spiritual Soul; and yet there are not — as the Athanasian Creed would probably put it — three Souls, but one Soul.

The word *Ego*, too, is almost as confusing. Thus we read of a *Personal Ego*, an *Immortal Ego*, a *Reincarnating Ego*, and the like, till the word is so altered and qualified that one's conception of what *an Ego* or *the Ego* really is, is extremely vague and misty. This confusion is partly due to poverty of the language in metaphysical terms, and partly, I imagine, to our own inability to grasp abstruse metaphysical concepts.

So far as I have been able to comprehend them, the terms *Soul*, *Ego*, and *Manas* represent exactly and identically the same thing or idea. The lower *Manas*, the *Personal Ego*, and the *Animal Soul* are different expressions for that consciousness which is limited to the physical body and perishes with it. *Buddhi-Manas*, the *thinking Ego*, and the *Spiritual Soul* seem also to be equivalent phrases. *Atma*, *Spirit*; and the *Higher Self* express one and the same idea.

The *Soul*, *Manas*, or *Ego*, being an entity intermediate between

Spirit on one hand and the physical body on the other, necessarily has two aspects, and ultimately, at the death of the ordinary man, divides into two, the Kama-Manas sharing the fate of the lower quaternary, and the higher Manas uniting with Atma-Buddhi to form the reincarnating Ego.

This intermediary entity — the Soul — seems to have been created or evolved by the interaction of Spirit and gross matter extending through long periods of time on this plane. The first races of men were mindless or soulless, (1) and even now it is only the lower Manas that has been developed in humanity. Our Spiritual consciousness or Higher Manas is yet dormant, and will not be fully awakened before the Fifth Round — ages hence.

These brief statements are not offered, however, in any dogmatic spirit, but may serve to elicit discussion which may clear up some of the perplexities and difficulties that encounter the student of theosophic literature in the use of these frequently recurring words. — N.

II. "PRINCIPLES"

I unhesitatingly agree with our President that the term "Principles" applied to the 7 constituents of man's compound nature is not only incorrect but misleading. Some other and more accurate term should certainly be used. Yet one may well doubt whether "Vehicles," though free from some of the objections to "Principles," and though more precise in one respect, is really satisfactory. If we are to make a change, let it be to a word rigorously correct.

If each constituent is to be regarded as the "vehicle" for the one above it, the new objections soon appear. The Body is no doubt the vehicle of Prana or Jiva, the life-force which animates and conserves it. But surely it cannot be said that Prana is the vehicle

for the Astral Body; if anything, the Astral Body is the vehicle for it. The difficulty may be met by making the Astral Body rank next above the Physical Body and Prana above both. Then Prana would vitalize the Astral Body, and the Astral Body, thus a vehicle, would transmit influence to the outer form. But how can Prana be a vehicle for the Animal Soul? Logically and chronologically, life-force must precede the desires, passions, etc. which presuppose a living body as their seat and source. This consideration pushes Prana up above the Animal Soul. But at once two difficulties arise. The first is that the Animal Soul having thus become the vehicle for Prana, the Astral Body has become vehicle to the Animal Soul. But how can the Animal Soul transmit life-power to the Astral, when both the Astral and the Physical Bodies must have preceded the Animal Soul to make its existence possible? The other difficulty is that this order makes Prana the vehicle of the Human Soul, and it surely is inconceivable that reason, memory, and will can find a channel in a mere life-force. With Prana as the 4th in the series, the look-up or the look-down is fatal to the new term. We must then either demote Prana to its old station, thus reviving all the perplexities which pushed it upwards, or else concede an absolute hiatus between the Human Soul and Prana, and this is fatal to the vehicular theory. From this stage upwards all is reasonable enough. The Human Soul may very well be the vehicle for the Spiritual Soul, and that again for Spirit. But a theory which works correctly enough half-way up or half-way down, but which will not go all the way through, is almost as bad as its rival which makes of the Physical Body a "Principle".

It, may, indeed, be said that the vehicles are not to be considered as vehicles to each other, but only as vehicles to the one primal and persistent force — Spirit. But here again we are in trouble, for this would make the different vehicles independent of each

other. Besides, the word "vehicle" implies a transmission of something to something else, and, if there is no transmission, there is no "vehicle". Whether, therefore, we adopt this theory, which makes the term "vehicle" meaningless, or the former, which makes it inaccurate, we are as badly off as if we adhered to "principle".

I should say, then, that we have not yet discovered the true word. "Constituent" is not bad, though a trifle long. What is the objection to "Component"? It is no longer than "principle" or "vehicle"; it allows a certain individuality to each part, while not disconnecting them from each other; it does not necessarily reduce Spirit to the same rank as the other "components" associated with it; and its meaning etymologically expresses with some accuracy the union of several elements in one combination. Why not give it a hearing? — Alexander Fullerton

FOOTNOTES:

1. See *Secret Doctrine*. ([return to text](#))

The Path

MAN'S ORIGIN — N.

The subject for this evening's discussion is The Sevenfold Nature of Man. But before we place him upon the table and make way for the Doctors to operate upon him with their dissecting knives, suppose we pause for a moment and ask where the subject came from. What is the origin of earthly man? How came he upon this planet? And the enquiry may possibly help to throw some light upon his composite nature.

Of course of ourselves we know nothing of the origin of the human race, and can only appeal to the "law and the prophets" — to the authorities on the subject, so to speak — to those outgivings which have from time to time come to us from the East, and particularly to the teachings of the *Secret Doctrine*. Taking this volume alone as our guide, what do we find?

Now at the outset it is proper to say that, although a vast flood of light is thrown in the Second volume of *The Secret Doctrine* upon Anthropogenesis or the origin of man, the information is still very fragmentary, and careful reading and sifting are necessary to get at anything like a straightforward connected story. Hints only are often given where we would like plain statements; details are purposely omitted, and much is everywhere left to the reader's imagination and spiritual intuition. All this was perhaps unavoidable. I don't refer to it in any spirit of criticism, but solely to illustrate the difficulty of getting at the truth, and to explain in a general way why there is often such a lack of harmony and fullness in our views on many of the topics we are in the habit of discussing.

From my own reading of the *Secret Doctrine*, I have been led to this conclusion: — that man made his first appearance on this

planet as a lunatic or idiot. This may seem a harsh and extreme way of putting it; but it is abundantly justified by our authority. For what is a lunatic? Literally, one affected by the moon; more commonly, one whose mind is affected; one "out of his mind", as the phrase is; while an idiot is a being without any mind. Now the *Secret Doctrine* tells us that the first man on this globe, the first personalities of our race, came from the moon. They were the lunar Pitris or fathers. They are our ancestors; they are in fact ourselves, and we would be strictly bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh, only it happened that they didn't have any bone or flesh to transmit. They were lunar beings and only had astral bodies. They were semi-divine entities travelling on the downward curve into matter, and appear to have consisted of two groups — one group of three classes very ethereal and incorporeal, without even astral bodies; the other of four classes, possessing greater corporeality and endowed with astral bodies. It was this second group that, coming over in the process of evolution to our planetary chain, passed during the first three rounds through the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, and at the beginning of the fourth round became men — not the gross physical being that man is today, but ethereal astral entities in human form yet of immense size.

But this lunar man was an idiot; the first race was mindless, says the *Secret Doctrine*. And he was without a mind because the lunar fathers themselves, our ancestors, were mindless. They gave man all they had to give, — his lower principles, but, having no "manas" or mind themselves to bestow, the early human races were practically animals in human form.

Perhaps some one will ask: How is it that the lunar Pitris who were semi-divine and godlike entities were mindless? Can we conceive of a god-like being without a mind? Now I shall not attempt to answer a question of this kind. But here is a

suggestion. What is "mind?" What are its functions? I may be wrong in my view of it, but to me "mind" seems to be the connecting link between the spiritual monad — the Atma-budhi — and the lower personality. If a being is all spirituality, the lower personality having vanished, what necessity is there for mind? What is the use of a connecting link when there is nothing to connect? So if an entity consists solely of the lower quaternary, the higher principles being in absolute abeyance, mind again would be a useless superfluity. Just, then, as we know animals to be mindless, so we can conceive of a mindless god. And this seems to have been the condition of the lunar fathers to whom we owe our physical existence. True, the whole septenary principles were there, germinally or otherwise; but as the fathers had not yet passed through human experiences and imperfections, manas was still wholly latent. And the shadows or projections of the fathers were equally mindless.

In this mindless, idiotic condition early man long remained. He lived and died and propagated his kind in strange fantastic ways, but for ages was only an animal still. The first race gave place to the second, and the second to the third, each becoming more and more gross and material. And the second race having absorbed the first, man, so-called, had then not only an astral but a physical body, yet he still continued mindless. About the middle of the third race, however, a change took place. In obedience to cyclic law the gods with minds, variously known as the Solar angels, Sons of wisdom, Kumaras, Agnishwattas, Dhyanis, Pitris, breaths, fires, flames, thrones, essences, intelligences, and the like, incarnated in these animal lunar shells, and man as we now know him was the result. Where the shell was so far ready that it could receive the full incarnation of the essence, the man thus endowed became an Arhat or sage. But in the majority of cases only a spark of the divine flame was projected into the shell, and

this spark quickening into activity the germ of the manas, or fifth principle, latent in it from the beginning, produced the average human being as we now find him. Thus man has a two-fold line of descent, and, as it were, a dual being. On the lower or physical side he comes from the Moon his Mother; on the higher or spiritual, from the Sun his father. On the one side he is a physical entity; on the other a divine ego; the union or blending of the two constituting the complete man.

But it may be asked, and very naturally: If man has this double origin, if he is a combination of lunar and solar elements, does he not really consist of two monads instead of one? And which then is the real human monad — the original lunar germ or the incarnating solar angel? To this the *Secret Doctrine* says: "No; — there are not two monads, only one." But the passage in which this statement occurs is a very interesting one, and an extract from it may fittingly close this brief paper:

"We now come to an important point with regard to the double evolution of the human race. The Sons of Wisdom, or the Spiritual Dhyanis, had become intellectual through their contact with matter, because they had already reached, during previous cycles of incarnation, that degree of intellect which enabled them to become independent and self-conscious entities *on this plane* of matter. They were reborn only by reason of Karmic effects. They entered those who were ready, and became the Arhats or sages alluded to above. This needs explanation.

It does not mean that Monads entered forms in which other monads already were. They were "Essences," "Intelligences," and *conscious spirits*; entities seeking to become still more conscious by uniting with more developed matter. Their essence was too pure to be distinct from the universal essence; but their "Ego" or *Manas* (since they are called *manasaputra*, born of *Mahat*, or

Brahma,) had to pass through earthly human experiences to become *all-wise*, and be able to start on the returning ascending cycle. The *Monads* are not *discrete* principles, limited or conditioned, but rays from that one universal absolute Principle. The entrance into a dark room through the same aperture of one ray of sunlight following another will not constitute two rays, but one ray intensified. It is not in the course of natural law that man should become a *perfect* septenary being before the seventh race in the Seventh Round. Yet he has all these principles latent in him from his birth. Nor is it part of the evolutionary law that the Fifth principle (*Manas*) should receive its complete development before the *Fifth Round*. All such prematurely developed intellects (on the spiritual plane) in our race are abnormal; they are those whom we call the "Fifth Rounders." Even in the coming Seventh Race at the close of this Fourth Round, while our four lower principles will be fully developed, that of manas will be only proportionately so. This limitation, however, refers solely to the spiritual development. The intellectual on the physical plane was reached during the Fourth Root-Race. Thus those who were "half ready", who received "but a spark", constitute the average humanity which has to acquire its intellectuality during the present manvantaric evolution, after which they will be ready in the next for the full reception of the Sons of Wisdom."

The Path

OCCULTISM WHAT IS IT? — *Eusebio Urban*

Not only in the Theosophical Society, but out of it, are tyros in Occultism. They are dabblers in a fine art, a mighty science, an almost impenetrable mystery. The motives that bring them to the study are as various as the number of individuals engaged in it, and as hidden from even themselves as is the center of the earth from the eye of science. Yet the *motive* is more important than any other factor.

These dilletanti in this science have always been abroad. No age or country has been without them, and they have left after them many books — of no particular value. Those of today are making them now, for the irresistible impulse of vanity drives them to collate the more or less unsound hypotheses of their predecessors, which, seasoned with a proper dash of mystery, are put forth to the crowd of those who would fain acquire wisdom at the cost-price of a book. Meanwhile the world of real occultists smiles silently, and goes on with the laborious process of sifting out the living germs from the masses of men. For occultists must be found and fostered and prepared for coming ages when power will be needed and pretension will go for nothing.

But the persons now writing about occultism and competent to do any more than repeat unproved formulae and assertions left over from mediaeval days, are few in number. It is very easy to construct a book full of so-called occultism taken from French or German books, and then to every now and then stop the reader short by telling him that it is not wise to reveal any more. The writings of Christian in France give much detail about initiations into occultism, but he honestly goes no further than to tell what he has gained from Greek and Latin fragments. Others, however,

have followed him, repeated his words without credit, and as usual halted at the explanation.

There are, again, others who, while asserting that there is magic science called occultism, merely advise the student to cultivate purity and spiritual aspirations, leaving it to be assumed that powers and knowledge will follow. Between these two, theosophists of the self-seeking or the unselfish type are completely puzzled. Those who are selfish may learn by bitter disappointment and sad experience; but the unselfish and the earnest need encouragement on the one hand and warning on the other. As an Adept wrote years ago to London Theosophists: "He who does not feel equal to the work need not undertake a task too heavy for him." This is applicable to all, for every one should be informed of the nature and heaviness of the task. Speaking of this tremendous thing — Occultism — Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gita* says: "During a considerable period of time this doctrine has been lost in the world . . . This mystery is very important." We do not think that the doctrine has yet been restored to the world, albeit that it is in the keeping of living men — the Adepts. And in warning those who strive after occultism with a selfish motive he declares: "Confused by many worldly thoughts, surrounded by the meshes of bewilderment, devoted to the enjoyment of their desires, they descend to foul Naraka . . . and hence they proceed to the lowest plane of being."

In what, then, does the heaviness of the Occultist's task consist? In the immensity of its sweep as well as the infinitude of its detail. Mere sweet and delightful longing after God will not of itself accomplish it, nor is progress found in *aspiring* to self-knowledge, even when as a result of that is found partial illumination. These are excellent; but we are talking of a problem whose implacable front yields to nothing but *force*, and that force must be directed by *knowledge*.

The field is not emotional, for the play of the emotions destroys the equilibrium essential to the art. Work done calling for reward avails not unless it has produced knowledge.

A few examples will show that in Occult Science there is a vastness and also a multiplicity of division not suspected by theosophical Occultists in embryo.

The element of which fire is a visible effect is full of centres of force. Each one is ruled by its own law. The aggregate of centres and the laws governing them which produce certain physical results are classed by science as laws in physics, and are absolutely ignored by the book-making Occultist because he has no knowledge of them. No dreamer or even a philanthropist will ever as such know those laws. And so on with all the other elements.

The Masters of Occultism state that a law of "transmutation among forces" prevails forever. It will baffle any one who has not the power to calculate the value of even the smallest tremble of a vibration, not only in itself but instantly upon its collision with another, whether that other be similar to it or different. Modern science admits the existence of this law as the correlation of forces. It is felt in the moral sphere of our being as well as in the physical world, and causes remarkable changes in a man's character and circumstances quite beyond us at present and altogether unknown to science and metaphysics.

It is said that each person has a distinct mathematical value expressed by one number. This is a compound or resultant of numberless smaller values. When it is known, extraordinary effects may be produced not only in the mind of the person but also in his feelings, and this number may be discovered by certain calculations more recondite than those of our higher

mathematics. By its use the person may be made angry without cause, and even insane or full of happiness, just as the operator desires.

There is a world of beings known to the Indians as that of the Devas, whose inhabitants can produce illusions of a character the description of which would throw our wildest romances into the shade. They may last five minutes and seem as a thousand years, or they may extend over ten thousand actual years. Into this world the purest theosophist, the most spiritual man or woman, may go without consent, unless the knowledge and power are possessed which prevent it.

On the threshold of all these laws and states of being linger forces and beings of an awful and determined character. No one can avoid them, as they are on the road that leads to knowledge, and they are every now and then awakened or perceived by those who, while completely ignorant on these subjects, still persist in dabbling with charms and necromantic practices. It is wiser for theosophists to study the doctrine of brotherhood and its application, to purify their motives and actions, so that after patient work for many lives, if necessary, in the great cause of humanity, they may at last reach that point where all knowledge and all power will be theirs by right.

The Path

MUCH READING, LITTLE THOUGHT — *William Brehon*

The wise man sagely said that of making books there is no end. If true in his day, it is the same now. Among members of the Theosophical Society the defects are widespread, of reading too many of the ever coming books and too little thought upon the matter read. Anyone who is in a position to see the letters of inquiry received by those in the Society who are prominent, knows that the greater number of the questions asked are due to want of thought, to the failure on the part of the questioners to lay down a sure foundation of general principles.

It is so easy for some to sit down and write a book containing nothing new save its difference of style from others, that the pilgrim theosophist may be quickly bewildered if he pays any attention. This bewilderment is chiefly due to the fact that no writer can express his thoughts in a way that will be exactly and wholly comprehended by every reader, and authors in theosophic literature are only, in fact, trying to present their own particular understanding of old doctrines which the readers would do much better with if they devoted more time to thinking them out for themselves.

In the field of every day books there is so much light reading that the superficial habit of skimming is plainly everywhere apparent, and it threatens to show itself in theosophical ranks.

So well am I convinced there are too many superfluous books in our particular field, that, if I had a youth to train in that department, I should confine him to the *Bhagavad-Gita*, the *Upanishads*, and the *Secret Doctrine* for a very long time, until he was able to make books for himself, out of those, and to apply the principles found in them to every circumstance and to his own

life and thought.

Those theosophists who only wish to indulge in a constant variety of new theosophical dishes will go on reading all that appears, but the others who are in earnest, who know that we are here to learn and not solely for our pleasure, are beginning to see that a few books well read, well analysed, and thoroughly digested are better than many books read over once. They have learned how all that part of a book which they clearly understand at first is already their own, and that the rest, which is not so clear or quite obscure, is the portion they are to study, so that it also, if found true, may become an integral part of their constant thought.

The Path

THE SEVENFOLD CONSTITUTION OF MAN — *K. Hillard*

In the second volume of the *Secret Doctrine*, p. 81, Mme. Blavatsky bids us remember that to some extent even the esoteric teaching is allegorical, and that to make the latter comprehensible to the average intelligence, symbols cast in an intelligible form must be used. And in *Esoteric Buddhism* Mr. Sinnett warns us against thinking of the higher principles as of a bundle of sticks tied together, or, in another view, of considering the different principles as being like the skins of an onion, to be peeled off one by one till we get to the innermost and best. It is said that one of the favorite topics of discussion in the medieval Church was as to the number of angels that could find standing room on the point of a cambric needle. Human nature is the same always, and in every age of the world we have found it difficult to dispossess our minds of concrete conceptions and come down to abstract thought. We instinctively cling to some form of expression which materialises our idea, so to speak, and enables us to make a picture of it in our mind's eye; and then, almost before we know it, we have accepted that picture as the thing it tried to symbolise. Men are always making to themselves graven images, and then bowing down and worshiping the images instead of the gods they endeavored to represent.

So it seems to me that our difficulty in getting at a clear idea of the seven-fold constitution of man lies mostly in the way we go to work; that we fail to recognise, in the first place, that we are dealing with spiritual things, and that those things cannot be seen with the physical, nor even the intellectual eye, and that the more we divide and subdivide, the more we define and consequently materialise our subject. This is most certainly a case where we need to generalise, and not to particularize, until we have arrived

at the point where we are quite sure we are conscious that we are dealing with symbols and not with entities.

If we wish to get a general idea of Man, we may think first of the body, as a thing which upon this material plane whereon we live we may call a tangible reality. Now a "tangible reality", though it can easily be proved to be the greatest of all illusions, is also the most material thing about us and the most widely removed from spirit; therefore we can set it aside, as do the Vedantin schools spoken of in the *Key*, p. 117, as not part of the spiritual man, or we can call it the lowest "principle" of our being. The material at one end of the scale involves the spiritual at the other, and we find on page 101 and 119 of the *Key*, *Atma* described as the Divine essence, which "is no individual property of any man", but "only overshadows the mortal; that which enters into him and pervades the whole body being only its omnipresent rays or light". "This ought not to be called a human principle at all" (p. 119).

We have, then, the body and the Spirit accounted for, — what remains is Consciousness, in its different phases. Upon p. 100 of the *Key* we read: "The 'principles' (save the body, life, and the astral eidolon, all of which disperse at death) are simply *aspects* and *states of consciousness*."

We realize a mood of intense desire or passion as something apart from our spiritual nature, and more akin to the physical; and we sometimes speak even of our "physical consciousness" as a thing that we do not therefore perceive with our senses. This is the lowest aspect of our consciousness, and is called in Sanskrit *Kama-rupa*, or "the body of desire." This is, of course, a highly figurative expression.

Then comes our intelligent consciousness, the Mind itself, the thinking part of us, which differentiates us from the brute; and we all realise that this aspect of our consciousness has a dual

nature, and may drag us down to the level of the animal or raise us to the height of the god. Therefore we speak of the higher and lower *Manas*, or mind.

The physical body, its passions, and that lower aspect of mind which tends to gravitate downward and which belongs to the physical brain, are dependent upon *life*, or the vital principle, a form of the Divine Energy within us. So also is that phantom body, the shadow of the real one, which disperses after death like the light of a distant star, that to us appears to be still shining, although in reality long ago fallen from its sphere.

If we can imagine the lower aspect of our intelligence or mind tending downward, we can also realise its higher phase aspiring to unite itself to our spiritual consciousness or *Buddhi*, the vehicle of the Divine, of that Universal Spirit which makes us one. Our highest intelligence and our spiritual consciousness, overshadowed by the radiation of the Absolute, form the *Monad* or re-incarnating Ego.

Of this Madame Blavatsky says on p. 92 of the *Key*, that it alone can be thought of as the highest "principle in man". Because, as she explains it is always the predominating element in man that counts, and in one man passion is the ruling and foremost phase; in another, intellect; in another, spirituality.

But however we choose to arrange these phases in our minds, let us remember always that they are not entities, and that, as Mme. Blavatsky says, "There is but one *real* man, enduring through the cycle of life and immortal in essence, if not in form, and this is *Manas*, the Mind-man or embodied consciousness." (*Key*, p. 100.)

REMEMBERING THE EXPERIENCES OF THE EGO — *Eusebio Urban*

To many it seems puzzling that we do not remember the experiences of the Higher Self in sleep. But as long as we ask "Why does not the lower self remember these experiences", we shall never have an answer. There is a contradiction in the question, because the lower self, never having had the experiences it is required to remember, could not at any time recollect them.

When sleep comes on, the engine and instrument of the lower personality is stopped, and can do nothing but what maybe called automatic acts. The brain is not in use, and hence no consciousness exists for it until the waking moment returns. The ego, when thus released from the physical chains, free from its hard daily task of living with and working through the bodily organs, proceeds to enjoy the experiences of the plane of existence which is peculiarly its own.

On that plane it uses a method and processes of thought, and perceives the ideas appropriate to it through organs different from those of the body. All that it sees and hears (if we may use those terms) appears reversed from our plane. The language, so to say, is a foreign one even to the inner language used when awake. So, upon reassuming life in the body, all that it has to tell its lower companion must be spoken in a strange tongue, and for the body that is an obstruction to comprehension. We hear the words, but only now and then obtain flashes of their meaning. It is something like the English-speaking person who knows a few foreign words entering a foreign town and there being only able to grasp those few terms as he hears them among the multitude of other words and sentences which he does not understand.

What we have to do, then, is to learn the language of the Ego, so that we shall not fail to make a proper translation to ourselves. For at all times the language of the plane through which the Ego nightly floats is a foreign one to the brain we use, and has to be always translated for use by the brain.

If the interpretation is incorrect, the experience of the Ego will never be made complete to the lower man.

But it may be asked if there is an actual language for the Ego, having its sound and corresponding signs. Evidently not: for, if there were, there would have been made a record of it during all those countless years that sincere students have been studying themselves. It is not a language in the ordinary sense. It is more nearly described as a communication of ideas and experience by means of pictures. So with it a sound may be pictured as a color or a figure, and an odor as a vibrating line; an historical event may be not only shown as a picture, but also as a light or a shadow, or as a sickening smell or delightful incense: the vast mineral world may not only exhibit its planes and angles and colors, but also its vibrations and lights. Or, again, the ego may have reduced its perceptions of size and distance for its own purposes, and, having the mental capacity for the time of the ant, it may report to the bodily organs a small hole as an abyss, or the grass of the field as a gigantic forest. These are adduced by way of example, and are not to be taken as hard and fast lines of description.

Upon awakening, a great hindrance is found in our own daily life and terms of speech and thought to the right translation of these experiences, and the only way in which we can use them with full benefit is by making ourselves porous, so to speak, to the influences from the higher self, and by living and thinking in such a manner as will be most likely to bring about the aim of the soul.

This leads us unerringly to virtue and knowledge, for the vices and the passions eternally becloud our perception of the meaning of what the Ego tries to tell us. It is for this reason that the sages inculcate virtue. Is it not plain that, if the vicious could accomplish the translation of the Ego's language, they would have done it long ago, and is it not known to us all that only among the virtuous can the Sages be found?

The Path

THE MODERN INQUISITION — *Edward Maitland*

In view of the attempt of European physiologists to debauch the people of India by introducing among them the practice of Vivisection — as instanced by the recent experiments of the British Chloroform Commission at Hyderabad, — the time seems opportune for a special appeal to the conscience of the West in regard to this practice. And there is no quarter from which such appeal can so fitly proceed as that which represents the higher nature of man as implied in the term Theosophy. Hence the presence of this appeal in these pages.

As is generally well-known, Vivisection consists in the employment of living animals for the purpose of physiological and biological research. To such extent and in such manner is that research carried on, that Christendom — so-called for its once veneration of a humanity which, for the voluntary sacrifice of its own lower nature to its higher and of itself for others, was recognized as divine — has of late years become from end to end studded with torture-chambers, under the name of physiological laboratories, wherein unceasingly myriads of innocent, healthy, and otherwise happy creatures, of the keenest sensibility, are made to undergo sufferings the most excruciating and protracted which scientific skill can devise. (1)

The plea for this state of things varies with the class to whom it is addressed; but it is in all cases a selfish one. With the general public it is the advancement of medical knowledge for their own benefit. With the physiologist, it is his own professional advancement.

With respect to the former of these pleas, it does not come within the scope of this paper to do more than state that it is in no way

sustained by the results obtained: For this we have the positive assurance of the most eminent experts in medical science, — some of them in their day noted experimentalists, — that, so far from that science being promoted by the practice, it has been seriously hindered and injured. And this in three different ways, (1) By its misleading nature, through the untrustworthiness of the conclusions based upon it. (2) By its being made a substitute for sound and legitimate methods of observation. And (3) by its tendency to repel from the study of medicine the finest minds and noblest characters, and to hand it over to the hardest hearts and dullest consciences. In support of one of these allegations it will suffice to state that some of its most ardent practitioners have been known to warn their friends against accepting aid, medical or surgical, from men whose knowledge or skill has been obtained in the laboratory. (2)

And in support of another, that in places where the practice prevails the poor are notoriously in danger of repairing to the hospital only to find it a laboratory and themselves the subjects of agonizing and murderous experimentation performed for ends in which they have no manner of concern. (3) All this is but as would confidently be anticipated by intelligent students of Nature who have learnt to look within the veil, and represents the Nemesis which inevitably attends on the violation of her laws, whether physical or moral. For, as these know absolutely, Nature is no mere mechanism, inscient and insensible to defiance and outrage. Like her own children, she is a Soul, having a body. For we can have nothing that she has not. And she is very woman, whose real law is sympathy, whatever to shallow and loveless observation it may appear to be. For she reflects to each one who approaches her precisely the image he presents to her. Wherefore to those, and those only, who court her with reverence, humility, patience, and tenderness, does she open her heart and disclose

her secrets. But the attempt to ravish these from her by violence — how mean soever the subject of the assault — she vehemently resents, and avenges by smiting with impotence the intellect of the offender, so that he can in no wise discern the significance even of that which with his outer eyes he may behold. From this it comes — as is demonstrated by all the records of the practice — that, like the witness stretched upon the rack, Nature — put to the question by torture — answers with a lie. Through a creature crucified alive to a plank, cut into with knives, torn with saws, burnt with acids or hot irons, pierced through and through with nails, scalded inside or outside with boiling water, wetted with spirits and set on fire, whose eyes and organs and limbs are dissected out bit by bit, whose nerves and sinews are wrung to their utmost tension with hooks, whose whole circulation is deranged and whose frame is writhing throughout with agony — Nature permits no trustworthy revelation to be made; so that the very "facts" obtained by a vivisectioning science are not truths but falsehoods. And if instances be demanded in token whether of the futility of the method or of its paralysing influence upon the minds of its followers, we have these two typical ones, (1) Physiologists were, unknown to the general public, vivisectioning not only animals but men and women — criminals from the prisons of Egypt and Italy being delivered to them in hundreds for the purpose — for nearly two thousand years, before that most probable and obvious of natural phenomena was discovered, the circulation of the blood. And so far were they even from suspecting the fact, that the discovery, when at length it was made, was received by the profession at large with incredulity and derision. The discovery, moreover, though made by a vivisectioner, was neither due to vivisection, nor could have been made through vivisection. (2) To this day it is a question — real or pretended — among physiologists, whether animals are capable of feeling pain. (4) It is not, however, on the ground of its

uselessness or its mischievousness that this protest against vivisection is based, but on that of its cruelty, injustice, and selfishness, and, therein, of its immorality and wickedness. (5)

For, constituting as it does, the extremest conceivable instance of seeking one's own advantage regardless of the cost to others, it is so hopelessly and desperately wrong as to warrant the assertion that if vivisection is right then nothing is wrong. For there is no principle of morality to which it is not in direct opposition. To approve it, we must hold that the end justifies the means; that might is right, and that the strong and crafty do no wrong when for their own selfish ends they ruthlessly torture the weak and simple; that mankind can be benefited by that which is subversive of humanity; that kingship is tyranny, and the right to rule involves the right to torture; that the way to make earth a heaven is to establish human society upon the ethics of hell, and people the world with fiends in place of beings really human; that there are pursuits to which there are no moral limits; and that man has no duties either towards his own best, or towards those who are unable to enforce their own rights: that the universe, so far from proceeding from one and the same source, or having any unity of substance, impulse, method, or design, proceeds from opposites so extreme that good is to be got by doing evil and divine ends are to be attained by infernal methods; that force is all, love nothing; that sense is all, conscience nothing; that head is all, heart nothing; that the form is all, the character nothing; that the body is all, the soul nothing: that inhumanity is humanity; and that the physical self is the beginning and end of existence, and the care of that self the fulfilling of all rational law.

Such are the principles which, at the bidding of a wholly materialistic science, the society at large of Christendom accepts, the legislatures protect and endow, the literatures and press uphold, the churches by silence consent to or, by implication,

sanction; and practically imbued with which its youth come forth from its centres of education to propagate by precept or example on entering the world as men. And so great is the prevailing hardness of heart and dullness of perception, that the perpetrators of the most dreadful atrocities can openly publish their horrible records without risk legal or social, and pose on platforms and in senates as authorities on education and morals, and rebuke people for such scruples as they may still retain, without finding a public sentiment to be shocked at the anomaly. And, to crown all, there are not wanting women so lost to all sense of tenderness and beauty, and with the womanhood in them so dead, as to consort as wives with the torturers, and even with their own hands to exercise their foul art, and to send their daughters to classes in "experimental physiology"! And meanwhile all really human lives are made intolerable by the consciousness that such horrors are being enacted, such principles recognised, and humanity unspeakably degraded, under the sanction of the laws and the protection of the police. So that it is a question of torturing men and women as well as animals. For all really human beings are tortured through the knowledge of what is being done in their midst, and can with full truth declare to the torturers, "Inasmuch as ye have done it to the least of these our brethren, ye have done it unto us."

It is a very real and serious danger with which modern society is confronted, the danger which arises from the demands of certain scientific classes to exercise supremacy over it, and the readiness of the generality to concede it to them. History shows that there is always a disposition on the part of Specialists of some sort to get themselves erected into an oligarchy and invested with a universal dictatorship, in the exercise of which they trample under foot every principle and sentiment that stands in their way. History shows also that it depends upon what people most dread,

what class of specialists gets the upperhand. Thus, when the danger is anarchy or invasion, then the specialists in military science — the soldiery — bear sway. When people most fear for their souls, or believe their worldly welfare to be endangered by supernatural causes, then the specialists in religion — the priests — become the rulers, they being credited with a monopoly of the arts of saving souls and propitiating the powers above. And now that peace and security are sufficiently assured to enable us to dispense with a military domination; and people are for the most part persuaded either that there are no such things as souls to be saved and super-natural powers to be propitiated, or that priests possess no special faculty in the matter, and that the body is all in all, their concern is all for their bodily welfare, and they are ready to give a free hand to the specialists of medical science, and to invest the doctors with the authority formerly wielded by soldiers and ecclesiastics. And in this way it has come that the professors of the cure of souls have been superseded by those of the cure of bodies.

Now, of specialists in any department, this is indisputably true. Be they eminent as they may in their own department — and, indeed, by reason of such eminence — they are in the highest degree liable to be correspondingly deficient in respect of departments other than their own; so that the converse of the adage "General knowledge means particular ignorance" holds good of them, and their particular knowledge means general ignorance. This is because their habit of exclusive concentration upon one subject or class of subjects renders them non-percipient in respect of others, and incapacitates them for estimating their relative values. For this reason it is necessary that society at large keep a strict watch on specialists, and particularly on that class which the circumstances of the time bring most into vogue, in order that other interests may not suffer.

To this rule the class of specialists now to the front, that of medical science, is no exception, and the interests to which it is blind are precisely those which, for all who have taken pains to obtain knowledge both general and particular, are the most important of all interests, seeing that upon them it depends whether life be worth living at all, and humanity be something worth belonging to. These are the interests of that part of man's nature which so far transcends the sphere of physiology and medicine as wholly to escape recognition by the exclusive followers of those branches of knowledge, use what instruments they may, — the part moral and spiritual in the human system. Not, be it observed, that these studies by any means necessarily incapacitate the mind for the discernment and appreciation of higher things. To one duly percipient and reflective, to one capable of thought really free, every natural object is suggestive of an informing idea the pursuit of which, if carried far enough, uplifts the mind to the divine source of all Truth; while the very inadequacy of the physical organism to account for the facts of consciousness suggests the necessity of something vastly transcending the organism to complete and interpret the man. That this is notoriously not the case with the physiologist of the period is, then, no fault of the study itself. Rather does it show that medical science has for the most part fallen into the hands of men whose minds are not duly percipient and reflective; of men, that is, who are, in respect of the higher regions of man's nature, rudimentary and undeveloped, and who, accordingly, instead of supplementing and correcting the senses by the mind, subordinate and suppress the mind in favor of the senses, and make these their sole criterion of truth. This is to say that they who claim to represent the medical science of the day, and — as shown by their insistence on vivisection — to dictate to society its code of religion and morals, are, in respect of all matters transcending the merely physical, exactly in the condition of

those who deny the diurnal revolution of the earth on the ground that they *see* the sun and stars go round it every twenty-four hours, and *feel* it stationary beneath their feet, and who recognize as trustworthy nothing but the bodily senses. Now, it is at the bidding of men precisely such as these that we are called on, by the toleration of vivisection, to renounce the soul, or higher ego, and all those sentiments which, being of the soul, alone make and ennoble Humanity.

But it is said that the doctor is necessarily, by the very nature of his vocation, so humane as to render *a priori* incredible the items of this indictment against him. Never was there a greater fallacy; or one more ridiculed and scoffed at, and this by the subjects themselves of it. And the marvel is how, in the face of history and its awful records of the doings of those who, being priests and claiming to be ministers of the gentle religion of Jesus, were responsible for the horrors of the Inquisition and multitudinous persecutions, such a plea can find utterance. As well might we credit the soldier with more courage than other men on account of his vocation; the policeman with more civic virtue; the ecclesiastic with profounder piety; the lawyer with a greater love of justice; as the doctor with more humanity than other men on account of his vocation. He is but as others, as he himself knows and freely admits. And being so, he is no less liable to ignore right principles in favor of evil methods where his material interest, or the exaltation of his order, is concerned. And it is precisely through its persistency in doing this that the medical profession of our day has become guilty of the most dire conspiracy ever contrived against the human race, in that it has for its object the destruction of the *character* of mankind, present and to come. No less tremendous than this is the issue involved in this question. And that people have failed so to discern it is because, under the prevailing materialistic *regime*, they are so wholly given to

idolatry as altogether to ignore the substance for the appearance, and to worship this accordingly, believing that it is the form, and not the character, which makes and *is* the man. Whereas the human form, to be valid, must, like any other form, *be filled up*. It must have the MAN inside it.

As history shows, every age has its sanguinary orthodoxy claiming a vested interest in some barbarous wrong. But, as history also shows, it was not by tamely submitting to the dictation of Specialists that our forefathers procured for us the possibilities of such advance as has been made. Wherefore, as they abolished, one after another, such horrors as bloody sacrifices, human and animal, prisoner-killing, witness-torturing, gladiatorial and other brutal sports, heretic burning and racking, and persecution generally for conscience sake, witch-baiting, press-ganging, and negro slavery, — so let us in our turn abolish the peculiar barbarism of our time. Thus doing, we shall set ourselves and our children free to follow with unstained hearts and hands those knowledges whose lawfulness or unlawfulness, whose power to bless or to curse, depend no less on the method of their acquisition than on that of their application.

We who seek to smite down vivisection are the true descendants and successors of those who smote down the corresponding inquiries of the past, and who live again in us, for the spirit is the same. And they who uphold vivisection are the true descendants and successors of those who upheld the corresponding iniquities of the past, and who live again in them, for the spirit is the same. Then, just as now, abolition was denounced as dangerous to religion, morals, and the best interests of society. Historians tell us that the decline of the taste for human sacrifices — a practice once universal as the world has never regretted the abolition of such things in the past, so — we may be well assured — it will never regret the like abolition now; but rather will it evermore

rejoice in its recognition, though tardy, of the self-evident propositions that true science, like true religion, neither needs, nor can be sustained by, torture; and that, come what may, it is better to die men than to live fiends. In the words of *The Perfect Way*, "In vivisection the human is abandoned for the infernal."

FOOTNOTES:

1. According to published returns the number of victims used at Prof. Schiff's laboratory at Florence in ten years exceeded 76,000, of which over 14,000 were dogs, and the minimum annual demand for the same purpose at Geneva is stated at 10,000. There are hundreds of such institutions.

The notion that the suffering is prevented or mitigated to any appreciable extent by means of anesthetics is altogether fallacious. Both the duration and the nature of the vast majority of the experiments are such as to preclude the use of anaesthetics. For their effect would be either to kill the animal or to vitiate the result. Their chief use in the matter has been to lull the public conscience. And in this view anesthetics have been pronounced by a *quondam* experimenter to be "the greatest curse of vivisectionable animals." The inventive genius of the Americans, as applied to this department, has procured for the physiologists of the United States the evil reputation of surpassing all others in the cruelty of their experiments. ([return to text](#))

2. The late celebrated French experimental physiologist, Prof. Claude Bernard, said shortly before his death in regard to the results then obtained, "Our hands are empty." And of M. Pasteur's system — to which the experimentalists cling as their last hope, that bubble not having yet burst for the public, it has been shown by Luteau and others that, while there is abundant evidence to show that it has caused many deaths, there is no evidence to show that it has saved any lives.

Among those who have given the above warning was the late Prof. Majendie, one of the most hardened of French experimentalists. It is a common thing in the Paris medical schools for students under examination to be rebuked for founding their answers on vivisectional experimentation, on account of the eminent untrustworthiness of the method. ([return to text](#))

3. See, among other works, *St. Bernard's*, by a London Physician, and the key to it. ([return to text](#))

4. Among others Prof. Huxley has tried to show that animals are little more than non sensitive automata. On the other hand, Prof. Mantegazza of Milan — whose experiments were especially contrived for the production of pain, in order that he might observe its phenomena — divided the pain produced by him into four degrees, which he named respectively "great pain", "intense pain", "cruel pain", and "most atrocious pain". ([return to text](#))

5. It is precisely on the ground of its immorality and impiety that French physiologists, while admitting its uselessness, insist on it as constituting a fitting protest against any attempt of religionists and moralists to interfere with science. See *XLXth Century*, Feb., 1882, Art. "The Uselessness of Vivisection," by Dr. Anna Kingsford. ([return to text](#))

The Path

TRUE PROGRESS — *Bryan Kinnavan*

IS IT AIDED BY WATCHING THE ASTRAL LIGHT?

Perhaps those who have engaged in discussions about whether it is more advisable to become acquainted with the Astral Plane and to see therein than to study the metaphysics and ethics of theosophy, may be aided by the experience of a fellow student. For several years I studied about and experimented on the Astral Light to the end that I might, if possible, develop the power to look therein and see those marvellous pictures of that plane which tempt the observer. But although in some degree success followed my efforts so far as seeing these strange things was concerned, I found no increase of knowledge as to the manner in which the pictures were made visible, nor as to the sources from which they rose. A great many facts were in my possession, but the more I accumulated the farther away from perception seemed the law governing them. I turned to a teacher, and he said:

"Beware of the illusions of matter."

"But," said I, "is this matter into which I gaze?"

"Yes; and of grosser sort than that which composes your body; full of illusions, swarming with beings inimical to progress, and crowded with the thoughts of all the wicked who have lived."

"How," replied I, "am I to know aught about it unless I investigate it?"

"It will be time enough to do that when you shall have been equipped properly for the exploration. He who ventures into a strange country unprovided with needful supplies, without a compass and unfamiliar with the habits of the people, is in

danger. Examine and see."

Left thus to myself, I sought those who had dabbled in the Astral Light, who were accustomed to seeing the pictures therein every day, and asked them to explain. Not one had any theory, any philosophical basis. All were confused and at variance each with the other. Nearly all, too, were in hopeless ignorance as to other and vital questions. None were self-contained or dispassionate; moved by contrary winds of desire, each one appeared abnormal: for, while in possession of the power to see or hear in the Astral Light, they were unregulated in all other departments of their being. Still more, they seemed to be in a degree intoxicated with the strangeness of the power, for it placed them in that respect above other persons, yet in practical affairs left them without any ability.

Examining more closely, I found that all these "seers" were but half-seers — and hardly even that. One could hear astral sounds but could not see astral sights; another saw pictures, but no sound or smell was there; still others saw symbols only, and each derided the special power of the other. Turning even to the great Emanuel Swedenborg, I found a seer of wonderful power, but whose constitution made him see in the Astral world a series of pictures which were solely an extension of his own inherited beliefs. And although he had had a few visions of actual everyday affairs occurring at a distance, they were so few as only to be remarkable.

One danger warned against by the teacher was then plainly evident. It was the danger of becoming confused and clouded in mind by the recurrence of pictures which had no salutary effect so far as experience went. So again I sought the teacher and asked:

"Has the Astral Light no power to teach, and, if not, why is it thus?"

And are there other dangers than what I have discovered?"

"No power whatever has the astral plane, in itself, to teach you. It contains the impressions made by men in their ignorance and folly. Unable to arouse the true thoughts, they continue to infect that light with the virus of their unguided lives. And you, or any other seer, looking therein will warp and distort all that you find there. It will present to you pictures that partake largely of your own constitutional habits, weaknesses, and peculiarities. Thus you only see a distorted or exaggerated copy of yourself. It will never teach you the reason of things, for it knows them not.

"But stranger dangers than any you have met are there when one goes further on. The dweller of the threshold is there, made up of all the evil that man has done. None can escape its approach, and he who is not prepared is in danger of death, of despair, or of moral ruin. Devote yourself, therefore, to spiritual aspiration and to true devotion, which will be a means for you to learn the causes that operate in nature, how they work, and what each one works upon."

I then devoted myself as he had directed, and discovered that a philosophical basis, once acquired, showed clearly how to arrive at *dispassion* and made *exercise* therein easy. It even enables me to clear up the thousand doubts that assail those others who are peering into the Astral Light. This too is the old practice enjoined by the ancient schools from which our knowledge about the Astral Light is derived. They compelled the disciple to abjure all occult practices until such time as he had laid a sure foundation of logic, philosophy, and ethics; and only then was he permitted to go further in that strange country from which many an unprepared explorer has returned bereft of truth and sometimes despoiled of reason. Further, I know that the Masters of the Theosophical Society have written these words: "Let the

Theosophical Society flourish through moral worth and philosophy, and give up pursuit of phenomena." Shall we be greater than They, and ignorantly set the pace upon the path that leads to ruin?

The Path

THE KALI YUGA IN HINDU CHRONOLOGY — G. E. W.

Several weeks ago a communication was read at a regular meeting of this Branch, in which some references to the Kali Yuga were quoted from the *Secret Doctrine*, and some questions asked concerning them. In order to understand what the difficulties were which this writer found in his studies of the subject, I will take the liberty of repeating part of his letter.

"Allow me to ask a few questions about Kali Yuga; but it is necessary to preface a few references, so that the question may be understood. The references are to Vol. II. *Secret Doctrine*.

Page 434, 'There are seven rounds; this is the fourth; we are in the fifth root-race. Each root-race has seven sub-races.' Page 435, 'The fifth root-race has been in existence about 1,000,000 years; hence each of the four preceding sub-races has lived approximately 210,000 years; thus each family race has an average existence of about 30,000 years.' Page 395, 'The Aryans were 200,000 years old when the first great Atlantean island was submerged, about 850,000 years ago.' Page 147, 'All races have their own cycles. The Fourth sub-race of the Atlanteans was in its Kali Yuga when destroyed, whereas the Fifth was in its Satya Yuga. The Aryan Race is now in its Kali Yuga, and will continue to be in it for 427,000 years longer, while various family races are in their own special cycles.' So far preliminary. The questions are: 1. If the Aryan race has gone through its Krita, Treta and Dvapara ages in about 1,000,000 years, can its Kali Yuga be literally 432,000 years? 2. If the entire earth is in the Kali Yuga of some great cycle, may not we of this country still be in the Krita age of some smaller cycle?"

The writer of the foregoing, a respected member of the

Theosophical Society, is not alone in his perplexity regarding the divisions of time, as established by the Hindus. There are very many exoteric Oriental students, as well as members of the society, who have been unable to reconcile the various statements made concerning the Yugas by different authorities. I think, however, that upon a careful examination of the subject, most of these difficulties will vanish, and the truth will be made plain in a manner to reflect credit instead of discredit upon the Hindu cosmogony and upon the subtle Aryan mind that conceived this wonderful chronological theory.

Before proceeding to this branch of the subject it will be necessary to examine the earliest references to the yugas in the Hindu Books, in order not only to understand the difference between the various divisions of time as there employed, but to discover, if possible, when they were first brought into common use. There is a wide divergence of opinion among Oriental scholars as to the date of the *Manu Smriti*, or *Laws of Manu*. Max Muller and his followers, who apparently bend all their energies to the task of proving that everything in Hinduism is of comparatively recent origin, claim that the *Laws of Manu* were compiled in the fifth century of our era. Their arguments are based solely upon certain passages which allude to customs and religious rites known to be modern. But it can easily be shown that all such passages may have been later interpolations of the Brahmins, while, on the other hand, the bulk or greater part of the work is undoubtedly archaic in character. Prof. Monier Williams, of Oxford, says: "Sir William Jones held that Manu's book was drawn up in about the year 1280 B. C. Mr. Elphinstone placed it 900 years B. C. Possibly some parts of it may represent laws and precepts which were current among the Manayas at the later date, but no one would now assign so early a date to the actual compilation of the Code. Nor can it, I think, reasonably be

placed later than the fifth century B.C." (1)

There is here a trifling difference of a thousand years in the estimates of two such good authorities, even, as Max Muller and Monier Williams, to say nothing of the earlier writers quoted, who affirm a still higher antiquity for Manu.

But let us see what the Hindus themselves claim. Manu, according to Brahminical authority, was literally the first man in the present manvantara or man-period. He taught the code of laws to his son Bhrigu, who promulgated them to the Rishis. Concerning the divisions of time he used the following language:

68. — But hear now the brief description of the duration of a night and a day of Brahman, and of the several ages of the world according to their order.

69. — They declare that the Krita age consists of four thousand years of the gods; the twilight preceding it consists of as many hundreds, and the twilight following it of the same number.

70. — In the other three ages with their twilights preceding and following, the thousands and hundreds are diminished by one in each.

71. — These twelve thousand years which thus have just been mentioned as the total of four human ages are called one age of the gods.

72. — But know that the sum of one thousand ages of the Gods makes one day of Brahman, and that his night has the same length.

73. — Those only who know that the holy day of Brahman, indeed, ends after the completion of one thousand ages of the gods, and that his night lasts as long, are really men

acquainted with the length of days and nights.

79. — The before mentioned age of the gods or twelve thousand of their years, being multiplied by seventy-one, constitutes what is here named the period of a Manu, or a Manvantara.

80. — The Manvantaras, the creations and destructions of the world, are numberless; sporting, as it were, Brahman repeats this again and again.

81. — In the Krita age justice is four-footed and entire, and so is truth; nor does any gain accrue to men by unrighteousness

82. — In the other three ages, by reason of unjust gains justice is deprived successively of one foot, and through the prevalence of theft, falsehood, and fraud, the merit gained by men is diminished by one-fourth in each.

83. — Men are free from disease, accomplish all their aims, and live four hundred years in the Krita age, but in the Treta and in each of the succeeding ages their life is lessened by one-quarter.

84. — The life of mortals mentioned in the Veda, the desired results of sacrificial rites, and the supernatural power of embodied spirits are fruits proportioned among men according to the character of the Age.

85. — One set of duties is prescribed for men in the Krita age, different ones in the Treta and in the Dvapara, and again another set in the Kali, in proportion as those ages decrease in length.

86. — In the Krita age the chief virtue is declared to be the performance of austerities, in the Treta divine knowledge,

in the Dvapara the performance of sacrifices, and in the Kali liberality alone. (2)

In the Vishnu Purana we find the same scheme of cosmogony. After stating the duration of the yugas, this ancient book adds:

Seven Rishis, certain secondary divinities, Indra, Manu, and the Kings his sons, are created and perish at one period, and the interval, called a Manvantara, is equal to seventy-one times the number of years contained in the four yugas with some additional years; this is the duration of the Manu, the attendant divinities and the rest, which is equal to 852, 000 divine years or to 306,720,000 years of mortals, independent of the additional period. Fourteen times this period constitutes a Brahma day. At the end of this day a dissolution of the Universe occurs, when all the three worlds, earth, and the regions of space are consumed with fire. (3)

We see from the foregoing extracts that the Hindu theory of the four yugas is of immense antiquity. It is not something that has been evolved out of modern thought and speculation. Back even of Manu and the Puranas the same idea may be traced, as frequent references to the Kalpas are found in the Upanishads and Mahabharata. In fact, the latter devotes an entire chapter to an explanation of this subject. (4)

Let us now see how the figures are obtained upon which the calculations of the yugas are based. Following the directions as given in Manu, we have the following table:

Krita Yuga	4,000
Sandhya (twilight)	400
Sandhyamsa (dusk)	400
	4,800

Treta Yuga	3,000
Sandhva	300
Sandhvamsa	300
	3,600
Dvapara Yuga	2,000
Sandhva	200
Sandhvamsa	200
	2,400
Kali Yuga	1,000
Sandhva	100
Sandhvamsa	100
	1,200
Total	12,000 divine years.

According to Brahminical computation a year of men is equal to a day of the gods; hence, to convert the preceding figures into mortal years we multiply by 360. Thus:

4,800 x 360 = 1,728,000 years of the Krita age.

3,600 x 360 = 1,296,000 years of the Treta age.

2,400 x 360 = 864,000 years of the Dvapara age.

1,200 x 360 = 432,000 years of the Kali age.

Total 4,320,000 years.

The sum of the four ages constitutes a Mahayuga or divine age, and 1,000 of these ages make a day or night of Brahma. Now it is distinctly stated that it takes seventy-one of these maha yugas, with some additional years, to make one Manvantara, and there are fourteen Manvantaras in the day of Brahma.

In order to locate ourselves, or rather our present time, in this comprehensive scheme, we may first divide the Kalpa mentally into fourteen parts, one for each Manvantara. That is certainly a

simple proposition. We find that each one of the fourteen Manvantaras has its own leader or Manu, and we find furthermore that Avayambhara Manu, the leader of the present wave of humanity, was the seventh Manu, thus fixing our location at about the middle of the Kalpa. But my present object is to still further define our location; hence we will endeavor to analyze the present or seventh Manvantara.

We learn from the above that it takes seventy-one maha yugas, or sum totals of our four ages, together with some additional years, to make one manvantara. The "additional years" spoken of are in the nature of a grand sandyha or twilight which is added to the maha yugas, just as the smaller twilights are intercalated in the minor yugas to make up a maha yuga. Of these seventy-one maha yugas, which is the one in which our race is located? This question the exoteric teachings of Brahmanism and Buddhism alike fail to answer. It was and has always been behind the veil. Neither the Puranas nor the Sutras utter a word upon the subject. But of late years a large part of the secret doctrine of the Hindu and Buddhist priests has been given to the Western public through the Theosophical Society. The revelations of Sinnett and of Madame Blavatsky recently have given us an insight into these hitherto sacredly guarded traditions. We are told in *Esoteric Buddhism* that there are seven rounds in every Manvantara and that this one is the fourth. As there are about seventy-one maha yugas and just seven rounds, each round must include about ten maha yugas, and as this is the fourth round, it follows that we are in the vicinity of the fortieth maha yuga, 172,800,000 mortal years after the beginning of the Manvantara. It will be observed that we are near the middle of the Manvantara — somewhat past the middle, to be more exact — the total number of years in the manvantara being about 306,000,000. There are seven root-races in each manvantara, and seven sub-races to each root-race. But

the limits of existence of the various races are not identical with the divisions of time; hence we find ourselves, or at least we are told that we find ourselves, in the fifth root-race and the fifth sub-race, the latter having already been in existence about a million years.

The question is asked: "If the Aryan race has gone through its Krita, Treta, and Dvapara ages in about 1,000,000, can its Kali yuga be literally 427,000 years?" I will answer this briefly by saying that the four ages, as applied to particular races, are only used metaphorically. Strictly speaking, they are grand general limitations of time. To speak of the Krita age of the Aryan race is a metaphorical way of alluding to the origin of that race, which, however, as a matter of fact really developed on earth in the latter portion of the Treta yuga. The second question is: "If the entire earth is in the Kali yuga of some great cycle, may not we of this country still be in the Krita age of some smaller cycle?" Practically the same answer can be given to this as to the preceding. I think the use of the names of the yugas in this sense is misleading. We might just as well speak of this morning, for instance, as the Krita age, or this evening as the Kali age, of this particular Saturday.

Now, while all this sounds perplexing to one who has not studied the subject, and no doubt seems foolish to those who are accustomed to the ordinary Biblical chronology, there is really a great truth conveyed in these gigantic estimates of time. It does not appear that the Hindus or Buddhists accept the figures given as intended to be literally exact. In a general way they indicate vast periods of time, and allow ample scope for the development of the physical earth, as well as of the human race according to the now everywhere accepted law of evolution. And it must be said that the latest discoveries in science tend to confirm very many of the Hindu theories. Geology especially is unfolding daily

new and startling developments in corroboration of what may be termed Ions chronology. It is true that many men of science still make a bid for popular approval by condemning or ridiculing the chronological systems of India and Chaldaea, but such time-servers are happily growing fewer each year, and it now seems as though it cannot be long before there will be no profit in advocating the exploded time-scale of the Hebrews. When there is no longer any money in it, perhaps the 4000 B.C. scheme will be abandoned. Already a few scientists are lifting their voices in behalf of the truth. The most notable contribution to recent literature in this direction is a book entitled *The Origin of the Aryans*, by Isaac Taylor, published in the Scribners' "Contemporary Science Series", 1890. The author admits that within the last ten years conclusions that had prevailed for fifty years in philology have had to be abandoned. He says:

"First among the causes which have led to this change of opinion must be placed the evidence as to the antiquity and early history of man, supplied by the new sciences of geology, anthropology, craniology, and prehistoric archaeology. The assumption that man was a comparatively recent denizen of the earth. . . . and the identification of the Aryans with the descendents of Japhet had to be reconsidered when it was recognized that man had been an inhabitant of Western Europe at a time anterior to the oldest traditions, probably before the close of the last glacial epoch. . . . to which Dr. Crall and Prof. Geikie assign on astronomical grounds an antiquity of some 80,000 years."

But, to return to the yugas, the question is often asked how the four ages happened to acquire their names. Literally they are the Ace-age, the Deuce age, the Trois or Third age, and the Quad or Fourth age, being named after the first four sides of the dice used

in gambling. The natural arrangement, however, is reversed, and the Krita or Fourth age represents the first or golden age. The Treta or Third age stands second, the Dvapara or Second age comes third, and the Kali age, that in which we live, and which is equivalent to the Ace age or lowest throw possible at dice, is fourth. These appellations, however, are subject to grave misapprehension. It is true that in the archaic ages in India gambling with dice was extremely common, and there is no doubt of the yugas having been named after the four first numbers on the ivory cubes; but, as in many other instances, this nomenclature was only an exoteric blind. Not to have veiled their meaning would have been to expose one of the seven keys to the Brahminical mysteries. We know that Pythagoras found a great part of his philosophy in India, and we are also aware that the basis of his philosophy was mathematical.

"Pythagoras considered a point to correspond in proportion to unity; a line to two; a superficies to three; a solid to four; and he defined a point as a monad having position and the beginning of all things; a line was thought to correspond with duality because it was produced by the first motion from indivisible nature and formed the junction of two points. A superficies was compared to the number three because it is the first of all causes that are found in figures; for a circle, which is the principal of all round figures, comprises a triad in centre, space, and circumference. But a triangle, which is the first of all rectilinear figures, is included in a ternary, and receives its form according to that number; and was considered by the Pythagoreans to be the creator of all sublunary things. The four points at the base of the Pythagorean triangle correspond with a solid or cube, which combines the principles of length, breadth, and thickness, for no solid

can have less than four extreme boundary points." (5)

Here, then, we have the origin of the nomenclature of the yugas. It was not astronomical, as might, as a hasty glance, be expected in such circumstances. Perhaps it antedated astronomy, as the science of numbers must have antedated the science of the stars.

There can be no accurate astronomy without mathematics; astronomy presupposes exact methods of calculation. Hence the naming of the ages from the science of numbers instead of from the science of the stars is a proof of the extreme antiquity of the Hindu theory of cosmogony.

As, according to Brahminical calculation, the present Kali yuga began in the year 3102 B. C. and as the yuga is expected to last 432,000 years, we have still over 427,000 years to look forward to before the end of the maha yuga. Some people, even members of the Theosophical Society, appear to think that the end of the maha yuga will be the end of the world. All such will please take notice that, according to the Hindu scheme, there are yet thirty more maha yugas to come, or about 129,600,000 years before the close of the present manvantara, and there are then seven more full manvantaras, or 2,160,000,000 years, to elapse before the day of Brahma is completed. In other words, the gradual process of evolution upon the solar system is only about half-way upon its course, and we can thus see how mankind in its cycle is now very nearly at the lowest point, and will in some thousands or millions of years begin to show traces of spiritual improvement.

Let no one smile contemptuously at the simplicity of the Puranic prophecy any more than at the complexity of the Hindu system of cosmogony. We must bear in mind that these Brahmins are a picked race. For almost endless thousands of years they have devoted themselves to metaphysical studies, religious contemplation, and intellectual and physical improvement. From

generation to generation they have carefully observed the Brahminical rules of health as well as of morality, and the result, according to the Darwinian law of selection, can not fail to have been the development of a class of men far superior to the mixed races. Among the ignorant in America there is an impression that the Hindus are enervated, weak in mind and body, cowardly and abject, and fit subjects only for the missionary. It is true that India has been during the past century ground down beneath the heel of British despotism, but the Empress of India rules only by the sheerest brute force. The pretended superiority of the British to the Hindus is a superiority of physical muscle. As well set up the claim that Sullivan, the prize-fighter, is superior to Whittier, the poet. Among the low-caste natives of India there is doubtless much abjectness, but they are no less obsequious to their own Brahmins than to the English conquerors of the soil. The Brahmins themselves are highly cultivated and possess great powers of thought. Their belief in the archaic system of the yugas is not one of blind faith, but has stood the test of investigation by thousands of the most subtle minds produced among a race that is and has always been intensely metaphysical. Here is what Max Muller says in his introductory lecture to the civil service students at the University of Cambridge:

"If I were to look over the whole world to find out the country most richly endowed with all the wealth, power, and beauty that nature can bestow — in some parts a very Paradise on earth — I should point to India. If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant — I should point to India. And if I were to ask myself from what literature we, here in

Europe, we who have been nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greeks and Romans and of one Semitic race, the Jewish, may draw that corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact more truly human, a life not for this life only, but a transfigured and eternal life — again I should point to India." (6)

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Indian Wisdom*, page 215. ([return to text](#))
 2. *Laws of Manu*, Book I, 68. ([return to text](#))
 3. *Vishnu Purana*, Book I. Chap. III. ([return to text](#))
 4. *Mahabharata* XII. 232. ([return to text](#))
 5. *Secret Doctrine*, I, page 616. ([return to text](#))
 6. *India, What can it Teach us?* p. 24. ([return to text](#))
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The Path

THE SACRED VEDIC VERSES

VEDA JANANI — THE MOTHER OF THE VEDAS.

"Aum, — the light of the Universe, the omniscient and omnipresent; the all containing, in whose womb move all the orbs of heaven; the self-effulgent, from whom the sun and stars borrow their light; whose knowledge is perfect and immutable, whose glory is superlative; who is deathless, the life of life and dearer than life, who gives bliss to those who earnestly desire it, and saves from all calamities his genuine devotees, and gives them peace and comfort; the all intelligent, who keeps in order and harmony all and each by permeating all things, on whom is dependent all that exist, the creator and giver of all glory, the illuminator of all souls and giver of every bliss, who is worthy to be embraced; the all-knowledge and all-holiness, — we contemplate and worship that He may enlighten our intellect and conscience."

STUMBLING BLOCKS IN WORDS — *Cadi*

A fellow student came to me the other day and asked, "What is the relation of 'space' to 'sat'? Is there any difference? In the *Secret Doctrine* I find that H. P. B., quoting from the disciples' catechism, says that 'space is that which is and ever was and is not created.'"

There is as much stumbling on mere words by students of Theosophy as on anything else. A simple word will often keep out the truth, and not only cause us to reach wrong conclusions, but frequently to enter upon disputes which sometimes end in quarrels. But in the question asked about "space" and "sat" there is an error in postulating "relation" for things which are without relation. "Sat" means being or *beness*, so it must be indivisible and unrelateable; "space" must be the same as "sat" because it is everywhere, being the one thing or aspect of things from which there is no escape. The moment we speak of "sat" or *beness*, we are forced to say that it exists somewhere, using the word "somewhere" in the abstract sense, and that "somewhere" is space. They cannot be dissociated from each other. So when I met the extract from the disciples' catechism in the *Secret Doctrine*, I at once came to the conclusion that "sat" is the word to metaphysically express the same idea as we have in mind when we think of space, the one being abstract existence and the other abstract locality in which to place the existence.

At one time some Theosophists were discussing the true sort of life and practice for a Theosophist. And one said that he thought that the body ought to be "cultivated". The rest at once entered into a discussion which lasted some time, during which the various arguments and illustrations of each were brought

forward, when at the end it was suddenly discovered that there was not, in fact, any disagreement. The whole misunderstanding grew out of the one word "cultivation", which should have been "purification".

We should all be careful not only to use the right word to express the idea intended to be conveyed, but also to accurately understand what is the idea the other person is trying to express, and to do this regardless of what words may have been used. In doing so it is absolutely necessary to remember what aspect the terms are being used in. Take "Jiva" for instance. It means life, and may be made to mean soul or ego. Mr. Sinnett has adopted Jiva to designate the mere life-principle of the human organism. But all through the metaphysical writings of the Hindoos we can find the word used to describe the immortal self. And there is no more confusion in these writings than there is in those of English speaking nations. Napoleon used to say that he paid attention to find out what idea might be behind anything that was said to him, and did not listen so much to the words as to the ideas which they were used to shadow forth. Words do no more than shadow forth the ideas, and a great deal depends upon the mental touch, taste, and power of smell of the person to whom the words are addressed. Remembering that there are such stumbling blocks as these in the way, the wise Theosophist will not be made to fall.

The Path

EVOLUTION — *W. Q. Judge*

The word "evolution" is the best word from a theosophical standpoint to use in treating of the genesis of men and things, as the process which it designates is that which has been always stated in the ancient books from whose perusal the tenets of the wisdom religion can be gathered. In the *Bhagavad Gita* we find Krishna saying that "at the beginning of the day of Brahma all things come forth from the non-developed principle, and at the coming on of Brahma's night they are resolved into it again", and that this process goes on from age to age. This exactly states evolution as it is defined in our dictionaries, where it is said to be a process of coming forth or a development. The "days and nights of Brahma" are immense periods of time during which evolution proceeds, the manifestation of things being the "day" and their periodical resolution into the Absolute the "night".

If, then, everything is evolved, the word creation can only be properly applied to any combination of things already in existence, since the primordial matter or basis cannot be created.

The basis of the theosophical system is evolution, for in theosophy it is held that all things are already in *esse*, being brought forth or evolved from time to time in conformity to the inherent law of the Absolute. The very next question to be asked is, What is this inherent law of the Absolute? as nearly as can be stated. Although we do not and cannot know the Absolute, we have enough data from which to draw the conclusion that its inherent law is to periodically come forth from subjectivity into objectivity and to return again to the former, and so on without any cessation. In the objective world we have a figure or illustration of this in the rising and setting of the sun, which of all natural objects best

shows the influence of the law. It rises, as H. P. Blavatsky says, from the (to us) subjective, and at night returns to the subjective again, remaining in the objective world during the day. If we substitute, as we must when attempting to draw correspondences between the worlds, the word "state" for locality or place, and instead of the sun we call that object "the Absolute", we have a perfect figure, for then we will have the Absolute rising above the horizon of consciousness from the subjective state, and its setting again for that consciousness when the time of night arrives, — that is, the night of Brahma. This law of periodicity is the same as that of the cycles, which can be seen governing in every department of nature.

But let us assume a point of departure so as to get a rapid survey of evolution theosophically considered. And let it be at the time when this period of manifestation began. What was projected into the objective world at that time must have been life itself, which under the action of the law of differentiation split itself up into a vast number of lives, which we may call individual, the quantity of which it is not possible for us of finite mind to count. In the Hindu system these are called Jivas and Jivatman. Within these lives there is contained the entire plan to be pursued during the whole period of manifestation, since each life is a small copy of the great All from which it came. Here a difficulty arises for studious minds calling for some attention, for they may ask "What then do you do with that which we call 'matter', and by and through which the lives manifest themselves?"

The reply is that the so-called matter is an illusion and is not real matter, but that the latter — sometime known in Europe as primordial matter — cannot be seen by us. The real matter is itself only another form of the life first thrown out, but in a less perfect state of differentiation, and it is on a screen of this real matter that its inner energies project pictures which we call

matter, mistaking them for the real. It may then be further asked, "Have we not been led to suppose that that which we supposed was matter but which you now say is an illusion is something absolutely necessary to the soul for acquiring experience of nature?" To this I reply that such is not the case, but that the matter needed for the soul to acquire experience through is the real unseen matter. It is that matter of which psychic bodies are composed, and those other "material" things all the way up to spirit. It is to this that the *Bhagavad Gita* refers where it says that spirit (purusha) and matter (prakriti) are coeternal and not divisible from each other. That which we and science are accustomed to designate matter is nothing more than our limited and partial cognition of the phenomena of the real or primordial matter. This position is not overturned by pointing to the fact that all men in general have the same cognitions of the same objects, that square objects are always square and that shadows fall in the same line for all normal people, for even in our own experience we see that there is such a thing as a collective change of cognition, and that thus it is quite possible that all normal people are merely on the single plane of consciousness where they are not yet able to cognize anything else. In the case of hypnotizing everything appears to the subject to be different at the will of the operator, which would not be possible if objects had any inherent actuality of their own apart from our consciousness.

In order to justify a discussion of the Theosophical system of evolution, it is necessary to see if there be any radical difference between it and that which is accepted in the world, either in scientific circles or among Theologians. That there is such a distinction can be seen at once, and we will take first that between it and Theology. Here, of course, this is in respect to the genesis of the inner man more especially, although Theology makes some claim to know about race descent. The Church either

says that the soul of each man is a special creation in each case or remains silent on the subject, leaving us, as it was once so much the fashion to say, "In the hands of a merciful Providence", who after all says nothing on the matter. But when the question of the race is raised, then the priest points to the Bible, saying that we all come from one pair, Adam and Eve. On this point Theology is more sure than science, as the latter has no data yet and does not really know whether we owe our origin to one pair, male and female, or to many. Theosophy, on the other hand, differs from the Church, asserting that *Paramatma* alone is self-existing, single, eternal, immutable, and common to all creatures, high and low alike; hence it never was and never will be created; that the soul of man evolves, is consciousness itself, and is not specially created for each man born on the earth, but assumes through countless incarnations different bodies at different times.

Underlying this must be the proposition that, for each Manvantara or period of manifestation, there is a definite number of souls or egos who project themselves into the current of evolution which is to prevail for that period or manvantara. Of course this subject is limitless, and the consideration of the vast number of systems and worlds where the same process is going on with a definite number of egos in each, staggers the minds of most of those who take the subject up. And of course I do not mean to be understood as saying that there is a definite number of egos in the whole collection of systems in which we may imagine evolution as proceeding, for there could be no such definiteness considered in the mass, as that would be the same as taking the measure of the Absolute. But in viewing any part of the manifestation of the Absolute, it is allowable for us to say that there are to be found such a definite number of egos in that particular system under consideration; this is one of the necessities of our finite consciousness. Following out the line of our own argument we reach the conclusion that, included within

the great wave of evolution which relates to the system of which this earth is a part, there are just so many egos either fully developed or in a latent state. These have gone round and round the wheel of rebirth, and will continue to do so until the wave shall meet and be transformed into another. Therefore there could be no such thing as a special creation of souls for the different human beings born on this earth, and for the additional reason that, if there were, then spirit would be made subservient to illusion, to mere human bodies. So that in respect to theology we deny the propositions, *first*, that there is any special creation of souls, *second*, that there is, or was, or could be by any possibility any creation of this world or of any other, and *third*, that the human race descended from one pair.

In taking up the difference existing between our theory and that of science we find the task easy. Upon the question of progress, and how progress or civilization may be attained by man, and whether any progress could be possible if the theories of science be true, our position is that there could be no progress if the law of evolution as taught in the schools is true, even in a material sense. In this particular we are diametrically opposed to science. Its assumption is that the present race on the earth may be supposed to belong to a common stock which in its infancy was rude and barbarous, knowing little more than the animal, living like the animal, and learning all it now knows simply by experience gained in its contest with nature through its development. Hence they give us the paleolithic age, the neolithic age, and so on. In this scheme we find no explanation of how man comes to have innate ideas. Some, however, seeing the necessity for an explanation of this phenomenon, attempt it in various ways; and it is a phenomenon of the greatest importance. It is explained by theosophy in a way peculiar to itself, and of which more will be said as we go on.

The Path

TWO LOST KEYS — *William Brehon*

THE BHAGAVAD-GITA — THE ZODIAC.

It has never been admitted by orientalists that there existed a key to the *Bhagavad-Gita*, other than a knowledge of the Sankrit language in which it is written. Hence our European translators of the poem have given but its philosophical aspect.

But it is believed by many students of theosophy — among them such an authority as H. P. Blavatsky — that there are several keys to the noble poem, and that they have been for the time lost to the world. There has been no loss of them in the absolute sense, since they are preserved intact in many rolls and books made of polished stones hidden and guarded in certain underground temples in the East, the location of which would not be divulged by those who know. No search has been made by the profane for these wonderful books, because there is no belief in their existence; and for the sincere student who can project his mental sight in the right direction, there is no need for such discovery of the mere outward form in which those keys are kept.

There is also a key for the Zodiac. The modern astrologers and astronomers have lifted up their puny voices to declare regarding the probable origin of the Zodiac, giving a very commonplace explanation, and some going so far as to speak of the supposed author of it, not that they have named him or given him a distinct place in history, but only referred to the unknown *individual*. It is very much to be doubted if these modern star-gazers would have been able to construct anything whatever in the way of a Zodiac, had they not had this immemorial arrangement of signs ready to hand.

The *Bhagavad-Gita* and the Zodiac, while differing so much from each other in that the one is a book and the other the sun's path in the heavens, are two great storehouses of knowledge which may be construed after the same method. It is very true that the former is now in book shape, but that is only because the necessities of study under conditions which have prevailed for some thousands of years require it, but it exists in the ideal world imbedded in the evolutionary history of the human race. Were all copies of it destroyed tomorrow, the materials for their reconstruction are near at hand and could be regathered by those sages who know the realities underlying all appearances. And in the same way the Zodiac could be made over again by the same sages — not, however, by our modern astronomers. The latter no doubt would be able to construct a path of the sun with certain classifications of stars thereon, but it would not be the Zodiac; it would bear but little relation to the great cosmic and microcosmic periods and events which that path really has. They would not apply it as it is found used in old and new almanacs to the individual human being, for they do not know that it can in any way be so connected, since their system hardly admits any actual sympathy between man and the Zodiac, not yet having come to know that man is himself a zodiacal highway through which his own particular sun makes a circuit.

Considering how laughable in the eyes of the highly-educated scientific person of today the singular figures and arrangement of the Zodiac are, it is strange that they have not long ago abolished it all. But they seem unable to do so. For some mysterious reason the almanacs still contain the old signs, and the moon's periods continue to be referred to these ancient figures. Indeed, modern astronomers still use the old symbology, and give to each new asteroid a symbol precisely in line with the ancient zodiacal marks so familiar to us. They could not abolish them, were the

effort to be made.

The student of the *Bhagavad-Gita* soon begins to feel that there is somewhere a key to the poem, something that will open up clearly the vague thoughts of greater meanings which constantly rise in his mind. After a while he is able to see that in a philosophical and devotional sense the verses are full of meaning, but under it all there runs a deep suggestiveness of some other and grander sweep for its words. This is what the lost key will reveal.

But who has that key or where it is hidden is not yet revealed, for it is said by those who know the Brotherhood that man is not yet in the mass ready for the full explanation to be put into his hands. For the present it is enough for the student to study the path to devotion, which, when found, will lead to that belonging to knowledge.

And so of the Zodiac. As our acquaintance, through devotion and endeavor, with the journey of our own sun through our own human zodiac grows better, we will learn the meaning of the great pilgrimage of the earthly luminary. For it is impossible in this study to learn a little of ourselves without knowing more of the great system of which we are a copy.

For Atman is the sun,
The moon also it is;
And the whole collection of stars
Is contained within it.

The Path

THE LION IN THE PATH — *Jasper Niemand*

At a certain era of theosophical study and practice, we reach a point of pause, of silence. The mind appears saturated with the new and wonderful teaching; insensible to fresh impressions, it can take in no more. The heart that once bounded so elately in all the vigor of renewed life and stimulus has resumed its normal beat under the pressure of daily trial, to be met, as it was not heretofore met, with self forgetfulness and altruistic endeavor. Slowly we seem to fall into a deadness, a lethargy of all the nature. We act, we plan, we fill the groove of circumstance, but we do it as though we walked in sleep. A blank wall rises before us seeming to bar further progress, and a pall falls over the inner life.

When this point of pause is reached, students say in their hearts that their progress is stopped, that they can advance no more. They have met a lion in the path, and fall back before its grim aspect. What causes this stop, this silence? First; we have learned more, intellectually, than we can use up in practical daily life. Head and heart have not kept pace. We know, in large part, what we should be in all relations of life, and why we should be it, but we have not attained the power of acting always and at once upon the lines of altruistic endeavor. And by a law of nature the brain cannot assimilate and digest the mass of knowledge received until it has been used up, to some extent at least, in the experience, any more than the stomach can receive and digest fresh food before the assimilative processes have been undergone with respect to food previously taken in. All the teachings we receive on the line of natural law (or spiritual law; the terms are one) are based upon the fact that motive determines energy and the value of energy, in a way touched upon by an adept in *The*

Occult World. There is "good and evil in every point of the universe", and the motive for which force is evolved, and in which it is used, must then qualify it. "Kundalini" may make or may kill. Apply the same rule to concentration. The *passive* fixation of the empty mind produces a passive magnetic condition of the physical body, well indicated by the sign —, and facilitates the entrance of adverse lower astral influences and entities; these are helped also by the quickened activity of the inner body under the said concentration. The *positive* fixation of the mind upon some worthy object, such as a high Ideal, the Higher Self, the image of an Elder Brother if one is known, renders the outer body positive, or magnetically +, and reduces the activity of the inner body by casting it into the mould of the mind occupied with this image. The doors are barred to all lower influences; a vibration far above their own effectually excludes them. In the one case we have lowered our spiritual vitality; in the other, we have raised it. To the aphorism, "A medium is an open door", might be added this, — "The positive idealist is a closed temple." "The image of the Master is the best protection against lower influences; think of the Master as a living man within you", says an M. S. S. This refers to the mental image of that master, who may be either an adept or the Higher Self. Patanjali says that the mind flows out and moulds itself upon the object seen; mind makes form.

In these brief hints may be found some explanation of our clogged mental processes. Those who participate so actively in theosophical work as to have little, if any, time for study, do, to my personal knowledge, make greater progress than other more learned F. T. S. Unconsciously (sub-consciously is a better term) they draw upon the Source for whose greater diffusion they work; they empty themselves and are filled, through the unfailing regularity of natural processes. Their motive predetermines the quality of the fresh energetic supply received. I do not pretend to

constitute myself a judge of progress, but that must be advance which sweetens, regulates, and clarifies the nature; absence of these and presence of harshness and disturbance must imply some degree of retardation.

Even such workers do not escape the point of pause. The Lion confronts them; upon his forehead is branded the grim name of Doubt. Despair is the lair to which he conveys his victim.

In using the word Doubt, I do not restrict it to its conventional meaning, but apply it to all phases of mind that are in opposition to a wholesome and calm confidence in the reign of Law, to a full assurance that all is as well, with us and with the world, as it can possibly be at this moment. The evolutionary wheels never stop; we all progress as particles of air are said to do, through advance and recoil; and as sound is propagated along their line by just that motion, so the life wave, with its currents of progress, runs through individuals and through worlds in the same rise and fall. Progress is *always* being made at some point of our greater and of our individual being, so long as we try at all, so long as we do not deliberately retard the methods of nature.

Why, then, should we yield to this despondency? If I have anything to say upon the subject at all, it is because I have passed along that road: I have reached the point of pause and confronted the Lion. At first there seems no escape. We can only close the mind, throw ourselves into a vortex of practical altruistic work, and hold on, with stern determination, to the ideal now behind the clouds. We cannot lift our hearts to it; we are too dead-tired for that; but we can insist that it still shines behind the darkness and will reappear. Habit is the parent of Doubt. We have some special failing, some specific trial, some rock closing our path. That is what we think, laboring desperately to remove it, squandering all our strength upon the one obstacle. We mistake.

No one thing has power to bar advance in all our being, on all its many planes. There are other causes, operative as obstacles, of which we are unconscious. Let us, then, accept our selves just as we are, and work on, trusting to work for others and to the influx of light which that brings for better comprehension of the lower self. To use up all our thoughts and most of our strength upon some personal failing is a fatal mistake. We do not kill our faults. We outgrow them. This growth can only be had by a study of spiritual law through the inner nature of things, and by its application to all the issues of life, above all, to the tendencies of the lower self. A clearer idea of philosophy and more theosophical work are what we most need.

It is not to be supposed that our faults are to be wholly ignored. But they are to be viewed without emotion, calmly, as an excrescence upon a tree, a blight in the midst of nature. No student should ever forget to look at things in that aspect which they wear on the plane of force. Anxiety, there, is an explosive: fear contracts, hope expands. The affection which trembles for its object, however legitimately to the outward sense, acts there as a disintegrating force. The thinker may increase the list for himself. Consequently, the agonizing repentance of the sinner is a deterrent if it continues longer than is necessary to the first stirring up of the inner nature. What we should do is more scientific. We should practice the substitution of mental images. Make deliberately in the mind an image opposed to the habit, or the desire, or the too influential person, whenever the idea which you desire to expel shall arise. You do not even need to *feel* this new form at first; just bring it up and consider it; hold it as long as you can. You will come to feel it. You will react to it.

In the very hour of defeat is the germ of victory. All things go on to a climax; then reaction sets in. We are generally exhausted when this natural impulse arises; we fail to grasp it, to encourage

and increase it. We can bring it about more speedily by increasing the momentum of any given feeling or course, so that the climax shall be more speedily reached, but such is not often the action of the wise. They await the proper hour. A caterpillar's nest caused ravages in my garden. The wind was high, the vermin active and spread abroad. I could do nothing then. I cultivated other parts of my garden. When night came, and the wind fell, and the vermin collected in the nest, I burned it. He who waits quietly, patiently, studiously, working for others where he can and substituting higher mental images for low ones in every idle hour, consciously making these etheric forms and clothing them with ever increasing energy; he who calmly waits the crisis and then vigorously, promptly takes the reactionary current, — he will know what is meant when the Voice of the Silence enjoins us: "Chase all your foes away * * even when you have failed."

Create your own reactions. It is done by thought. "If thou wouldst not be slain by them, then must thou harmless make thy own creations, the children of thy thoughts, unseen, impalpable, that swarm around humankind, the progeny and heirs to man and his terrestrial spoils." You have stamped those thoughts upon energetic centres in the astral light until they have become your habits; they inform, propel, and nourish the Lion in the path. Efface the old impressions; bathe the sensitized centres in the biting acid of Will; create new thoughts daily, automatically if you cannot do it with love at first; love will follow; all things follow Will. Ruskin says: "Do justice to your brother — you can do that whether you love him or not — and you will come to love him. But do injustice to him — because you don't love him, and you will come to hate him." Justice primarily demands that we cease to poison the *milieu* in which men live, which souls exhale and respire, with our personal fears, desires, and all the haunting shapes of self. Man legislates against poisoning of the air, but nature prohibits

the infection of the soul atmosphere, the ether. "Doubt is Self," she cries. "Thou art the Lion in thy brother's path; destroy it, and it will not bar thine own."

The Path

HIT THE MARK — *William Brehon*

"Having taken the bow, the great weapon, let him place on it the arrow, sharpened by devotion. Then, having drawn it with a thought directed to that which is, hit the mark, O friend,—the Indestructible. OM is the bow, the Self is the arrow, Brahman is called its aim. It is to be hit by a man who is not thoughtless; and then as the arrow becomes one with the target, he will become one with Brahman. Know him alone as the Self, and leave off other words. He is the bridge of the Immortal. Mediate on the self as OM. Hail to you that you may cross beyond the sea of darkness." — Mundaka Upanishad.

Archery has always been in vogue, whether in nations civilized or among people of barbarous manners. We find Arjuna, prince of India, the possessor of a wonderful bow called Gandiva, the gift of the gods. None but its owner could string it, and in war it spread terror in the ranks of the enemy. Arjuna was a wonderful archer too. He could use Gandiva as well with his right as with his left hand, and so was once addressed by Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita dialogue as "thou both-handed." The bow figures in the lives of the Greek heroes, and just now the novelist Louis Stevenson is publishing a book in which he sings the praises of a bow, the bow of war possessed by Ulysses; when war was at hand it sang its own peculiar, shrill, clear song, and the arrows shot from it hit the mark.

Archery is a practice that symbolizes concentration. There is the archer, the arrow, the bow, and the target to be hit. To reach the mark it is necessary to concentrate the mind, the eye, and the body upon many points at once, while at the same time the string

must be let go without disturbing the aim. The draw of the string with the arrow must be even and steady on the line of sight, and when grasp, draw, aim, and line are perfected, the arrow must be loosed smoothly at the moment of full draw, so that by the bow's recoil it may be carried straight to the mark. So those who truly seek wisdom are archers trying to hit the mark. This is spiritual archery, and it is to this sort that the verse from the Mundaka Upanishad refers.

In archery among men a firm position must be assumed, and in the pursuit of truth this firm position must be taken up and not relaxed, if the object in view is to be ever attained. The eye must not wander from the target, for, if it does, the arrow will fly wide or fall short of its goal. So if we start out to reach the goal of wisdom, the mind and heart must not be permitted to wander, for the path is narrow and the wanderings of a day may cause us years of effort to find the road again.

The quality of the bow makes a great difference in the results attained by the archer. If it is not a good bow of strong texture and with a good spring to it, the missiles will not fly straight or with sufficient force to do the work required; and so with the man himself who is his own bow, if he has not the sort of nature that enables him to meet all the requirements, his work as a spiritual archer will fall that much short. But even as the bow made of wood or steel is subject to alterations of state, so we are encouraged by the thought that the laws of karma and reincarnation show us that in other lives and new bodies we may do better work. The archer says too that the bow often seems to alter with the weather or other earthly changes, and will on some days do much better work than on others. The same thing is found by the observing theosophist, who comes to know that he too is subject from time to time to changes in his nature which enable him to accomplish more and to be nearer the spiritual

condition. But the string of the bow must always be strung tight; and this, in spiritual archery, is the fixed determination to always strive for the goal.

When the arrow is aimed and loosed it must be slightly raised to allow for the trajectory, for if not it will fall short. This corresponds on its plane with one of the necessities of our human constitution, in that we must have a high mental and spiritual aim if we are to hit high. We cannot go quite as high as the aim, but have to thus allow for the trajectory that comes about from the limitations of our nature; the trajectory of the arrow is due to the force of gravity acting on it, and our aspirations have the same curve in consequence of the calls of the senses, hereditary defects, and wrong habits that never permit us to do as much as we would wish to do.

Let us hit the mark, O friend! and that mark is the indestructible, the highest spiritual life we are at any time capable of.

The Path

PERSONALITIES — *A. P. Ril*

It cannot be said that the members of the Theosophical Society are yet free from the trouble which the study of and delight in personalities are always sure to bring about. We should not be the imperfect human beings that we know we are, had we reached such perfection. But surely some effect ought to be produced upon all earnest members in this direction by the philosophy they study, as well as from a sincere attempt to carry out the objects of the organization.

Looking into the rules laid down for the pledged disciples, there is to be met an absolute prohibition against their talking to each other either about what happens to them, or the experiences they are having, or the progress they are making. With them there are two reasons for this, one the tendency to make trouble, and the other that vanity is certain to follow upon one's talking much to others about what he has done or experienced in the theosophical field of investigation, especially if there have been any abnormal phases to it. Long experience has shown that for the beginner vanity is a most insidious foe lurking everywhere, and which is as likely to attack the earnest as those who are neither earnest nor sincere, and its immediate action is to throw a veil over the mental sight, making things appear to be what they are not, tending to make the victim centre more and more in himself, and away from that tolerance for and union with others which it is the aim of theosophical study to bring about.

The civil law has always held that there is a wide distinction between a discussion or criticism of a person's work and of that person himself. It is permitted to say as much as one pleases regarding or against what another has said or written, but the

moment the individual is taken up for consideration we have to be careful not to commit libel or be guilty of slander. In the theosophical life this excellent rule should be extended so that there could be no criticism of persons, no matter how much is said about their writings or the ideas they give out; and, in addition, another rule well to observe is to avoid as much as possible the retailing of what may be called gossip about the doings and goings to and fro of other members.

All those who are personally acquainted with H. P. Blavatsky and who have not been blinded by their devotion to personalities know that during all the years she has worked in the Society her constant goal has been to so educate those who were willing to listen that they might be able to think for themselves upon all points and not be led away by the personality of any leader or writer. Many have thought that in the Society her word is law, but no one denies this more than herself, she always insisting that we must accept and believe only that which we have decided is true after a careful study. Here the mistake should not be made of supposing that because one is told to have regard for what she says, therefore he is believing on her authority in place of accepting an idea from its inherent truth. Others again, carried in the opposite direction by their very fear of relying upon any person, have thought it right as a general rule to oppose whatever she says. But this is as great a mistake as the other. Respect for a leader of thought means that, as we have come to have belief in the general soundness of that leader's views, so when any come from that source we naturally give them more consideration than those uttered by persons of small repute and known paucity of knowledge. This readiness to give attention to a leader's views is not belief in any idea because such and such a person has put it forth, but solely a natural protection against waste of time in analyzing worthless notions.

I have known a great many of the theosophists who were prominent in the Society's work in India in its early history, and have been privileged to meet many more in England and be present at several so-called crises in our progress, and have noticed that in almost every case the whole trouble has been never about ideas but always about persons. Persons may foolishly think that either they or others may rule the world or some small section of it, but as fixed as fate is it that never persons but always "ideas rule the world." Persons are transitory, moving over the field of mortal view for a few brief years and then disappearing forever, but ideas persist through all these changes, and rule the different personalities as they flit out from the unknown into the objective sky and plunge soon again into the darkness of the beyond. So long as there remain in our ranks the devotees of the personal, just so long will we have to struggle, but as soon as we flee from all consideration of persons the entire Society will escape into the free upper air where every effort will have its perfect work.

The Path

DEVACHAN — *W. Q. Judge*

A letter to the editor from Holland upon this subject deserves reply, as it must give utterance to the questions of many other students.

The complaint in this letter is that when one goes to Devachan much time is lost away from earth life, where otherwise unselfish work for others might be continued by instantly returning to it after death. The reason given is that Devachan is an illusion, while the so-called illusions of earthly existence are in such a sense real that they are preferable to those of Devachan. In illustration of this, the supposed case is given of a parent in Devachan imagining that the beloved child is also there, when, in fact, the child not yet physically dead remains on earth perhaps in misery or leading a life of vice. This is the root of the objection — the supposed illusionary character of Devachan as compared to earth-life.

Now these feelings are always due to the thirst for life in the form which presently is most known to us, — that is, in a physical body. We cannot argue Devachan away any more than we can the necessity of incarnation upon this earth; the one is as philosophically necessary as is the other. A very easy way out of the difficulty — which arises almost wholly from our feelings — would be to calmly accept the law as it stands, being willing to take whatever may be our fate, whether that be in Devachan or in this earth-life. Our likes and dislikes can have no effect on the course of nature, but they may have an effect on ourselves which will be far from beneficial. For the dwelling upon pleasure or the constant desire to fly from "pain not yet come" will inevitably create Karmic causes which we would wish to avoid.

But perhaps there are some considerations on the subject of Devachan which may be of use. In the first place, I have never believed that the period given by Mr. Sinnett in *Esoteric Buddhism* of fifteen hundred years for the stay in that state was a fixed fact in nature. It might be fifteen minutes as well as fifteen hundred years. But it is quite likely that for the majority of those who so constantly wish for a release and for an enjoyment of heaven, the period would be more than fifteen hundred years. Indeed, the Hindu Scriptures give many special ceremonies for the attainment of heaven, or the regions of Indra, which is Devachan; and those ceremonies or practices are said to cause a stay in Indraloka "for years of infinite number."

The first question, however, must be "What is the cause for passing into Devachan?" Some have said that it is good Karma or good acts that take us and keep us there, but this is a very incomplete reply. Of course, in the sense that it is happiness to go into that state, it may be called good Karma. But it does not follow that the man whose life is good, passed in constant unselfish work for others without repining, and free from desire to have somewhere his reward, will go to Devachan. Yet his Karma must be good; it must act on him, however, in other lives, for the earth life is the place where such Karma has its operation. But if at the same time that he is thus working for others he wishes for release or for some place or time when and where he may have rest, then, of course, he must go to Devachan for a period which will be in proportion to the intensity of those desires.

Again, it should not be forgotten that the soul must have some rest. Were it, before becoming bright as the diamond, hard as adamant, and strong as steel, to go on working, working through earth-life after earth-life without a break between, it must at last succumb to the strain and come to nothing. Nature therefore has provided for it a place of rest — in Devachan: and that we should

thankfully accept if it falls to our lot.

But does Devachan suffer in the comparison made between it and this life on earth? To me it seems not. Human life is as great an illusion as any. To the sage Ribhu, Vishnu said it was the longest-lived reign of fancy. To say that it is a terrible thing to think of a mother in Devachan enjoying its bliss while the child is suffering on earth, is to prefer one illusion over another, to hug a philosophical error to the breast. Both states are not of the true, while the Ego, who is the real witness, sees the lower personality struggling with these phantoms while it, whether the body be living or its other parts be in Devachan, enjoys eternal felicity. It sits on high unmoved, immovable. The great verse in the Isa-Upanishad settles this matter for me in these words: "What room is there for sorrow and what for doubt in him who knows that all spiritual beings are the same in kind, though differing in degree." Therefore if I believe this, I must also know that, no matter whether I and my best beloved are in Devachan or on earth, they and I must forever partake of the highest development attained by the greatest of sages, for, as they and I are spiritual beings, we must have communion forever on the higher planes of our being.

Then, again, the fact seems to be lost sight of that each night we go into a sort of Devachan — the dream state or sleep without dream. The loving mother, no matter how unfortunate or evil her child, must sleep, and in that state she may have dreams of her loved ones around her in just the very condition of mind and body she would have them enjoy. If Devachan be objectionable, why not also rebel against our necessary sleep which acts on our physical frame to give it rest, as Devachan does upon our more ethereal parts?

Lying unnoticed at the foot of this matter is the question of time. It goes to the very root of the objection, for the aversion to the

stay in Devachan is based upon the conception of a *period of time*. This period — given or supposed as 1,500 years — is another great illusion which can be easily proved to be so. What we call time, measured by our seconds and minutes and hours, is not necessarily actual time itself. It is not the ultimate precedence and succession of moments in the abstract. For us it depends on and flows from the revolutions of our solar orb, and even with that standard it can be shown that we do not apprehend it correctly. We speak of seconds, but those are such as our watchmakers give us in the watch. They might be made longer or shorter. They are arrived at through a division of a diurnal solar revolution, the observation of which is not necessarily mathematically accurate. If we lived on Mercury — where we must believe intelligent beings live — our conception of time would be different. From our childhood's experience we know that even in this life our appreciation of the passage of time rises and falls, for in early youth the 12 months from one Christmas to another seemed very, very long, while now they pass all too quickly. And from watching the mental processes in dreams we know that, in the space of time taken for a bell to drop from the table to the floor, one may dream through a whole lifetime, with all the incidents of each day and hour packed into such a limited period. Who can tell but that in a Devachanic state of three months the person may go through experiences that seem to cover thousands of years? If so, why not say for him — since time as we know it is an illusion — that he was in Devachan for those thousands?

Devachan, however, is not a meaningless or useless state. In it we are rested; that part of us which could not bloom under the chilling skies of earth-life bursts forth into flower and goes back with us to another life stronger and more a part of our nature than before; our strength is revived for another journey between deaths. Why shall we repine that nature kindly aids us in the

interminable struggle; why thus ever keep the mind revolving about this petty personality and its good or evil fortune?

The Path

PRINCE TALLEYRAND CAGLIOSTRO — *J. Quilter*

A good deal for and against Cagliostro has been said since the time when he disappeared from the scene, and so much has been written against him by his enemies, especially the members of the order of Jesus, that the ordinary run of people have come to think of him as no more than an impostor, and a very cheap one at that. This has been pushed so far that his name in the encyclopaedias stands for one of the great charlatans who from time to time are said to appear for the delusion of mankind and their own profit. The same sort of reputation has been given also to our honored fellow student Helena P. Blavatsky, and for similar reasons, with just as little basis.

Indeed, there seems to be little doubt but that in time to come her enemies, like his, will delight to call her a great impostor, as has been done already by a little-minded so-called investigator who went all the way to India to look into matters theosophical.

If Cagliostro was in fact an impostor, it is a strange thing that so much attention was paid to him by the very best men and women of Europe. That fact will always call for explanation, and, until it is given due weight, the unbeliever in encyclopaedias will be likely to think a good deal of the Count. There are some persons now of quite bright minds and wide acquaintance with men who say they believe he is still living, not under his old name but with another, and that he is engaged in a great work which embraces the whole human family. This may or may not be true, since it calls for a very great age on his part, but the student of the occult knows that we are neither old nor young, but ever immortal.

The great Prince Talleyrand has left us something regarding Cagliostro which is of weight. It is to be found in a book published

in London in 1848, containing the Memoirs of the Prince by his private secretary M. Colemache, in chapter four. It there appears that the Prince was asked to give the incidents of his visit to Cagliostro, and did so at some length. He had heard so much about the Count that he resolved to pay him a visit and see for himself the man about whom nearly every one was talking. An appointment was made, and at the time set Talleyrand called and was ushered into the presence, where he found the strange figure — a woman dressed in black and whose face was veiled — of whom much has also been said on the ground that she was alleged to be the confederate of Cagliostro or else a very good sensitive or medium. The Count appeared to be busy, and gazed into the eyes of the Prince with such a peculiar stare that the latter was not able to collect his thoughts, obliging Cagliostro to remind him of the many people waiting for an audience who could not be kept waiting if there was nothing to be said.

Thereupon, as the Prince says himself, being utterly confused he failed to recollect the posers he had prepared, and was forced to ask Cagliostro if he could tell him anything about a certain Countess. The reply he received to this was that she would be at the theatre that night and would wear a certain dress and certain ornaments. Then Talleyrand asked if he could have a remedy for headaches she often had, and Cagliostro reaching down took up a jug and gave the Prince what looked like water. It was directed to be applied to her forehead, and the strict injunction given that no one else was under any circumstances to handle the bottle or touch the water. Talleyrand then went off, the Countess appeared at the theatre exactly as was said, and after the play the party, including Talleyrand, went to a supper. The meal had progressed almost to the coffee when some one asked for the result of the visit to the supposed impostor. The Prince produced the bottle, but, contrary to the directions, allowed every one of the company to smell it and handle it. It was then proposed to apply the water

to the fair forehead of the Countess, but there was some hesitation, until at last a quantity of the liquid was poured in the hand of one of the guests and placed on her forehead. Immediately she screamed with pain, but the hand could not be easily withdrawn; it had to be pulled off with violence, and with it came a large patch of the lady's skin. The next day the police were sent after Cagliostro, and the jug of liquid was taken to an official analyst who made report that it was water and nothing else, just the same as what was in the bottle. This could not be explained by the Prince, but on the examination Cagliostro said it was indeed water which he had strongly magnetised, and that if the Prince had followed directions no harm would have come; he, however, had permitted a lot of roysterers to handle and smell it, and they had turned the immensely strong magnetism into the violent agent it turned out to be. Of course the manufacturers of hypotheses will say that it was not water but "some" acid or the like, not being able, though, to tell what they mean exactly. The incident is well attested and made a deep impression on the Prince, who gives evidence thus to facts and not to disputable theories.

The Path

TRUE OCCULTISM

AS FOUND IN THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER BHAVAGAD-GITA.

There are nowadays many professors of occultism, just as years ago there was a numerous brood of those who pretended to know about the philosopher's stone. Both, however, were and are learned chiefly in repeating what they have heard of as occultism, with no substance or reality underneath all the profession. Now as then the mere incidentals of the true occultist's practice are thought of, spoken about, and pursued. Phenomena or the power to produce them constitute the end and aim of these searchers' efforts. But seek as we may, we will not find among them real knowledge, real experience, true initiation. Being on the wrong path, deluded by false light, they cannot do aught but mystify, annoy, and deceive those who put their trust in them. During the days of Rosicrucian fame there was some excuse for the mass of seekers, but since the old Hindu works have become gradually known to everyone, that exculpation is at an end; for on every hand the note of warning is sounded, and everywhere are signs that show in what direction lies the true path. Particularly is this so in that wonderful book, the *Bhagavad-Gita*. In it, however void of phenomena, however unattractive in respect to bait for psychic emotion, it points out the way, declares the mystic science, true devotion, right action. We therefore print an important chapter entire.

CHAPTER XIII. (1)

DEVOTION BY MEANS OF THE DISCRIMINATION OF THE
KSHETRA FROM KSHETRAJNA.

Krishna. This perishable body, O son of Kunti, is known as

Kshetra; those who are acquainted with the true nature of things call the soul who knows (2) it, the Kshetrajna. Know also that I am the knower in every mortal body, O son of Bharata; that knowledge which through the soul is a realization of both the known and the knower is alone esteemed by me as wisdom. What that Kshetra or body is, what it resembleth, what it produceth, and what is its origin, and also who he is who, dwelling within, knoweth it, as well as what is his power, learn all in brief from me. It has been manifoldly sung by the Rishees with discrimination and with arguments in the various Vedic hymns which treat of Brahma.

This body, then, is made up of the great elements, Ahankara — egotism, Buddhi — intellect or judgment, the unmanifest, invisible spirit; the ten centres of action, the mind, and the five objects of sense; desire, aversion, pleasure and pain, persistency of life, and firmness, the power of cohesion. Thus I have made known unto thee what the Kshetra or body is with its component parts.

True wisdom of a spiritual kind is freedom from self esteem, hypocrisy, and injury to others; it is patience, sincerity, respect for spiritual instructors, purity, firmness, self-restraint, dispassion for objects of sense, freedom from pride, and a meditation upon birth, death, decay, sickness, and error; it is an exemption from self-identifying attachment for children, wife, and household, and a constant unwavering steadiness of heart upon the arrival of every event whether favorable or unfavorable; it is a never-ceasing love for me alone, the self being effaced, and worship paid in a solitary spot, and a want of pleasure in congregations of men; it is a resolute continuance in the study of Adhyatma, the superior spirit, and a meditation upon the end of the acquirement of a knowledge of truth; — this is called wisdom or spiritual knowledge, its opposite is ignorance.

I will now tell thee what is the object of wisdom, from knowing which a man enjoys immortality; it is that which has no beginning, even the supreme Brahma, and of which it cannot be said that it is either Being or Non-Being. It has hands and feet in all directions; eyes, heads, mouths, and ears in every direction; it is immanent in the world, possessing the vast whole. Itself without organs, it is reflected by all the senses and faculties; unattached, yet supporting all; without qualities, yet the witness of them all. It is within and without all creatures animate and inanimate; it is inconceivable because of its subtlety, and although near it is afar off. Although undivided it appeareth as divided among creatures; and while it sustains existing things, it is also to be known as their destroyer and creator. It is the light of all lights, and is declared to be beyond all darkness; and it is wisdom itself, the object of wisdom, and that which is to be obtained by wisdom; in the hearts of all it ever presideth. Thus hath been briefly declared what is the perishable body, and wisdom itself, together with the object of wisdom; he, my devotee, who thus in truth conceiveth me, obtaineth my state.

Know that Prakriti or nature, and Purusha the spirit, are without beginning. And know that the passions and the three qualities are sprung from Nature.

Nature or *prakriti* is said to be that which operates in producing cause and effect in actions (3); individual spirit or *Purusha* is said to be the cause of experiencing pain and pleasure. (4) For spirit when invested with matter or *prakriti* experienceth the qualities which proceed from *prakriti*; its connection with these qualities is the cause of its rebirth in good and evil wombs. (5) The spirit in the body is called *Maheswara*, the Great Lord, the spectator, the admonisher, the sustainer, the enjoyer, and also the *Paramatma*, the highest soul.

He who thus knoweth the spirit and nature, together with the qualities, whatever mode of life he may lead, is not born again on this earth.

Some men by meditation, using contemplation upon the self, behold the spirit within, others attain to that end by philosophical study with its realization, and others by means of the religion of works. Others, again, who are not acquainted with it in this manner, but have heard it from others, cleave unto and respect it; and even these, if assiduous only upon tradition and attentive to hearing the scriptures, pass beyond the gulf of death. (6)

Know, O chief of the Bharatas, that whenever anything, whether animate or inanimate, is produced, it is due to the union of the Kshetra and the Kshetrajna — body and the soul. He who seeth the Supreme Being existing alike imperishable in all perishable things, sees indeed. Perceiving the same lord present in everything and everywhere, he does not by the lower self destroy his own soul, but goeth to the supreme end. He who seeth that all his actions are performed by nature only, and that the self within is not the actor, sees indeed. And when he realizes perfectly that all things whatsoever in nature are comprehended in the ONE, he attains to the Supreme Spirit. This Supreme Spirit, O Son of Kunti, even when it is in the body, neither acteth nor is it affected by action, because, being without beginning and devoid of attributes, it is changeless. As the all moving Akasa by reason of its subtlety passeth everywhere unaffected, so the Spirit, though present in every kind of body, is not attached to action nor affected. As a single sun illuminateth the whole world, even so doth the one spirit illumine every body, O Son of Bharata. Those who with the eye of wisdom thus perceive what is the difference between the body and Spirit and the destruction of the illusion of objects, (7) go to the Supreme.

Thus in the Upanishads stands the thirteenth chapter, by name — Devotion by means of the discrimination of the Kshetra from Kshetrajna.

FOOTNOTES:

1. This rendering of Chap. 13 is from the advance sheets of the new PATH edition of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, of which a notice will be found on another page. ([return to text](#))
2. That is, the true Ego, the real witness and spectator. ([return to text](#))
3. Prakriti, matter or nature, is the cause of all action throughout the Universe, as it is the basis by which action may take place; and herein are included all actions, whether of men, of gods, powers, or what not. ([return to text](#))
4. Purusha is the aspect of the individual spirit in every human breast; it is the cause of our experiencing pain and pleasure through the connection with nature found in the body. ([return to text](#))
5. Here *purusha* is the persisting individual who connects all reincarnations, as if it were the thread, and has hence been called the "thread Soul". ([return to text](#))
6. This last sentence means that they thus lay such a foundation as that in subsequent lives they will reach the other states and then to immortality. ([return to text](#))
7. This refers to what has previously been said about the great illusion produced by nature in causing us to see objects as different from spirit, and it agrees with Patanjali, who says that, although the perfectly illuminated being has destroyed the illusion, it still has a hold upon those who are not illuminated — they will have to go through repeated rebirths until their time of

deliverance also comes. ([return to text](#))

The Path

EVOLUTION AND INVOLUTION AS SYNTHESIZED IN MAN — *William Main*

Evolution is an unfolding of that which is within, the development of a potentiality. Involution is an infolding of that which is without.

I wish to show briefly that from the simpler affinities of the mineral world to the highest planes of existence, there is a continuous evolution of will and consciousness, of idea and intellect, and that this evolution takes place through a series of vehicles which are successively built up and cast aside.

A potentiality is a tension or tendency toward the production of a result, meaning also the power of effecting that result under suitable conditions. A grain of gunpowder has the potentiality of explosion, of evolving suddenly a quantity of gas due to the chemical combination of the elements mixed together. These elements had been separated from combination, and the return to that condition is like the release of a spring.

This is an example of the evolution of a few simple combinations due to the potentialities or chemical affinities of so-called elements. In chemical evolution weaker combinations perish, being torn apart by the more powerful attractions of the atoms for new mates, while a large amount of mechanical energy is made manifest. In the gunpowder, for instance, the saltpeter or nitrate of potassium disappears or perishes as such, yielding its different elements to form new compounds with the carbon and the sulphur. The saltpeter molecule is like a package in which a considerable amount of oxygen is compactly put up, held together by two other elements, the nitrogen and the potassium, which serve as binding material.

By a "molecule" the chemist means a definite group of atoms, or combination of elements. An atom is an exact and still simpler relationship of force and space, the real nature of which is not understood. It is the unit portion of an element and beyond this cannot be described.

All commercial transactions are exchanges of packages, using this word in its broadest sense, and all packages are made up of retaining or binding elements and those retained or held together in more or less permanent relationship.

The package consists of the case and the goods contained. The case after serving its turn passes back to the plane of being from which it was temporarily evolved, while the goods taken from it are made the vehicles of higher uses to perish in their turn.

Strange as it may seem, we will find upon reflection that there is absolutely nothing which has any value in itself. Value is based wholly on an estimate of that for which the article valued can be exchanged. The idea of exchange must not be limited to its narrow commercial sense; for an article used is at some time worn out or decays, exchanged for whatever its use or existence has brought, whether this be material or otherwise.

This result again is valued in like manner for what it can produce, but always in a direction toward the unevolved portion of our being. Whether by few steps or many, each of us must reach, somewhere within, the boundary of that shadowy land of vague aspiration and unrest.

Some men will reach this region at lower levels than others, according to their evolutionary stage.

A packing box is broken up, used as fuel or decays, passes into ashes and gases, to be again absorbed by growing plants or trees to furnish material for future boards, string, or paper.

The goods contained may be food, clothing, books, or pictures.

The food, which is but packages of energy, derived from the affinities of the mineral kingdom through vegetable or animal vehicles, is quickly consumed in the construction and maintenance of that most perfect of packing cases, the human body. The clothing is worn out in encasing it. The books and pictures are but the shells of ideas which form the nutriment of the mind, which itself is but the shell, medium, or vehicle of the higher spiritual ego with its transcendent faculties. Of what this again is the vehicle, we cannot tell, except by repeating vague words, which to those on higher spiritual planes may be full of meaning, but to the ordinary man convey only the impression that there are cycles of being far above, or rather within, our present conceptions.

We have, then, a series of vehicles, sheaths, or packing cases, grade above grade, the contents of each being utilized in the fabrication or evolution of the next higher, so that the production of the highest summarizes the uses of all.

The mineral or purely chemical kingdom, with its affinities, with its crystalline, liquid, and gaseous states, is the simplest manifestation of form and tendency, of energy and direction. By the mineral kingdom, it must be remembered, is meant not merely crystals, rocks, and ores, but all unvitalized matter, whatever its temporary condition.

This department of nature has been considered by most, even of non-materialists, as purely mechanical or machine like, with no trace of the self-centered will so evident as we go higher. The certainty with which the mineral Will (otherwise known as chemical affinity) is exercised has given rise to this impression.

In the vegetable kingdom the sub-consciousness of nature

manifests itself most clearly.

The plant gives all the evidence of a consciousness of its own that its structure and its fixed condition allow. Its tendrils follow and entwine lines of support. Its shoots, and even individual leaves, will constantly readjust themselves towards the light, no matter how often displaced. Potatoes in a dark cellar will send their sprouts for yards toward the knot hole or crevice through which a solitary ray finds entrance. Roots nose out nutriment and will grow straight toward some dainty morsel; when it is reached they will follow its outlines closely. On the other hand, a wind-shaken tree on a crag hooks its roots over every ledge and into each crevice, no matter how barren, and thickens its bark on the side most needing protection.

At night plants sleep, and if deprived artificially of rest give signs of exhaustion. Sensitive and insect-catching plants have distinct rudiments of a nervous system which is affected by anaesthetics. Sensitive plants sometimes become so much excited by violent winds as to lose sleep for several nights afterward.

The animal, having powers of locomotion, is able to give evidence of consciousness that cannot be questioned. The development of intellectual consciousness, or what is commonly called reason, is the object and highest attainment of the animal kingdom.

In the human kingdom intellectual consciousness reaches higher levels, and spiritual consciousness is developed.

In the evolution of the whole series, destruction and creation, disintegration and integration, go hand in hand and are opposite faces of the same thing. One looks toward the past, the other to the future. Each operation both of nature and art will appear under one aspect or the other, as interest or habit makes us look on the side facing the past or on that which looks toward the

future. Each structure, whether natural or artificial, is a factory or tool which elaborates material for the uses of a higher grade, and wears away in this production; or, it is a package. In other words, each structure is a vehicle, a maker of vehicles, or both.

This may be illustrated by the destructive and constructive operations involved in building a house.

Trees are cut down and destroyed that boards, mouldings, and the elementary forms of wood work may be constructed. These are sent from the saw mill and await the further operations of the carpenter, who, as he saws and chisels would be looked upon, from the stand point of the boards, as a destroying angel, but from that of the master builder as a subordinate creative power.

The crystalline structure of the mineral is destroyed in the smelting furnace, that bars and sheets of iron or other metal may be formed. These again are destroyed in the manufacture of nails, screws, locks, and other hardware. These elements of construction are delivered in neat packages by the hardware merchant to the builder. The packages are broken up and the contents distributed as required.

In these operations we find destruction less and less radical as we ascend the scale, until the higher elements of construction are simply fitted into place after being divested of an enclosing case. The apt Scriptural illustration of "living stones" will occur to some.

We must turn to the living world for fuller illustration. The hard and crystalline rock is split and crumbled, destroyed as rock and crystal, under the influence of vegetable life. Its soluble elements are absorbed by roots; others as soil form a medium for nutriment. The gases of the air disappear as such, lose their mobility, and become parts of the solid structure; fluids are

imprisoned in cells and sap vessels. The white sunbeams sink into the leaves, and the green rays only are rejected. What has become of all the energy conveyed by these vehicles?

A seed that a sparrow might devour evolves the giant red-wood tree, heaving a hundred tons of timber into mid air, withstanding the blasts of centuries.

It would be folly to suppose that the small germ contained this immense amount of energy, to say nothing of the annual crops of seeds produced by the same tree, each of equal capacity. The seed of the tree contained barely enough raw material, stored-up capital, so to speak, to form the first tiny pair of leaflets and a thread-like root.

It held something far mightier than the greatest store house of crude forces could contain; it held the idea of the great tree, a directive and guiding principle, which, though invisible and imponderable, was in touch with the material world through a point of matter. This idea by multiplication or reflection of itself could fill a continent with similar trees.

The idea or astral type creates neither energy nor matter, but directs the mindless energies of matter so that they seem to our material eyes to build up of themselves those great living temples in the construction of which "neither the sound of axe nor hammer is heard". How clumsy our machine and hand-made houses seem in comparison.

Animal life must depend upon plant forms and plant principles as food, for no substance unorganized by plant life is nutritious in the smallest degree. The consumption of flesh comes to the same thing, except that the labor of turning over and selecting from a considerable amount of vegetable matter has been performed by another set of digestive organs.

The mineral forms are altered or destroyed by the plant that the imprisoned forces may be stored and turned to account in its own structure. The animal kingdom, including man in his animal aspects, stands in the relation to the vegetable kingdom that the vegetable does to the mineral. At each transference there is a selection and rejection; finer forces are stored up and less crude material as we ascend the scale. New wants and affinities develop. The animal is content to feed, reproduce its species, and die. Many men are content with the same routine, or feel but vague and faint impulses for anything higher. A more advanced type of humanity spends body and life in the pursuit of ideas; the hunger of a growing something within directs the actions and experiences of the body and absorbs such of the results as accord with these higher affinities.

Let us go back to the grain of gunpowder which was taken as a familiar type of compactly-stored energy. This mixture, like other explosives, derives its peculiarity simply from the fact that the stored-up energy when let loose by combustion is expended suddenly; not that it contains more, or even as much as, hundreds of other substances; much of our food, for example. The affinities of most things cannot be let loose suddenly. There is a great difference between the bursting of a reservoir and the slow trickling away of its contents; but the same amount of horse power is expended in the end.

The tree slowly digesting mineral matter obtains the power which lifts its bulk and spreads its leaves. It creates none. Gunpowder used as a fertilizer will furnish some of the elements needed in plant food, and the same energy usually expended in sudden disruption and destruction may be slowly used in suitable channels of construction.

Let us look more closely and we will find at each stage a triad or

threefold aspect of the one. The affinities of matter are not blind. They are selective in the most exact and literal sense. Each element is but the working of an idea. The idea is *one* in all space; its multitudinous kaleidoscopic reflections give us the countless atoms distributed throughout space.

The will force guided by this idea is the energy of which so much has been said.

This abstract or ideal form and quality, and this will or energy, are both lodged in and manifested through something we call matter. Matter without these would be not only inert but unmanifested, therefore imperceptible and even unthinkable. No one of the three can be conceived to exist without the other two.

The Sanskrit terms for these three elements of existence are Prakriti, Purusha, and Fohat; the latter being the manifesting energy.

On all the planes of being we find this threefold unity. Each atom of matter has something corresponding to body, soul, and spirit.

Its selective affinities or ideal characteristics are its Purusha or Spirit, the basis of its being is Prakriti, its Body. The soul of the atom is the Fohatic force linking the dual or polar opposites of its being.

We marshal an army of atoms and call it a battery; the collective will-energy of this army, directed through a channel, is called an electric current.

Through all Nature the scheme of evolution must be threefold, corresponding with its triple unity. One part of it relates mainly to the physical side of existence, another to the spiritual, and the third or linking intermediate stream is the intellectual or Fohatic.

As said in the *Secret Doctrine*, "Each of these three systems has its

own laws, and is ruled and guided by different sets of the highest Dhyani or Logoi. Each is represented in the constitution of man, the Microcosm of the great Macrocosm; and it is the union of these three streams in him which makes him the complex being he now is."

Most students of evolution seek an explanation of its phenomena from the materialistic stand-point. Ascent of structure and intelligence appears to them due rather to a push from below than a pull from above. Some are forced above the heads of a struggling mob of life forms, or, in scientific language, "Evolution is due to the survival of the fittest in the struggle for existence among many spontaneous variations."

This idea, although of value in a limited way, cannot alone cope with the great problem.

If for the word "spontaneous," with its suggestion of accident, we substitute the word "Karmic", signifying cause and effect due to the free will of organism, this expression of the law of survival and progress is true in a far wider and less material sense than ever Darwin dreamed, and yet is not half the truth.

It will be found that the Eastern idea of Pralaya and Manvantara, of the periodic emergence of the universe from the potential and subjective condition to the actual and objective, gives a clue to a more complete philosophy, and will be accepted in time by many who now push it aside as a dream of the Oriental imagination.

The evolved and perfected men of a previous Manvantara, those who have survived the struggles and temptations of many material lives, have climbed heights that to us seem cold and shadowy, laden with the rich sheaves of knowledge and experience. Faithful in few things, they have been made "rulers over many things". The white ray of the Absolute manifesting

through them in their realms of light and power is divided into prismatic beams of creative intelligence. They are the brothers gone before, whose "footprints on the sands" of a previous manvantara have encycled a great Round of existence.

We have seen that construction and destruction are opposite faces of the same thing. So are evolution and involution; the evolving creature feels more clearly the influence of higher planes as it rises. As its nature expands and *unfolds* it *involves* or builds *into* itself the higher strength and light, becoming fit for still further progress. In its turn it becomes the transmitting agent to those lower than itself.

As self-conscious will develops, the being becomes responsible. The law of cause and effect reacting upon a responsible being is termed Karma. Even the shining Hierarchies of creative intelligence are linked to us by Karmic bonds, as we are to each other and to lower forms of life.

It is not as the survivor in a selfish struggle for existence that man becomes the crown of visible creation, nor is his intellect simply an envolved and superlative cunning which has enabled him to get the better of tooth and claw, and with club or rifle for a scepter make his throne upon the apex of a heap of combatants.

He does stand the highest visible representative of that chain or ladder of intelligence which above us is a path of light and below rests upon dull earth.

He is himself the way, the path, that ladder. Its rounds are man that has been, is, and will be.

Evolution, according to the Huxleys and Spencers of today, is but a jarring and aimless medley, without definite theme or movement.

As its truths reach us through the Theo-Sophia it becomes the true "music of the spheres," a majestic symphony, whose complex and perfect harmonies thrill through the cycles of eternity.

The Path

JAPANESE BUDDHIST SECTS: I — *Kyo-Ryo-Ya-Sha*

In Japan there are twelve principal Buddhist sects, all of them having different names and with different reasons for their inception. The chief priests of these met with Col. Olcott last year in friendly union for the purpose of seeing what could be done in the way of healing the differences which exist between the two great divisions of the church, and a short account of them it is thought will be of interest and value to the American theosophists.

I will name them in order and then tell of their different ideas in small space. They are:

The Ku-sha-shu, the Jo-jitsu-shu, the Ris-shu, the Hosso-shu, the San-ron-shu, the Ke-gon-shu, the Tendai-shu, the Shingon-shu, the Jo-do-shu, the Zen-shu, the Shin-shu, the Nichi-ren-shu. Many of these rely upon a certain book or books which give them their names.

The Ku-sha-shu is so called from the Book of the treasury of metaphysics which was composed by Vasubandhu or Se-shin. They have several other books, among which may be mentioned one which it is said was composed by five hundred Arhats or perfect men and is by name Dai-bi-ba-sha-ron. The various divisions of the inner man are given, and among them is a very peculiar property assigned to him and called Mu-hyo-shikin, which means "unapparent form". Though it is said to be formless, yet it is called form, and it means that when an action is done something relating to it is formed in the actor. The analysis of the faculties and other parts of man is very detailed. They say that all things are brought about by Karma except two, which are Space and Nirvana. It is also said that those who wish to be enlightened

fully may be so in three births if they are assiduous, but if not, then it will take them sixty kalpas.

The Jo-jitsu-shu has a book entitled "The perfection of the truth". It has explanations of the Tripitaka as preached by Buddha, and is said to have been written by a Hindu who was a disciple of Kumarila Bhatta. The book is said to unite the best of many other schools of Buddhism. One peculiar view which deserves notice is that the past and future are unreal, but that as to things the present only is real. By meditation on the unreal character of things, even including the person himself, one obtains enlightenment upon the destruction of passion. They have many books, and of these there is one commentary of 23 volumes and another in two.

The Ris-shu was founded about 617 A.D., it is said, by Do-sen from China. Its basis may be understood from a quotation taken from one of the works of the founder. He says, "If a man does not practise the Dhyana and Samhadi, that is, meditation and contemplation, he cannot understand the truth".

The Hosso-shu divides the whole mass of the doctrines of the Buddha into the following: "existence, emptiness, and the middle path," and they say that the doctrines of the Mahayana school to the number of 80, 000 can be put in these divisions. The sect is said to study as to the real nature of things, and its divisions are so very numerous as not to be admitted here. According to them a man has to live for countless kalpas in the right way before he can become a Buddha.

The San-ron-shu is named from their having three shastras or books which cover the whole teachings of Buddha during his life. They think that, as the object of Buddha was to teach people according to their several and different abilities to take the truth, therefore any shastra that will teach them may be preached from.

But of course they only use the Buddhist shastras.

Next comes the Ke-gon-shu, and it like some others takes its name from a book, the Ke-gon-gyo. They think their sutra was preached by Buddha soon after his enlightenment, and that by right thought on perfect enlightenment a man will reach it. Other rules are those common to all Buddhism. The name of the sect may be also Great-square-wide-Buddha-flower-adornment.

Ten-dai-shu, or the sect founded on the mount of TENDAI in China, preaches the doctrine of "completion and suddenness". This of course sounds singular to ears not accustomed to these terms, but it means the completion of enlightenment and the immediacy of that state to all men. They say that if the disciple properly understands the secrets as to form and reason, he will become Buddha in this life even.

Shin-gon-shu sect also teaches that a man may reach to perfect enlightenment even in this life if he follows their doctrine, which is called the secret mantra. This latter is in respect to body, speech, and thought. A very notable method of this sect is this: if the doctrines are read lengthwise from top to bottom as in the writing of that country, then the apparent doctrine is known; but if the table of doctrines be read across the lines of writing, then the secret doctrine becomes known. This seems to be a very peculiar sort of cipher. This hidden doctrine is communicated to the disciples by the teacher. Lengthwise the gradual improvement of thought is explained, and crosswise the circle of the state of things is fully explained, and this is the secret doctrine. Without going into this it may be said to be a method of teaching very like that of Patanjali, in which the several sorts of thought are classified and directed to be got rid of, one by one, until the state of pure thought is reached. Thus the apparent doctrine drives away the dust of outer thought, and the secret one shows the

inner truth. The final object is to know the source and bottom of one's thoughts, and thus to be able to reach the state of Buddha. There are many secret and curious things in the doctrine of this sect which it would be impossible to set down here from their great length.

(To be continued.)

The Path

WHICH IS VAGUE, THEOSOPHY OR SCIENCE? — *Eusebio Urban*

It is commonly charged against the exponents of Theosophy that they deal in vague generalities only. A lecture is given or paper read by a Theosophist, and the profane hearer laughs, saying, "All this is metaphysical absurdity; these are mere abstractions; let us have something like that which science gives us, something we can grasp".

A great many persons imagine, knowing but little in reality about science, that it is sure, certain, and fixed in the vital premises which underlie the practical outcome seen in many branches of life's activity. Why is this so? An inquiry into the question discloses the fact that some, if not all, the basic postulates of science are the purest abstractions, and that many statements from which deductions of fact are drawn are themselves the merest hypotheses. We will also find that the commonest of people unconsciously use in every work-a-day acts the most abstract and indefinite premises without which they could do but little.

Take navigation of the ocean, by which we are able to send the largest ships carrying the richest of cargoes from shore to shore of any sea. These are guided in their course by men who know little or nothing of Theosophy and who would laugh at metaphysics. But in order to safely carry the ship from departure to destination, they have to use the lines of longitude and latitude, which, while seeming very real to them, have no existence whatever, except in theory. These lines must be used, and, if not, the ship will strike a rock or run upon the shore. Where are the parallels of longitude and latitude? They are imagined to be on the earth, but their only visible existence is upon the chart made

by man, and their real existence is in the mind of the astronomer and those who understand the science of navigation. The sea captain may think they are on the chart, or he may not think of it at all. Where do they stop? Nowhere; they are said to extend indefinitely into space; yet these abstractions are used for present human commercial needs. Is this any less vague than Theosophy?

In the latter we have to guide the great human ship from shore to shore, and in that immense journey are obliged to refer to abstractions from which to start. Our spiritual parallels of latitude and longitude are abstractions, indeed, but no more so than those laid down upon the seaman's chart. The scientific materialist says: "What nonsense to speak of coming out of the Absolute!" We may reply, "What nonsense for the mariner to attempt to guide his ship by that which has no existence whatever, except in fancy; by that which is a pure abstraction!" Again he laughs at us for assuming that there is such a thing as the soul, "for", he says, "no man has ever seen it, and none ever can; it cannot be demonstrated". With perfect truth we can reply: "Where is the atom of science; who has ever seen it; where and when has its existence been demonstrated?" The "atom" of science is today as great a mystery as the "soul" of Theosophy. It is a pure hypothesis, undemonstrated and undemonstrable. It can neither be weighed, nor measured, nor found with a microscope; indeed, in the opinion of many Theosophists it is a far greater mystery than the soul, because some say they have seen that which may be soul; which looks like it; and no man has been, at any time, so fortunate or unfortunate as to have seen an atom. Further, the scientific materialist says, "What do you know about the powers of the soul, which you say is the central sun of the human system?" And we answer that "it is no more indefinite for us than the sun is for the astronomers who attempt to measure its heat and estimate its distance. As to the heat of the sun, not all are

agreed that it has any heat whatever, for some learned men think that it is a source of an energy which creates heat when it reaches the earth's atmosphere only. Others, celebrated in the records of science, such as Newton, Fizeau, and many other well-known astronomers, disagree as to the quantity of heat thrown out by the sun, on the hypothesis that it has any heat, and that difference is so great as to reach 8,998,600 degrees. Thus as to the central sun of this system, there is the greatest vagueness in science and no agreement as to what may be the truth in this important matter. In Theosophy, however, on the other hand, although there is some vagueness with mere students as to the exact quantity of heat or light thrown out by the sun, those who have devoted more time to its study are able to give closer estimates than any which have been given by scientific men in respect to the sun of the solar system. Yet all these generalities of science are the very things that have led to the present wonderful material development of the nineteenth century.

But let us glance for a moment at the subject of evolution, which engages the thought of materialist and theosophist alike; let us see if theosophy is more vague than its opponents, or more insane, we might say, in ability to lay wild theories before intelligent men. The well-known Haeckel in his *Pedigree of Man* says, in speaking of Darwin's teachings and lauding them: "Darwin puts in the place of a conscious creative force, building and arranging the organic bodies of animals and plants on a designed plan, a *series of natural forces working blindly*, or we say, *without aim, without design*. In place of an arbitrary act we have a necessary law of evolution. * * * *A mechanical origin of the earliest living form* was held as the necessary sequence of Darwin's teaching." Here we have blind, undesigning forces, beginning work without design, haphazard, all being jumbled together, but finally working out into a beautiful design visible in

the smallest form we can see. There is not a single proof in present life whether mineral, vegetable, or animal, that such a result from such a beginning could by any possibility eventuate. But these scientific men in those matters are safe in making hypotheses, because the time is far in the dark of history when these *blind*, undesigning acts were begun. Yet they ought to show some present instances of similar blindness producing harmonious designs. Now is this not a wild, fanciful, and almost insane statement of Haeckel's? Is it not ten times more absurd than theosophical teachings? We begin truly with Parabrahmam and Mulaprakriti and Hosts of Dhyan Chohans, but we allege design in everything, and our Parabrahmam is no more vague than motion or force, pets of science.

So I have found that a slight examination of this question reveals science as more vague than Theosophy is in anything. But some may say results are not indefinite. The same is said by us, the results to be reached by following the doctrines of theosophy, relating, as they do, to our real life, will be as definite, as visible, as important as any that science can point to.

The Path

RECOGNITION AFTER DEATH — *Katharine Hillard*

Does Theosophy provide for the recognition and re-union of friends after death? is a question frequently asked by those who find it hard to free themselves from the conceptions of a material philosophy. Unconsciously they still cling to the present, and to the illusions of this world, and while imagining that they are thinking of a spiritual life, are, in reality, formulating only a sort of etherealised physical existence. To gain anything like a true view upon the subject, we must consider *what* it is that persists, and *how* it persists, and the question will answer itself.

In the first place, let us take for granted the sevenfold constitution of man, as divided in the *Key to Theosophy* into a fourfold nature. This gives us *1st, The Higher Self, i.e., "Atma, the inseparable ray of the Universal and ONE SELF, the God above, more than within us."* This we instantly recognize as necessarily apart from any idea of mortality or personality.

Then we have as *2nd, The Spiritual Divine Ego, i.e., "The Spiritual Soul or Buddhi in close connection with Manas, or the mind principle. Without Manas, Buddhi is no Ego, but only the atmic vehicle; that is, we must have the self-consciousness of the intellect before we can formulate the idea of "I" at all. Here we have, therefore, simply the union of spirit and intelligence, an abstract consciousness, again impersonal.*

No. 3 is the Inner or Higher Ego, i.e., Manas or the intellect, independent of Buddhi, or the Spiritual soul. This is the permanent Individuality, or the re-incarnating Ego. Here, then, we have individuality, a separation from other egos, but not yet the personality, or that "which weaves for man the garment that we know him by".

No. 4 of this division is the *Lower* or *Personal Ego*, i.e., the physical man in conjunction with his animal instincts, desires, passions, etc., and the *lower Manas*, or baser half of the mind. These operate through the physical body and its astral double, and constitute altogether that which we call John Smith, but which clearer-sighted eyes know as the "false personality" of John Smith.

This fourfold division includes all the seven so-called "principles," except *Prana*, or the vital principle, which is, strictly speaking, the radiating force or energy of Atma, and permeates the whole of the objective Universe.

We have, then, two divisions only of which we can predicate *individuality*, and of these the first one has merely the individuality of the drops that compose the ocean, to our eyes without distinction, though we can think of them as separate drops. But if we had several bottles of sea water, each tinged with a different color, we could recognise one drop of each tint as it fell, and say to which bottle it belonged. Nevertheless it would not be the *water* that was different, but only the color, which enabled us to recognise the contents of the various vials. The bottles may stand for the physical body, the color for the Lower Ego, that is, the *personality* made up of the animal instincts and passions, and the lower half of the mind, those faculties that the higher animals share with us. If we once gain a clear idea of these distinctions, we must recognise that the change which we call Death can have nothing to do with the *Higher Self*, or God within us, nor with that abstract consciousness we call the *Spiritual Ego*, but that it severs the chain binding the *Higher Ego*, or the Intellectual Consciousness, the highest faculties of the mind, to the *Lower Ego*, or the lower faculties and passions belonging to and operating through the physical body.

What survives this change, then, can only be the highest and most

spiritual part of our being, not those qualities which are inherent in the physical nature and must perish with it. There can be nothing left of that entity we knew as John Smith, for instance, but the inmost and highest side of his nature, a side, indeed, that perhaps he had never shown to us. His physical body *must* return to the elements which composed it, and with it all those passions and emotions, those idiosyncracies of taste and manner which were its offspring, and which together composed the visible being of our friend. This being dwelt with us upon our physical plane, and the trammels of matter, indeed, often prevented our realising that he was other than the character we loved and thought we knew. Perhaps some touch of deeper thought, some flash of insight, may have come to us at some time, and for one brief instant we may have realised that the true individual belonged to a higher plane, and that only there we met his actual self, a self quite independent of all that bundle of physical characteristics that passed for the real man in the ordinary walks of life.

How possible it is even here to lose the sense of individuality, we can easily prove to ourselves by recalling some moment of deep emotion in a crowd — the one great burst of feeling that made the multitude shout "like one man," as the popular phrase is. They *were* one man, for the limitations of personality were swept away for those who, for the moment, had soared above the physical. There was no question of you or me, only the throb of one heart, the response of one mind

So when John Smith leaves this world, he lays down forever the limitations of that personality he had worn for awhile, just as the actor leaving the theatre drops the "inky cloak" and sombre philosophising of Hamlet, and becomes his real self. He leaves the mimic stage to take up his true part in the great drama of life. John Smith, like the actor, goes into another world, and we, for the present, stay in ours.

And we long to know whether, when our turn comes to pass through the dark portal, we shall recognise our friend upon the other side, forgetting all the time that then we too shall have left our temporary selves behind. As well might Horatio wonder if he shall know and love Hamlet tomorrow. Tomorrow he shall not be Horatio, but the man who played Horatio, and tomorrow night he shall be Cassio, and his friend Othello, and yet the *men* shall be the same. The difficulty is that we think of ourselves after death as we are *now*, not as we shall be then. We forget that it is not Jones in the body who is to meet Smith in the spirit, but that both will be on the same plane. We project our physical selves into the spiritual world, and expect to remain unchanged in the presence of "a new heaven and a new earth". The friend who knew and loved John Smith passes, like him, beyond the bounds of personality and the limits of time and space. It is two freed intelligences that encounter, not two mortal men. When the Sadducees asked Christ whose wife after death should be that woman who had married seven husbands, they were told that in heaven is neither marrying nor giving in marriage, but there we are as the angels. That is, not only far above any question of sex, but existing as spiritual beings, whose intercourse depends upon no formulated speech, nor even flash of eye, but is that direct communion of mind with mind and soul with soul which marks the highest moments of the highest friendship here, when for a brief instant we dwell with realities and not with illusions.

The John Smith who has finished his brief day of life lies down to the sweet sleep of death, the night of pleasant dreams. The laborer shall be worthy of his hire, and, having earned his rest, there shall come to him a season of repose interrupted only by happy visions, in which, unconscious of having died, he sees himself surrounded by all his dearest ones, and carries out his brightest dreams for the advancement of himself and his fellows.

And as the actor who has played his part earnestly and with all his might finds some trace of it lingering about him as he leaves the theatre, and perhaps plays it over again in his dreams, so the being we call John Smith finds something of his last personality clinging to him during the rest of Devachan and coloring all his visions. Meanwhile, as we read in the *Key*, p. 150, love beyond the grave has a *Divine* potency which re-acts on the living. The love of the man for his wife, of the mother for her children, will continue to be felt by them, because "pure divine love has its roots in eternity". It will show itself in their dreams, and often as a protection in times of danger, "for love is a strong shield, and is not limited by space or time".

And having in the rest of that quiet night beyond the grave enjoyed the reward of all the good deeds done in that brief day we call life, the inner or Higher Ego of the being we knew here as John Smith takes up the burden of his Karma again in some new part, a part assigned to him by no arbitrary selection, but the inevitable consequence of the way he has played the former ones entrusted to him.

Meantime we must remember what Mr. Sinnett has so well said in his paper on "The Higher Self," v. *Key*, p. 173. "The process of incarnation is not fully described when we speak of an *alternate* existence on the physical and spiritual planes, and thus picture the soul as a complete entity slipping entirely from the one state of existence to the other. The more correct definitions of the process would probably represent incarnation as taking place on this physical plane of nature by reason of an efflux emanating from the soul. The Spiritual realm would all the while be the proper habitat of the Soul, which would never entirely quit it; and that non-materializable portion of the Soul which abides permanently on the Spiritual plane may fitly, perhaps, be spoken of as the "HIGHER SELF." (Or *Atma*, not to be confused with the

Spiritual Divine Ego, which is *Buddhi* — *Manas*, or the *Higher Ego*, which is *Manas*.)

So, behind the different parts he plays, abides the actor's real self, watching what he does as Hamlet or Othello, and as unaffected thereby as a man upon a mountain top bathed in sunshine is by a thunderstorm rumbling below.

This is the broad outline merely of the theosophic teaching on the subject of re-union after death. That the common idea of a recognition of a physical being by a physical being cannot stand a moment before the test of logical analysis, can easily be proved. An *embodied* spirit it must be to be recognised, and an embodied spirit, however ethereal that body may be, is still linked to matter, is not yet free from the bondage of this death. And a body, moreover, involves the conceptions of space and time, both incompatible with the idea of pure intelligence.

Then again we are inevitably confronted with this dilemma. Either the personality is arrested at the moment of death, or it is not, and in either case a great gulf ever widens between the dead and their beloved ones. A young mother passes away leaving behind her a new-born infant, and that child, who has never known his mother, grows up to enter the spirit-world, perhaps as an old decrepit man, far older than the mother who bore him.

Or if we hold with the majority of our spiritualistic friends that the spirits of the departed continue to grow in the next life, and to keep pace with us here, the proposition is even more unthinkable. To grow implies accretion until disintegration, and accretion and disintegration imply matter, subject to decay and death. They imply more; some process of assimilation akin to that of earth, as far as regards the body; as regards the mind, some process of accumulated experience, registered facts, mental attrition. Again the concrete enters; conceptions of space, of time, of motion are

involved. Nor, granting these, would the results of such a theory be really satisfactory. The mother who loses her baby wants that baby back again: she does not want, after *long years of waiting*, to be confronted by that child grown to manhood. And then where is that growth to stop? And by what strange process of reversion are the decrepit to become young again? And why should our conceptions of time, founded on the revolutions of our sun and moon, hold good in a spiritual world, "where there is no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God doth lighten it." Those conceptions of time are proved to us here and now to be absolutely false, a mere illusion of our senses, as we know by the experiences of our dreams and of all strong feelings and earnest thought: why, then, should we predicate them of a higher sphere than ours?

And, moreover, with time our desires change; because born of the physical nature, they alter with its alterations. The friends that left us when we were children and they were children, could not be our friends today. Should they return to us, we should realise that our memory of them is the child's memory of a child, and not the image we hold dear. It is only the immortal that changeth not, in whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning.

There is a deeper meaning in the story of Rip Van Winkle than we ordinarily see therein. When the old man wakes from seeming death to return to his home, he can recognise nothing: all the old landmarks are swept away, all the familiar faces gone, and the only thing that has survived the years is the love in the heart of his child. "For love never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. Then shall I know even as also I am known."

And if even now, in rare and noble moments, we catch glimpses of those higher spheres in which our spiritual selves perpetually abide and hold communion with each other,

— "meet

Above the clouds, and greet as angels greet,"

if even now we know that all of good, all of true, all of beautiful in those gone before is with us still and ever shall be, can we not learn to realise that, once set free from these physical limitations, this consciousness shall but deepen and intensify? This is the true recognition, this is the union not to be broken by distance or by death, of which Christ said: "At that day (when the Spirit of Truth cometh) ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."

The Path

THE REINCARNATING PART OF US — *Alexander Fullerton*

It hardly seems possible for an ordinary student, one who has not closely inspected or received special instruction in Theosophic lore, to contribute any valuable material to a discussion of the "Seven Principles", or, indeed, of any topic of which no more is known than has been disclosed in books equally accessible to all. In such cases, perhaps all that can be done is to show probability through analogy, or to cancel a difficulty by proving that it inheres equally in every other theory, or to analyze some one section more closely than has been done in books, or to make suggestions tending to simplify the teaching.

I think that one of our greatest puzzles is to form a clear conception as to what part of us it is which reincarnates. The difficulty is found in the middle region, if we range the Principles in a line. On the supposition that pure Spirit is the 7th, it is seen to be everywhere and all-enduring, and not therefore entering into this question. Several Principles at the other end of the line are as readily disposed of. The body is evidently an affair of one incarnation, disintegrating at the end of it, and its elements scattered through Nature. The Life-Principle — Prana, Jiva, call it what you will — is understood to flow through all substance, and is not a constituent element of any individuality. The Astral Body is material, and, like the physical body, ultimately dissolves. No one of these three lasts over till, or is reproduced in, a later birth. Nor is it difficult to perceive that the Animal Soul has a transient endurance, at all events in part. So far as it represents purely physical desires — hunger, lust, and the like, it has no existence apart from a body. The bodily needs seem thrown back upon it, as it were, inciting it to action and thus reinvigorating the carnal forces. After the separation in death takes place, the immediate

stimuli are absent, and then only memories of enjoyment can remain. Even these, so far as a physical brain is essential to conserve them, must abate. All, therefore, that is rooted in, or conditioned upon, or attached to a fleshly body must vanish with it.

And now we come to the 5th Principle, the Human Soul, described by Mr. Sinnett as "the seat of reason and memory". Scientific men agree that memory is an indestructible faculty. If this be so, it would seem that the Principle wherein it has its seat must likewise be indestructible. We are told, however, by some Theosophical writers that memory is a perishable faculty, and that reason is only a minor, temporary gift, the tool of a higher endowment which is to obscure and succeed it. One finds difficulty in each of these propositions. If memory, however suspended or in abeyance as to previous incarnations, is not an inherent part of the Ego. an Adept, surveying his past, can find it only in impressions made upon the Astral Light. But how, without memory, could he connect such pictures with himself, and what value would they have to him if destitute of that connection? One may go even farther. Memory is what practically constitutes identity, for we only know ourselves as being the same person born long ago through the successive incidents and eras which we recall. Obliterate these, and we should be as unable to identify ourselves with the personality of 10, 20, 30 years back, as we now are to do so with the personality of a past incarnation. What, too, would become of the knowledge, the experience, the mental skill garnered through life, if there was no permanent faculty to conserve them? It is not enough that their essence be extracted in Devachan: our nature, higher than any semi-material ether, can hardly be less gifted than an Astral Light. It would seem that there must be in this 5th Principle a power of permanent conservation of all events and processes, and a further power of reproducing

them under the appropriate conditions; and this agrees with the three-fold analysis of memory by nomologists, for they give as its third element "reproduction". The contents of memory might be kept intact, even if the reproductive power was at anytime suspended or inoperative.

Nor does it seem probable that reason is but a transient and imperfect tool. We know it only in its earlier stages and in its human manifestations. And yet Holmes suggests that from the contemplation of a pebble an Archangel might infer the whole inorganic universe as the simplest of corollaries. What limits can we put to intelligence? Some of us have read the editorials of country newspapers, have undergone sermons from young divines, have overheard the babble of shop girls in a street car, have been tortured with drivel in private life, and yet have heard lectures from Prof. Tyndall, thus realizing the possibility of antipodes in human thought; but shall we say that there are not intelligences as much in advance of his as is his beyond those? The truth is that all human powers are yet little more than embryonic. Marvellous as they are to us, they must be trivial to beings of unbroken growth, beings to whom our little lives of 70 years seem utterly ephemeral. And where is this to stop? Radiating from the Supreme Spirit, All-wise, All-knowing, and All-powerful, there must be rank upon rank of intelligences, infinitely varied in capacity and strength. The two elements in wisdom are information and judgment, and from that combination in its perfection must come a descending scale, the lowest terminus whereof we see, but how slight a distance above it! As we ascend it in our own evolution, we shall doubtless drop many processes that are clumsy and dispense with many aids that we have outgrown, and yet the original faculty may still persist, not discarded, but amplified and enriched, freed from limitations and stimulated by exercise. What should we be without reason;

what would it be without memory?

Evidently, however, the immortal part of man is not to be found in intelligence alone. An undying intellect might of itself be mischievous or evil. Its complement must be in the moral or spiritual nature, which, still immature now as is the mind, may expand to equal proportions and make the whole symmetrical. Thus the intellect becoming more strong, and the moral sense becoming more fine, each correcting and guiding the other, the human soul and spirit, the mind and the higher nature, the brains and the heart, the God-given and the God-seeking, may in conjunction develop along the way to which there is no end. Perhaps this is what is meant by the Theosophical injunction to "unite the Manas with the Buddhi"; — at all events it is an intelligible interpretation.

If these two, united in whatever proportion and in whatever degree of evolution, constitute the Ego of any particular man, the combination is that which reincarnates. But it does not follow that the new incarnation exhibits the combination in all its fulness or with all its phases. Sometimes the intellectual element may be dominant, or even only a part of it; as where a genius arises in some special field, or one intellectual gift is more marked than the rest. This would account for a Macaulay in letters or a Verdi in music. Sometimes the moral element is in the ascendant, and then we see a Howard in philanthropy or a Paul in missionary ardor. Sometimes the spiritual nature so dwarfs all else that life is but one long aspiration, as with the mystics. But all the round must be traversed, or the Ego would have a development incomplete. If this is the true view of the reincarnating part of us, one important consequence seems to follow. Theosophical authorities have been somewhat cautious in defining ultimate destiny, intimating, indeed, that there is a state known as Paranirvana — "beyond Nirvana", but not usually

saying more than that Nirvana is not eternal, since it ends with a Manvantara, and that human spirits absorbed into the Divine fulness pass with it into Pralaya until the reawakening. Two questions at once arise: Do they lose consciousness during that era, and, Do they begin a new round of embodiments after it? If they begin a new round of embodiments, the implication is that there is no finality in that mode of evolution; and while the improbability of such a theory, and the strong repugnance all of us must feel to an eternity of incarnations, do not constitute more than an *a priori* argument against it, its force is very strong. If they do not, as would seem far more likely, how is Paranirvana attained? And what about the loss of consciousness during Pralaya? The "sleep of Brahm" may be a mere metaphor to indicate a suspension of world formation, and it is quite conceivable that a purely spiritual sphere of thought and action would meet all needs of a perfected being. But if it means, as its use generally seems to, a cessation of all interior as well as exterior function, a Theosophist may well demur. A comatose God is not an inspiring conception, even if one is able to contemplate it with entire gravity. Unconsciousness in the Supreme Being of a universe in which every other being was conscious would be strange enough during a Manvantara; but if you predicate it during a Pralaya, you make the Pralaya unending, for what is there to rouse up the Unconscious and induce a new Manvantara? It will not do to say "The Law of Cycles", for "Law" implies a law-maker, and what law-maker can be above the Supreme and impress his will thereon? Periodicity of manifestation may be, and probably is, a Law, but it is a law only frameable by the Supreme, and if the Supreme has Himself lapsed into unconsciousness, how is the Law to be made operative? One cannot escape from these difficulties by metaphysical juggles, or by terminology, or by mere appeals to authority; and, indeed, it is hardly worth while. I regard this as

one of the many cases where discrimination is one of the most valuable tools in a Theosophical equipment, and where a Theosophist will be all the better for making use of it. In fact, a measure of eclecticism is healthful to an adherent to any system, for without it he is apt to lose sense of proportion and to become a partisan where he should be a freeman.

But what other conception of the distant future is preferable?, one may ask. I should say, a conception which preserves all the results of reincarnations, and forbids a suspension of conscious, intelligent life to either Divinity or to human spirits made Divine. Worlds and systems may wax and wane, yet the Great Architect of the Universe be unaffected by their changes. Numberless egos, having advanced through repeated incarnations beyond the limits of human imperfection, reach and are pervaded by that unlocalized, impersonal Being whom we may style the Central Sun. The self-element purged away, yet the individuality preserved; consciousness no longer imprisoned, but free like the ether; the dew-drop restored to the shining sea after its wanderings over the earth, yet in some strange way its identity unsacrificed; these Egos, made a portion of the Divine, have not attained all knowledge or found an end to the endless. Like the asymptote to the hyperbola, they may be continually approaching a finality, yet never reach it. No number of Manvantaras can exhaust the resources of infinity, and these tireless intelligences, one as considered from without, many as seen from within, may forever find scope and action. What need have they of a Pralaya, a periodical state of coma, required neither by logic nor by languor? They depend on no material worlds for their interests and being, and in the long eras when formative powers are in abeyance have still the Divine life which never slumbers or wanes. Time, as all other limitations. has passed away, and there has succeeded to it a being which is unconditioned, unbroken,

and Eternal!

You may say that these thoughts are only a speculation. Certainly; as must be every other theory concerning the mode of the Divine existence or the nature of human life after its restoration to its source. These topics lie beyond the reach of finite faculty: the finite cannot possibly apprehend the Infinite. No better preparation can possibly be given to any student of spiritual things, be he Eastern or Western, than a careful reading of Mansel's famous *Limits of Religious Thought*. Herein is shown with unanswerable logic that we hardly enter upon examination of Divinity before we are confronted with hopeless and endless difficulties. The terms "Infinite" and "Absolute" contradict each other; every process essential to an inspection of the Divine brings us to a dilemma, each prong of which is an absurdity or a contradiction or both; we are beaten back, confused, paralyzed at every new step. There is perhaps no more lucid portrayal of the limitations of human thought. And it is simply because the finite is incompetent to grasp the Infinite. This must be equally true of all grades of the finite, for all fall short of infinity. A Mahatma is just as powerless to analyze the Supreme Being as you or I; not because he is not vastly greater than we, but because he as truly lacks the one essential to define God, — Godhood. He is still finite, that is, with a limit or end: God has no limit, no end. His conceptions are grander and fuller than ours, yet not herein more accurate, for no accuracy is possible. Hence of this region there can be no teacher, for a teacher who does not know is a contradiction. We may reverently accept the vast stores of knowledge acquired by those revered souls in Their aeons of development, and learn invaluable truths of the constitution of the universe, the earth, and ourselves; but the nature of the Supreme Being and the method of life within must ever be speculative, and we owe no allegiance to speculation. All that can

be done is to present in symbolical or analogical form some thought which reflects a possibility of the reality, but if that is unsatisfactory or objectionable, neither reverence nor duty exacts our acceptance of it. Mahatmas, Adepts, chelas, students, all here stand on common ground, for all are dwarfed to likeness in the presence of the Infinite.

Perhaps for that very reason we all can give our views without presumption. And so it comes to pass that the same evening at the Aryan Society which witnesses a quotation from the *Secret Doctrine* witnesses also a free discussion on the seven-fold division of man and a paper on his continuing essence and its eternal progress.

The Path

JAPANESE BUDDHIST SECTS: II — Kyo-Ryo-Va-Sha

To continue about the sect of Shin-gon. It would not be possible to fully explain their doctrines in one book, much less in one article. These are merely notes. They speak of three secrets and call them those of "body, speech, and mind," that is, the actions of those. The apparent form of all things is that of the five elements, and that is the secret of body. In the Hindu school of Patanjali we find an aphorism relating to the disappearance of the body, or, more properly, of the power to make another unable to see it, and this comes when one has found out the secret of form. (1) The Shin-gon-shu say that this secret is only understood by a Buddha.

Nichi-ren-shu was founded by Nichi-ren, who gave out for his followers the doctrines found in the Suddharma-pundarika. They believe that Buddha taught people gradually by expedients and different methods, although he had all the time but one means or vehicle. They have three great secret laws which have reference to the three great bodies of Buddha. and those are by name, Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, and Nirmanakaya. (2) The chief object of worship is the great Mandala of the ten worlds, and it represents the original Buddha of remote times. The wisdom, virtue, and knowledge of all men and sages of every region are the powers of this Buddha, who dwells in every place, is free from birth and death, and is the Buddha of permanence. Sakyamuni said he was this original Buddha and also that we ourselves are the same, and thus we are to meditate on this chief object of worship for our salvation. (3) A man should remember that his own body is that of the original Buddha, that his dwelling place is the Pure Land of constantly calm light, and his thought the Good law. The weak man may enter on the path by this teaching. (4)

The Shin-shu calls itself the True Sect of the Pure Land. The object is to be born in the pure land of Amitabha, a Buddha who in the very remote time made a vow and prayer like this: " If any of the living beings in the ten regions who have believed in me with true thoughts and desire to be born in my land and have even to ten times repeated the thought of my name should not be born there, then may I not obtain the perfect knowledge." With this prayer in view he lived for many kalpas for the purpose of perfecting his merit, so that any one who made use of his name might be thereby eventually saved. It is held that men in general have not enough power of their own to enable them to reach over death, yet at the same time it is allowed that there are some such men out of whom at last come the Buddhas. The common man who repeats this name will at last be led to virtue, and from that to wisdom and finally perfection.

The Jo-do-shu is also a sect of the pure land, and I cannot perceive much difference between it and the other of the same view, as the differences which exist between them are small. They had a teacher who taught about the belief in Amitabha, and Ryu-ju said that "in the great sea of the law of Buddha faith is the only means to enter."

Zen-shu is the sect of contemplation, and is thought to derive its name from the Sanscrit word Dhyana, or contemplation. They think that besides all the various and great doctrines there is as well another which may be called the secret doctrine, and that comes through one line of transmission and is not dependent on any one's utterances. This must mean that the truth comes to one as the result of his own thought.

After all this it must be plain to anyone who may read this that there is in fact very little difference between any of the sects of which I have been permitted here to speak, and that their

existence is due to the fact that Buddha did, as all know well, teach in many different ways, so that he might make an entry into the many different kinds of minds which men possess. For one man will have a mind that by nature is always in the state of contemplation, and another will not be able to do more than have great longing for the things of the spirit, and hence this latter sort of man would not be able to understand the abstruse parts of the doctrines of the great Lord. And so in the history of the life of Buddha we find that the time came when he made up his mind that he would tell the disciples that there was really only one way in which to look at the problems of life, although he had taught them in many another way for many years. Then some of the disciples who were not able to understand this rose, and, after saluting him, left the assembly. The learned Buddhist knows that it is karma which makes these differences, working together with the law of reincarnation, so that one man has only reached to a certain place in his spiritual learning and is not in any way able to understand those things that relate to a longer practise of right thought in other lives. Other men, however, have gone through all of this and are fitted to clearly grasp even the most abstruse doctrines of the Master. And yet, indeed, there is a great mystery here which will be apprehended by some, and that is that there is no man in any region who may not, if he will, grasp even the more difficult part of the law, but he has to have a faith which is perfect and live a life which is pure in all its parts.

The doctrine of the Pure-Land Sect is one that is meant to help all the common men, for it looks like a way of being freed from sin by the virtue of another being, yet it also is capable of another interpretation, and it is only one of the expedients of the great Lord to make men take advantage by an easy way of their own hidden natural powers. It is quite true that if any one will call on the name of this Buddha he will be saved, for the act of so calling

and aspiring has the effect of bringing to the surface the whole spiritual life and experience of the man from out of the dim and almost forgotten past. So even with this doctrine the man does in fact save himself, which is the true law of the Buddha and the one that underlies his whole teachings. As the years roll by and as the Kali yuga rushes further on, it will be found that the teachings of Buddha are great, wide, square, full of adornment, all comprehending, easy to understand, capable of taking us out of the ocean of rebirth in any of the ten different ways, and that in the course of time the Buddha will come again and will make perfect the imperfect renderings of his law which he alone is able to give to the world in a perfect state.

Let us remember the mystery of body, speech, and thought!

FOOTNOTES:

1. On page 705 of the 2nd vol. of the Secret Doctrine is this: "till our human form came into being, in which all things are comprised and which contains all forms," and in the note to it: "this sentence contains a dual sense and mystery which if and when known confer tremendous powers upon the adept to change his visible form." (Ed.) ([return to text](#))
2. See the Voice of the Silence where these are explained. (Ed.) ([return to text](#))
3. In the Bhagavad Gita the same is said in effect. (Ed.) ([return to text](#))
4. This sect certainly preaches the doctrine of non-separateness. (Ed.) ([return to text](#))

SHALL WE TEACH CLAIRVOYANCE? — *William Q. Judge*

A NOTE OF WARNING.

My attention has been arrested by the address delivered in the Adyar course by Dr. Daly and reported in the September *Theosophist*. It is entitled "Clairvoyance."

Coming out in the Adyar course, it has a certain flavor of authority which will appeal to many members of the Society and may cause them to adopt the suggestions for practice given in the latter part of the address. Yet at the same time it is very true that the Theosophical Society is not responsible for the utterances of members in their private capacity.

The fact that clairvoyance is a power sought after by many persons cannot be disputed, but the questions, Is it well to try to develop clairvoyance? and Shall we teach it? have not yet been definitely decided. Hence I may be permitted to give my views upon them.

At the outset I desire to declare my personal attitude on these questions and my beliefs as to facts. In using the term "clairvoyance" I intend to include in it all clear perception on that plane.

1. I have for many years been convinced by proofs furnished by others and from personal experience that clairvoyance is a power belonging to man's inner nature; and also that it is possessed by the animal kingdom.
2. This faculty is either inherited or educed by practice.
3. Those who have it by birth are generally physically diseased or nervously deranged. The cases where clairvoyance is shown by a perfectly healthy and well-balanced person are

rare.

4. The records of spiritualism for over forty years in America conclusively prove that clairvoyance cannot be safely sought after by persons who have no competent guide; that its pursuit has done harm; and that almost every medium to whom one puts the question "Am I able to develop clairvoyance?" will reply "Yes."
5. There are no competent guides in this pursuit to be found here or in Europe who are willing to teach one how to acquire it without danger.
6. The qualifications such a guide should possess render the finding of one difficult if not impossible. They are: the power to look within and see clearly the whole inner nature of the student; a complete knowledge of all the planes upon which clairvoyance acts, including knowledge of the source, the meaning, and the effect of all that is perceived by the clairvoyant; and last, but not least, the power to stop at will the exercise of the power. Evidently these requirements call for an adept.

Who are the teachers of clairvoyance, and those who advise that it be practised? In the main, the first are mediums, and any investigator knows how little they know. Every one of them differs from every other in his powers. The majority have only one sort of clairvoyance; here and there are some who combine, at most, three classes of the faculty. Not a single one is able to mentally see behind the image or idea perceived, and cannot say in a given case whether the image seen is the object itself or the result of a thought from another mind. For in these planes of perception the thoughts of men become as objective as material objects are to our human eyes. It is true that a clairvoyant can tell you that what is being thus perceived is not apprehended by the physical eye, but beyond that he cannot go. Of this I have had

hundreds of examples. In 99 out of 100 instances the seer mistook the thought from another mind for a clairvoyant perception of a living person or physical object.

The seers of whom I speak see always according to their inner tendency, which is governed by subtle laws of heredity which are wholly unknown to scientific men and much more to mediums and seers. One will only reach the symbolic plane; another that which is known to occultists as the positive side of sound; another to the negative or positive aspects of the epidermis and its emanations; and so on through innumerable layer after layer of clairvoyance and octave after octave of vibrations. They all know but the little they have experienced, and for any other person to seek to develop the power is dangerous. The philosophy of it all, the laws that cause the image to appear and disappear, are *terra incognita*.

The occult septenary scheme in nature with all its modifications produces multiple effects, and no mere clairvoyant is able to see the truth that underlies the simplest instance of clairvoyant perception. If a man moves from one chair to another, immediately hundreds of possibilities arise for the clairvoyant eye, and he alone who is a highly trained and philosophical seer — an adept, in short — can combine them all so as to arrive at true clear-perception. In the simple act described almost all the centres of force in the moving being go into operation, and each one produces its own peculiar effect in the astral light. At once the motion made and thoughts aroused elicit their own sound, color, motion in ether, amount of etheric light, symbolic picture, disturbance of elemental forces, and so on through the great catalogue. Did but one wink his eye, the same effects follow in due order. And the seer can perceive but that which attunes itself to his own development and personal peculiarities, all limited in force and degree.

What, may I ask, do clairvoyants know of the law of prevention or encrustation which is acting always with many people? Nothing, absolutely nothing. How do they explain those cases where, try as they will, they cannot see anything- whatever regarding certain things? Judging from human nature and the sordidness of many schools of clairvoyance, are we not safe in affirming that if there were any real or reliable clairvoyance about us now-a days among those who offer to teach it or take pay for it, long ago fortunes would have been made by them, banks despoiled, lost articles found, and friends more often reunited? Admitting that there have been sporadic instances of success on these lines, does not the exception prove that true clairvoyance is not understood or likely to be?

But what shall theosophists do? Stop all attempts at clairvoyance. And why? Because it leads them slowly but surely — almost beyond recall — into an interior and exterior passive state where the will is gradually overpowered and they are at last in the power of the demons who lurk around the threshold of our consciousness. Above all, follow no advice to "sit for development". Madness lies that way. The feathery touches which come upon the skin while trying these experiments are said by mediums to be the gentle touches of "the spirits". But they are not. They are caused by the ethereal fluids from within us making their way out through the skin and thus producing the illusion of a touch. When enough has gone out, then the victim is getting gradually negative, the future prey for spooks and will-o'-the-wisp images.

"But *what*" they say, "shall we pursue and study?" Study the philosophy of life, leave the decorations that line the road of spiritual development for future lives, and — practise altruism.

The Path

THEOSOPHY AND THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Underlying the Doctrines of Theosophy is one fundamental proposition, namely, "the essential Unity of all life and being." Manifestation of life is differentiation of this unity, the purpose of differentiation is evolution, and the destiny of evolution is the return of all manifestation into its source and original unity.

Of the manifestation of life there are two phases, poles, or aspects, the descent of Spirit into matter and the ascent of matter into Spirit. The infinite variety of gradation in development between these two poles marks the degree of differentiation from the *Unity*, in its downward or upward course. This universal truth of the essential unity of all life and being throughout nature was the basis upon which the ideal undertaking was grounded of providing a vehicle for its dissemination; therefore the T. S. was founded for the purpose of establishing a practical working centre for the exposition of these doctrines, but foremost with the object of the amelioration of human affairs, to point out the identity of interest, the common source of origin, the relative position in life to the rest of nature, and the probable destiny of the human being in the grand scheme of evolution. Besides this primary purpose of thus forming the nucleus to a Universal Brotherhood of humanity, its other objects are to promote the study of Aryan and other Eastern Literatures, Religions, and Sciences and to draw attention to and investigate unexplained laws of nature and the psychic powers of man.

Theosophy is not a new invention, but the essential underlying truth of all philosophies; it is a body of doctrine in philosophy, science, and ethics, principally derived from the *Eastern archaic sacred Theories*, which were worked out by a brotherhood of

devotees and initiates who used every method of scientific investigation known to us, as well as their own highly developed practises of observation, experiment, concentration, and meditation to reach the truth. They traced all phenomena by every possible means from their significance to their source, and by comparison of their independent searches and observations recorded their conclusions and accepted such results only as could stand the test of applicability and verification from every point and in every conceivable direction.

This slowly accumulating body of facts furnished the basis for these great universal doctrines, and the psychic development of these devotees and students gave them great power over nature and insight into the mystic side of the universe and man.

These doctrines were handed down from generation to generation since time immemorial, and were guarded by the most sacredly pledged disciples, who had devoted their whole lives to the development of their psychic and spiritual faculties. The reason why these doctrines had been so strenuously guarded from the profane and unripe is because the possession of their knowledge gives great power for use or abuse. It embraces the science of the finer forces in nature, their relation and correspondences in themselves, and the knowledge of their uses and application for the benefit or destruction of humanity.

Although this transcendental knowledge was accessible at all times to those who were ripe and who felt the craving for it strong enough to make the unremitting sacrifice, it would be acquired only by those whose supreme intensity of excitement and enthusiasm made it possible in those times to incur the self-denial and renunciation of worldly concerns necessary to initiation. For is it any different now, and never will be, except that portions of the doctrine are given out from time to time, such

as may be safely trusted to an advancing age, because to penetrate into the mystery of nature requires a state of the greatest purity and perfection, and this final perfection is not a gift to be expected from without, but is to be worked for by those who desire it.

It is often queried why this grand philosophy has existed for so long a time and yet so little of it has reached our all-conquering civilization.

This is due to the fact that our civilization has mainly occupied itself with material and intellectual progress, refusing to even recognize the superior faculties of intuition and man's capability of spiritual culture. These higher faculties have been allowed to remain dormant during the race for material aggrandizement and personal recognition.

Though it was hoped that the mystery of life and the power over nature could be obtained in our time by mere intellectual development, very little indeed has been accomplished, but instead we find ourselves — as the result of misdirected energies — in the abyss of modern materialism.

The abolition alone of these tendencies, and the *insight* into the inability to find the secret into the mystery of the all-pervading and unerring law of nature by physical means, — the abolition and destruction of these tendencies is the bridge over which alone we may arrive at the enlightened shore of transcendental wisdom.

At this present restless stage of discontent and the fruitless search for peace, the T. S. appeared with truly altruistic motives, reminding the perplexed age of the mistaken course it had taken in its illusion of separateness and in its denial of man's better nature.

It is the aim of the T. S. to bring to the notice of those who are inclined to admit the spiritual nature of man and his progressive evolution, that on another plane of existence, a plane which partakes of a wider field of consciousness and which lies within the capability of development in every individual, that on that higher plane there is a spiritual unity, a universal brotherhood of mankind, and on that plane of being there is no separateness from homogeneous existence; and further that no permanent progress is possible through fostering the illusion of separateness, and that man's true duty at all times and in all circumstances is the love of his kind and the preservation of harmony around him. It is with the endeavor to learn something concerning our position in life and our spiritual relation to each other that we come together weekly, some of us daily, to exchange our observations and experiences.

It is premised that man is the product of an advanced stage of evolution, which is demonstrated by his possession of the more developed faculties of perception and consciousness compared with other organisms, his capability of analysis of physical nature, his inherent sense of moral duty, and his aspirations to know his relative position in cosmic evolution.

The spiritual unity of mankind is the basis of our moral life. Regard, consideration, love, kindness are qualities which are exhibited and practiced intuitively during the greatest part of daily life; the voice of conscience which meddles in every thought and act is indicative of a brotherhood founded upon the sympathy of man for man, which is a fundamental fact of *human* nature.

When we observe the great intelligence and justice with which the minutest object in nature is governed, we can draw inference by analogy and apply to the human being. The same conditions

prevail; the great universality of government, embracing all and moving all with inexorable certainty in obedience to one law and design, the *interdependence* of everything, suggest the unity of all.

Unity of life and being means brotherhood of all the units which make up that unity of life and being, and it is the conscious realization of this unity, the universal, all-pervading principle of brotherhood, that lends a basis and meaning to the phenomena of life and existence.

Besides, the degree of relative brotherhood of mankind to itself must be closer than to anything else, because humanity is composed of one kind of units (more or less), and in the same stage or degree of development, at least as compared to other kingdoms in nature.

This essential unity of all being, however, becomes only realizable in the ratio in which consciousness on a higher plane is awakened, and this superior consciousness regards our present conception of all separateness apart from the whole as an illusion, because there it is no separation in reality; it only appears so to us on our present plane of consciousness. Therefore this tenet, although it is a fact in nature, is not so easily demonstrable on physical lines, because the problem itself transcends perception on this lower physical plane; in other words, it cannot be seen or heard, felt, smelt, or tasted, nor sensed with any physical instrument; still it is a fact which is at once plausible by conceding to the human being spiritual life at all, and perfectly realizable to those who have penetrated beyond the veil which surrounds gross matter.

Although the consciousness beyond the veil of matter may be very limited for us at present, cultivation of the mystic side of our nature will open vistas undreamed of, and widen our consciousness.

For instance, the investigation of the significance of our consciousness during the dream state and that in dreamless sleep. Our ideal life is derived from the state of dreamless sleep.

During that time of the entire oblivion of our self-consciousness we are quite on another plane.

Intelligent and persistent scrutiny and searching into the dreamless sleep will soon reveal, first, the fact that it is a state of great purity, entirely uninfluenced by good or bad actions which we may have performed during the day; and second, that we receive ideal impulses during our daily life which come to our perception quite unawares and are, as we think, perfectly natural, but which are in reality reflections in the physical brain from the dreamless sleep.

Man leads a dual life even in the waking state. In every thought and deed is a dual aspect. The first and most pressing one in our day is that which concerns our personality, the second how it affects our relations with the world at large.

The process itself is so automaton-like that it eludes notice, but to these two aspects all our activities are subjected.

If the predilections of the personality predominate, the result will be correspondingly selfish; if, on the other hand, the ideal aspect is duly regarded, the act will be corresponding to and means better intuition. This latter is the ideal side of man's dual life, a state of higher consciousness, the exploration of which will greatly expand the conception of the part man is playing in the drama of life, and that "*Ideal Unity*" or "*Universal brotherhood of mankind*" is a "*fact*" and the notion of the separateness of humanity is an illusion.

CONSOLATION — J. D. B.

The mountain paths seem rough and steep,
 With cypress overgrown,
The valleys where the lilies weep
 Are oft obscure and lone.

The breath to which the vale responds
 With music and delight,
Blows wild and tree through waving fronds
 Far up the mountain height.

The lilies crowd the valley's zone,
But he who climbs must stand alone.

The lotus vales are warm and sweet,
 The mountain paths sublime;
We linger with unwilling feet
 O'er things of sense and time;
The touch of some familiar hand,
 The voice that thrills the sense;
The music of the Lotus-land
 The heart's sweet recompense:
Where lilies pale and zephyrs moan,
And souls fear most to stand alone.

Ah! not alone: no zephyr bends
 The head of lily fair,
But slightest breath for aye portends
 The sweep of mountain air.
Souls sicken where the languor grows
 And faint ere flush of even;
'Till rough winds blow with breath of snow
 Borne from the purer heaven.

The zephyrs sleep in wild wind's moan
Nor breath nor gale e're throbs alone.

The voices of the vale ascend:

The sweeping breath comes down,
While grief and joy together blend,
Hope lightens fate's dark frown.
Dear heart, be brave! no joy is lost;
Fate brings thee all thine own;
The flower that blossoms in the frost
Is in the valleys sown.

List for the voice from starry zone
Nor think to live or grieve alone.

We stand alone, yet not apart,
Save when self intervenes;
The griefs and joys that try the heart
Are only Maya dreams.

As soldiers mount at bugles blast
To brave the battle shock,
So gird thine armor to the last;
Dear heart! be firm as rock.

We climb together, zone on zone;
Together most, when most alone.

HIDDEN HINTS IN THE SECRET DOCTRINE — *William Q. Judge*

(From p. 1 to p. 67, Vol. I.)

A PROPHECY. In the 20th century — 1900 — the scholars of our era will begin to recognize that the *Secret Doctrine* has neither been invented nor exaggerated, but simply outlined — Vol. 1, p. xxxvii Intro. In other places the author hints at surprises in store in the way of manuscripts, etc. It would seem that by 1900 some "discoveries" will be made by scholars that will support our author. "Once the door permitted to be kept a little ajar, it will be opened wider with every new century. The times are ripe for a more serious knowledge than hitherto permitted." *Vol. I, p. xxxviii Intro, note.* "We have not long to wait, and many of us will witness the Dawn of the New Cycle at the end of which not a few accounts will be settled and squared between the two races." *V. I, Intro, xliv.*

AN ARCHAIC MANUSCRIPT. Some of the doctrines given out are found by her in a collection of palm-leaves made impervious to the elements by some unknown process, *Proem V. I, p. 1.* It is well known that some of the most ancient eastern manuscripts are on palm-leaves which are cut in oblong, narrow form and tied with a string. How is this seen by her? Either in the astral light or objectively, being brought to her table. By whom or what?

CONTINUITY OF PLAN FROM ONE MANVANTARA TO ANOTHER. In this old MS. it is said (*Proem*) that during the pralaya the plan for the next manvantara slumbers until the dawn of the next evolution, when its potential power goes forth to action. There is, therefore, a continuity from manvantara through pralaya to succeeding manvantara. Continued on pp. 4 and 5 of V. I.

THE BASIS OF AFFINITY, hence for all correlations of force. It is stated that Leucippus taught an occult law when he declared, 500 B. C., that the *lateral motion of atoms* is the root for affinity and correlation of force. *p. 2, V. I.*

EACH PERIOD OF EVOLUTION IS *sui generis*. "Yet at each new manvantara its organization — speaking of the cosmos — may be regarded as the first and the last of its kind, as it evolutes every time on a higher plane." *V. I, p. 3.*

A NEW ELEMENT AT THE END OF OUR 4th ROUND. "Occult science recognizes seven cosmic elements, four entirely physical, the fifth — ether — semi-material, *as it will become visible in the air* toward the end of our 4th round, to reign supreme over the others during the whole of the 5th Round." *Vol. I, p. 14.*

AKAS AND MANAS CORRESPOND. *See note p. 13, Vol.1.* "That A'kas-a, the fifth universal cosmic principle — to which corresponds and from which proceeds human *Manas* — is, cosmically, a radiant, cool, diathermal, plastic matter, creative in its physical nature, correlative in its grossest aspects and portions, immutable in its higher principles." It must therefore follow, under the law of correspondences, that *manas* in the seven-fold division is creative, correlative, and immutable in the same way and portions as stated for Akasa.

MANAS IN THE 5th ROUND. By following out the correspondence we find that as Ether, the lower form of Akas, now semi-material, will become visible in the air at the end of this Round — the 4th — so *manas*, now only semi-developed in this race, will be further evolved in the 5th Round at the same time with the parent source, and as the form of Ether spoken of will then be the superior element in nature, so at the same time the superior principle reigning in the septenary constitution of man will be *manas*. The full development of *manas* imposes full responsibility on the race,

and thus we see how the turning point is reached and what it may mean, and also what is the meaning of the "moment of Choice". With full responsibility the choice must be made by the race which thus has perfect *manas*. It is for and towards that period that the Masters of Wisdom are now working so as to prepare the present Egos for the momentous days when the choice of the good or evil path must be intelligently made.

And as in many places in the *Secret Doctrine* the author says that we are the same egos who were in the Atlantean bodies, and that they had a very weighty karma, we may perceive why it is that we are those who will be compelled to make the great choice for good or evil destiny in the next Round.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EFFECT OF GREAT AND MINOR PRALAYA. The question "What happens to the planets during a minor pralaya or dissolution?" is answered in *footnote p. 18, V. I.* They are dead, as it were, but not dissolved, for, as she says, "they remain intact as a huge animal caught and imbedded in the polar ice remains the same for ages." After the great Pralaya no planets remain *in corporibus*, but all are dissolved, their akasic "photographs" alone remaining. This must be taken metaphorically, or else we will again make objective, that which is subjective. But in a minor pralaya the "dead planets" are objective in space, but with all their active life and energy gone.

DHYAN CHOANS NOT THE ONLY TERM FOR THE HIGHEST BEINGS. "Each of the various groups has its own designation in the Secret Doctrine." *V. I., p. 22, lines 8, 9.* Nor are they personifications of powers in nature. *Vol. I, p. 38, line 18.*

EACH ROUND has its special class of Dhyanis to watch over it. The same for races, *p. 42, Vol. I (a).* The present round is watched especially by the Fourth Class of Dhyanis.

THE ABSOLUTE NOT UNDERSTOOD by the Dhyan Chohans. *p.51, Vol. I, line 16.* And yet some theosophists ask to have definitions or explanations of the Absolute. We heard of one who claimed to have "communed with the Absolute."

THE BREATH OF BRAHMA. This may be said to be the same as "The Eternal Breath" spoken of in the *Secret Doctrine*. It is motion, and proceeds through space ceaselessly. It does not stop during the pralayas. *p. 55, vol. I, line11.*

IDEALS AND TYPES IN THE ASTRAL LIGHT. The prototype is present in an ideal form in the Astral Light from dawn to night during the manvantaric period — everything from man to mite, from giant trees down to the tiniest blade of grass, *p. 63, vol. I, 1st para.* There is a clear correspondence here with the formation of the astral man, which is the copy, plan, or prototype on which the corporeal man is formed.

THE PRIMORDIAL FORM of every manifested thing is like that of an egg. *p. 65, vol. I.* A *paramahansa* once wrote for *the Theosophist* an article in which he said that theosophy was that Branch of Masonry which showed the universe in the form of an egg.

THE VERBUM, OR WORD, AND ITS FORCE. All religions speak of "the Word." The Jews, from whom the Christians get their religion, say that the all-powerful name of God if pronounced will shake the Universe; the Freemasons speak of the lost word; the Hindus tell of the great word; it is the Greek *logos*. The question is often raised, "Supposing there be such a word, wherein is its force?" H. P. B. says it is in *motion* and not in number. *Note I, p. 67, vol. I.* The Hebrew Kaballah leans more to *number*, as being the force of power of this word.

THE PURPOSES OF SOUL — *Jasper Neimand*

One night, I watched with my dead.

This comrade was smitten in departing; his soul cried out through the body, "*Oh! my wasted life*" Silence followed, for him the silence of high spheres; for us, the silence of the grave in that dark hour above which exhausted faith could not lift us. It was an hour of bleak despair, and, beneath that, an icy blank.

Yet other hours dawn for the student when a voice out of negation cries, "Look in thy heart and write." In such an hour, the cry of the departed one was illumined as by the awful torch of Truth. For there is terror for the human soul in that great glory; it blinds as with tempest and pain.

"Oh! my wasted life." Yet he had worked, striven, done, apparently, all. But the high soul knew well indeed that all had not been done; the conscience-stricken mind confessed its failure.

I wish, my comrades, that we could live our lives, as it were, upon the slopes of death, trying their issues by the light of the new dawn of consciousness. Think you we should not find, by that test, that these lives are full of small issues, tortuous, involved, guided by the opinions of the mass and the needs — not so much of our own bodies and minds, but of those of a complex civilization? The unseen currents pour upon us, through us; the pictures and suggestions thrown upon us by them, as upon a screen, are mistaken for "our own" thoughts and wishes. These are the traps of nature to detain us, as matter attracts and detains spirit. Can we not wish and think what we *will*, from our own centres, in accordance with the impulse of our higher mind? Is it not our first duty to do this; our duty to mankind and to ourselves; to the

Law above all? What avails it, think you, to creation or to ourselves, if we allow so-called consideration for others to imbed us more deeply in the material life? Is it not for the higher good of all that we should remain apart from it, even while in it? Apart in thought, in heart. To yield to another is sometimes to assist that other in encumbering his higher soul and our own with details the mind should outgrow, but to which, lacking strength, it still clings. It clings for fear of loss, forgetting that it cannot lose its own. Could we not simplify, think you, if we saw death drawing near, a sheaf of wasted years in his hands? In the death moment, when those years flash across the abnormally quickened brain; when the evolutionary purpose stands clearly forth; when the life result is tested by that purpose and we see that the intent and impulse of the reincarnating ego have been crushed under innumerable petty details of a life foreign, for the most part, to the *real needs* of souls, how is it with us then? A dread accountant appears, the scales of justice in his hands, a look of alienated majesty on his brow. It is the Master, the Higher Self, denied, outraged, to whom we cry: "I have sinned before heaven and against thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son."

What, then, is this evolutionary purpose? Listen! *We are the Sons of God*. May we reverently consider the Deity.

There are things too mysterious, too awful for expression. Therefore when speech is attempted, others say, "But I know that." They do not know it, for to know it is to be and do it. Therefore they only know some minor differentiation, which they still neglect.

Consider with me the One Life. "The One Ray multiplies the smaller rays. Life precedes form, and life survives the last atom of form. Through the countless rays proceeds the Life-Ray, the One, like a thread through many jewels." This Ray is the Mystery. It is a

conscious Flame. It vibrates in the Dark Centre; it arises; it flashes forth; it is the Knower; it swallows up the merely human consciousness and sets itself on high, the Crest jewel of Wisdom.

There is only one way of study. It is this. We must permit that Power to set the lower mind aside. It is ready, every hour of our lives, to declare the evolutionary purpose, the next step; our part is to listen. How then shall we listen and how attract the voice of the Power?

The first step is Resignation. That we know. It is the instant, unceasing acceptance of all results, as fruits of the Law. The next step is Devotion. It evolves causes of a nature sufficiently selfless and pure to ensure higher results. They are higher, insomuch as they make nearer approach to the universal. This Devotion is the interior preparation of a ground in which the spirit can freely act. By it we hold the mind in concentration upon the Supreme. We encourage it to remain there. Surface waves come and go, but the deep inner attitude invites the Power. Even in the outward it acts, as such thought directs the attractive and assimilative processes of bodies and organs. The myriad atoms, each a life, which we absorb every instant, are for or against the evolutionary purpose as our thought is with it or withdrawn from it.

A formula cannot be given, but we can make an approach to one. Krishna said: "With all thy heart place all thy works on me; prefer me to all things else; depend upon the use of thy understanding and think constantly of me; for by doing so thou shalt, by my divine favor, surmount every difficulty which surroundeth thee." Even in the tumult of our lives this can be done. We must treat our bodies and minds as weak places to be strengthened and upheld. Therefore religious observance is useful. Begin the day with an instant of devotion, and end it so. Standing, with reverential attitude of body and mind, repeat aloud some verse of

the scriptures, the mind fixed on the Higher Self, or on the One Life, the aggregate of these selves. Such texts have a life of their own; their spoken word will quicken ours. "The ever unknowable and incognizable *Karana* alone, the *Causeless* Cause of all causes, should have its shrine and altar on the holy and ever untrodden ground of our heart — invisible, intangible, un-mentioned, save through 'the still small voice' of our spiritual consciousness. Those who worship before it ought to do so in the silence and sanctified solitude of their Souls, making their spirit the sole mediator between them and the Universal Spirit".. (1) It is useless to say that we must take others with us. "The soul goes alone to The Alone." Having thus set the vibrations for the day, let the student consider the One Life in all life. Let him study every event, referring all to the action of the currents of that Life, and not to the centres through which it speaks. Men are but ganglionic centres, repeating the nerve-auric impulse and passing it along. That is to say, they are this for the most part: there are souls who have achieved their higher being. The student should form the habit of observing the Life waves, the manifestations of Life, as one. Consider the action of the Life principle in all things. In food, in air, light, sound, persons, events, the human heart; let him refer all things back to it, back to the plane of force, and try to sense them on that plane, to see Krishna in all. This service is no sinecure. But the Lord will repay. Strange lessons will be learned. Life will be seen as made up, not of persons and events, but of manifesting currents, some of which may be rejected and some accepted at the bidding of the inner voice. It alone should command, and not probabilities, eventualities, or temporizing. He who asks, of every crisis, but the simple question, "What is my duty?", and does that regardless of events, to that man the gods appear. He will often find that we do many things because the Life impulse is checked by some counter current of sympathetic attraction, which, by contrary vibration in specific centres, blocks

its way. Then the general current urges the accomplishment of the thought or action, in which accomplishment the counter current finds equilibrium, is neutralized, and the main current is re-established. This is the impulse of Nature. If we recognize the counter attractions as Karmic illusion, and do not pour our mind into their moulds, the attractions disappear because we have fallen back upon the higher one, the Universal Life, whose flow in us we have increased until it sweeps all obstacles away.

Thinking thus always of the One Life in the outer circumstances of our days, there is still another thing we can do. The Deity is always manifesting in us, as everywhere. It impels us by means of impulses springing deep within us and registered upon the consciousness; registered further upon the brain in the proportion in which that brain is prepared to receive it. This preparation consists in keeping the thought turned expectantly toward The One. We need to keep watch for its commands; to learn to distinguish these from lower impulses, suggestions from without, so to say. Above all, we need to obey them. Increase and continuance come from use. While we fulfill the real duties of external life (which are fewer than we think), this interior watch can be kept up. We can be observant of all the impulses arising in us. Who has surprised the swift Will upon its hidden throne, or Motion, the power behind the throne? Only the man who has waited upon the gods. We are here for the purposes of soul.

At first we shall make mistakes in action, but soon an uneasy, subtle undercurrent of warning or dissatisfaction will accompany action which has not been suggested by the true Source. In practical occultism, regular chelas of a group set down all the events of each day; these are compared, and a guiding current is soon seen. Soon they distinguish this from every other *by its tendency*; in the unencumbered field it manifests in glory and power. This course must be followed by him who desires to avoid

the death cry of a wasted life. He must also give a fixed time daily, were it but five minutes, to the consideration of The One. He must hold this ground sacred against every invasion. If he be so fortunate as to know the face of a Master, let him bring that before him as an embodiment of the Deity, trying to see it clearly before him in every free moment. "If it be a real Master, he will send his voice. If not, it will be the higher self that will speak." This subconsciousness, this undercurrent of fixed attention, of revolution around the One Life, can be cultivated and enlarges our orbit.

The true student will not speak of the Unknown One. He will be devotional in attitude and in manner when studying high themes. Such habits train the body and free the mind. The place of study should be as simple as possible, and due regard should be had to the making or breaking of currents, for these are *the messengers of the gods*. At such times all externalities should be firmly set aside, and a place cleared in life for the use of the Deity, nor should others be permitted to overrun this place, whether in opposition or in love. Example is our highest duty. We must point out the Star of the Law. If we allow the pain of another — pain unrighteous — to draw us from our duty to that other and to all, we have in so far helped him along the path of future despair. True Love is Wisdom. Is not my best goal that of my comrade also? Then I am not to linger in delights of self with him, but to draw him up to the light. Will he not come? Then I must go on and do my duty. His pain is resistance to Law,

It is a sad truth that the love of friends and associates often binds them and ourselves. A true lover of humanity says to the Beloved: "The Soul is free. Be free, Beloved! Wait upon the inner impulse; follow it alone. If thou art mine, I cannot lose thee. Spiritual gravitation makes for us. If not mine, I relinquish thee to thine own ray. Even so, thou art mine, as all are myself and thee in the

One. I question not thine impulse, thine act. Come; go; do; abstain. The same law is mine." Rich rewards, revelations unguessed await him who loves thus. It is the only right Love. For if I tell another he is free to do as he will, and yet question the wisdom of his impulse or display my pain, is the liberty real? Not so. If I feel pain, it is my service to conquer that ignorance. If he errs, then he learns that lesson. Oh! for a wider trust in the Law. Then the Deity would speak. The life would not be overlaid with material shapes and forms of fear. It congests in these moulds. Obeyed every hour, the evolutionary law would manifest. Alas, my comrades! These friends cling to old observance and diurnal habit because in them they know us; they take these to be our established character, the guarantee of our love, and fear to lose us by losing these. And we do the same thing.

I make a great call for Freedom. I raise this standard reverently. Not license attracts me, but Freedom under Law. Freedom to clear a spot where we may listen, hear, obey. That spot Arjuna was told to sit upon because it was his own. Freedom to lop off the excrescences of life; errors of action, errors of thought. Freedom to speak the real mental fact now present to us, without encountering the wounds of affectional habit. Freedom to accept facts as they are, without personal tincture or emotion, so that we may study their meaning with our comrades, accomplishing thus a higher bond, with hearts that accept the freedom of soul. If any others are pained by the Soul's obedience to the laws of her Being, it is our slavery and not our souls they love. Each should see and desire to unveil the higher nature of the other, that God may become manifest in him. The Power only manifests in the free. A soul denied essential freedom, in escaping at death, appeals to the great ones to witness its wrongs, and the Lipika record the penalties of the Law. Mistakes made through "Love" (too often mere attraction or synchronous vibration on one or several

planes, without root in the highest bond) do not save us from Karmic retribution. True Love is Cohesion. The One Ray is known also as Eros, because it expands freely to all; freely expands, freely obeys the impulse given by the Eternal. No Love is worthy of the name which is not a sub-ray or copy of That, and "perfect Love casteth out fear." No life so environed that it cannot prepare for the Power. We say we desire the Light and the Path, but we do not use the keys given us, while yet we ask for more, for other ways. There is only one way, and it will be harder to take in each successive life after man has been offered the keys and refrains from using them. We can never break away from the Material, to turn upward, without a shock. It will never be easier than it now is, to cut our way through. Thus in the death-watches spoke a voice to me. The eloquence of wasted lives cries aloud to all the nights of Time. It has cost others blood and tears to learn these things. May you learn at less cost. May the One Ray shine upon us. May we know our whole Duty. AUM.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Secret Doctrine*, I, 280 ([return to text](#))

The Path

HIDDEN HINTS IN THE SECRET DOCTRINE — *William Q. Judge*

(From p. 67 to p. 128, Vol. I.)

MATTER DURING PRALAYA. It is in a state of great tenuity seen only by Bodhisatvas. When evolution begins again it appears like curds in space. *V. I, p. 69.*

ELECTRICITY AN ENTITY. *V. I, p. 76, line 6;* it is an emanation from an entity of power, p. 111 in note; and is coexistent with the one life, *p. 81:* it is primordial matter of a special nature, *p. 82.*

PULSATION OF THE HEART AND THE TIDES. Probably due to the universal expanding and contracting of the atoms, which in turn are caused by the expansion and contraction of matter of space. *V. I, p. 84.* "There is heat internal and heat external in every atom" *id.*

TWO SORTS OF FIRE OR HEAT. One in the central Sun and the other in the manifested universe and solar system. *V. I, p. 84, 87.*

MAGICAL POTENCY OF WORDS is in the vowel sounds and not in the numbers. *94, V. I.*

THE TERM "HUMAN" is not to be Confined to this Globe. It must be applied to all entities who have reached the fourth stage of development on any planet in space in its fourth round in any chain of planets. *V. I, p. 106, 2nd para.*

BUDDHI AS COMPARED WITH SPIRIT is material, although for us and the highest conceptions we can form it is wholly beyond materiality. *V. I, p. 119, line 7.*

THE HUMAN MONAD is the union of the ray from the absolute with the soul. *V. I, p. 119, para 1.*

SYMBOLISM AND NUMBERS. They are intimately connected with the

hosts of the Dhyān-Chohans. The basic numbers refer each to distinct groups of ideas which vary according to the group of Dhyān Chohans referred to. In other places the author says that, as the Dhyāni are connected with evolution in all its intricacies and mysteries, it follows that symbolism is of the highest importance. *V. I, p.119, (b).*

THE ONE FUNDAMENTAL LAW OF OCCULT SCIENCE is the radical unity of the ultimate essence of each constituent part of compounds in nature from star to atom and from the highest Dhyān Chohan to the smallest infusoria. And this is to be applied spiritually, intellectually, and physically. *V. I, p. 120, last para.*

KARMA NEEDS MATERIAL AGENCIES to carry out its decrees. *V. I, p. 123, line 2.* The material agents spoken of here are not merely those that we class as such, but many others which are generally conceived of by us as spiritual. For, as said above, even Buddhi is material when compared with Atman of which it is the vehicle. The clue here given is in regard to the operations of Karma through the atoms that are used by the egos in their various incarnations. But in following this out it must not be forgotten that there is no particle or point of materiality which is not at the same time mixed with or in company with another particle — if the word may be used for this purpose — of spirit or the one life.

THE THREE GROUPS OF BUILDERS. These are as follows: The first is the group which constructs the entire system as a whole and which includes more than this globe system; the second is the group of builders who come in when the system as a great whole is ready and form the planetary chain of this earth; and the third is that group which builds or projects Humanity, as they are the great type of the microcosm — man. *V. I, p. 128, second para.*

THE LIPIKA AS COMPARED WITH THE BUILDERS are the great Spirits of the universe as a whole, the builders being of a special nature. The

Lipika, like the others, are divided into three groups, but it is asserted that only the lowest of these three groups has to do with this system of ours and that the other two cannot be known, and also that those two are so high that it is doubtful if even the highest of the Adepts know about them. It may therefore be supposed that for the Adepts the Lipika of the higher degrees are as great a mystery as the Mahatmas are for us, and that this ascending scale of greatness ever gives to the soul something still higher, no matter how far it may progress, to which to look and aspire. V. I, see whole of page 128.

But as each of the three groups is divided into seven others (*p. 127*), it may be the 21st sub-group which has to do with this globe; and it is said that as to the highest of the groups it is directly connected with our karma. *V. I, p. 128, last line*. Now as Karma rules the entire universe, it must follow, in order to make and keep harmony, that the "highest grade of Lipika" referred to on page 128 is not the highest of the last series of 21 sub-groups, but the highest of the whole three great groups.

Note Well. Whenever an "entity" is spoken of among the various, "hosts" it is to be known as composed of many entities, just as man himself is similarly constituted, his total consciousness being that of the whole mass of beings who go to make up his intricate life.

The Path

PLUCK AND PATIENCE — *Katharine Hillard*

The famous English artist, Leslie, once painted upon his easel as a motto, "Pluck and Patience". Pluck is but a familiar name for courage, yet it seems, like most familiar names, to bring the quality down from its heroic heights to the level of every-day life, and that is where we need it. For courage is not only to be thought of as comprising physical and moral courage, but also as being divided into active and passive courage, and the latter borders so closely upon patience that the English artist's motto seems upon reflection, almost tautological. Active courage takes the initiative, rushes into the fight, leaps into the gulf, executes some brilliant feat, some deed of heroism, is like a leaping flame, one splendid flash and then — darkness. Passive courage is the quality of endurance, that stands quiet and suffers unmoved, like the rock buffeted by many waves, but unshaken by all the tempests. In the words of Dante, it

"Stands like a tower firm, that never bows
Its head, for all the blowing of the winds."

Active courage, to be true courage, must be distinguished from hardihood or recklessness. Real courage will ever go hand in hand with reason, not in defiance of it. That action which is of no advantage to any man, being done, but a simple flinging of the gauntlet in the face of death, is no act of courage, but of foolish hardihood. Sir Philip Sidney, who was one of the bravest of the brave, once said that "courage ought to be guided by skill, and skill armed by courage. Neither should hardiness darken wit, nor wit cool hardiness. Be valiant as men despising death, but confident as unwonted to be overcome." It is this confidence that is the secret of success; we are never afraid to do what we know

we can do well. But let a man once admit the traitor Doubt within the citadel, and the gates are soon flung open to the foe and the city surrendered. True courage is ever sure of itself, not from overweening vanity, but from a reasonable confidence that a brave heart, strong in the right, *must* win the field. The first step to victory is the conviction that it belongs to us, because we are on the side of right and truth. The head must second the heart, judgment must confirm impulse, and then we are full-armed for any battle. When Paul wrote to the Thessalonians and called them "the children of day and of the light", he exhorted them to put on the breastplate of faith and love, and to take for a helmet the hope of salvation. Was it an intentional distinction that when he wrote to the Ephesians they were told to put on the whole armor of God, that, having overcome all, they should *stand*? "Stand, therefore," which surely indicates *passive* courage, or endurance, "having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness" (which is equivalent to right-thought, right-speech, and right-action), "and having your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace" (which surely means love to man), "and, above all, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit," or faith, hope, and the Divine word, to complete the heavenly panoply. Possibly Paul intended to imply that to resist, the soul needed more preparation than to attack. It is far easier to nerve the energies to one swift onslaught in some moment of trial, than to stand firm beneath the pin-pricks of successive tiny arrows. The crudest torture known is the Chinese punishment that lets water fall drop by drop upon the culprit's head. It is passive courage, the faculty of endurance, for which women are especially noted, as it is the form that they are especially required to exert. The faculty of resisting persistent pain without a murmur, of continuing the same wearisome tasks from day to day cheerfully and uncomplainingly, of ministering from hour to hour to the needs of others without a thought of self,

this is what many of our sisters are doing all the time, and we call it patience, but it seems to me that we should call it courage, and of the noblest kind. To take up, day after day, the same task, one that never can be accomplished and ever remains to be done, is an heroic achievement, not merely an effort of patience. In the *Voice of the Silence* patience is the key to the third of the seven portals, but it is explained to be the gate of *fortitude* that that key unlocks; then comes: "indifference to pain and pleasure", and then "the dauntless energy that fights its way to the supernal truth".

"Beware of trembling," says the *Voice*. " 'Neath the breath of fear the key of *patience* rusty grows: the rusty key refuseth to unlock. — The more one dares, the more he shall obtain. — Fear, O disciple, kills the will and stays all action. — If thou hast tried and failed, O dauntless fighter, yet lose not courage; fight on and to the charge return again, and yet again. — Remember, thou that fightest for man's liberation, each failure is success, and each sincere attempt wins its reward in time."

Perhaps, then, we may define pluck or courage as that which inspires us to act, and patience as that which helps us to repeat the action, even if apparently a failure. And it is here that reason comes to the help of courage, for the wise man will study the causes of that failure that he may avoid them in his next attempt. Then there is ever one obstacle the less in the way of his progress.

There is another phase of patience, that sweet unruffled serenity which nothing can disturb. One of the most beautiful passages of the old English drama is Dekker's description of it:

"Patience! why, 'tis the soul of peace:
Of all the virtues, 'tis nearest kin to heaven;
It makes men look like gods. — The best of men
That e'er wore earth about him was a sufferer,

A soft, meek, patient, humble, tranquil spirit;
The first true gentleman that ever breathed."

However one may dilate upon the subject, when we have said "Pluck and Patience," we have summed up in two words the manner of our duty in life, and the lesson is for every day as well as for those heroic moments that come but occasionally. We have but to remember that every mountain-road, however steep and arduous, is climbed step by step, that every year, however long and tedious, is made up of successive minutes, and that they come to us one by one, however we may loiter or hasten. So thinking, we shall find that courage and patience are two strong-winged angels to bear up the fainting spirit in its progress through life: courage to strengthen it to light and to endure, patience to keep its serenity as undisturbed as "a lamp well guarded in a spot free from all wind".

The Path

LOSS OF THE SOUL: I — *Harij*

"The *Karana Sarira* may become so contaminated and so unfit to reflect the light of the Logos as to render any further individual existence impossible; and then the result is annihilation, which is simply the most terrible fate that can befall a human being." — *Notes on the Bhagavat Gita* by T. Subba Row.

The Secret Doctrine, Ancient Philosophy, and the Christian Scriptures all advance the idea of the possible destruction of the human soul as the penalty for certain transgressions. This is indeed a very old doctrine. In the Christian Scriptures it is referred to as "the sin against the Holy Ghost", "the unpardonable sin"; and devout and bigoted Christians have been driven to insanity by the belief that they had committed this "unpardonable sin". While it is far from the present purpose to revive such a degrading superstition on the one hand, on the other hand there is a law of retribution following perversions of the human will, altogether obscured and rendered of no account by the conflicting wrangles of the Christian theology. That one should go insane in seeking to reconcile freedom of the will with predestination and the idea of the sin against the Holy Ghost creates very little surprise today; but as the result is to obscure the principle of Eternal Justice as applicable to human conduct and the results of human action, and, as a further result, many individuals seem unconsciously embarking on the journey that must inevitably lead to destruction unless arrested, the real philosophy and rationality of the subject need pointing out.

If a swift and sure destruction could be predicated of the voyagers on this Stygean sea, if painless death were immediate

annihilation, further comment would be unnecessary, for that would indeed be an easy way of balancing accounts. But Karma as the Law of Retributive justice provides otherwise. The road through selfishness, cruelty, vice, and crime is long before one reaches the dividing line and plunges down the steep descent. Step by step "the Spirit" — the Higher Self — strives with man, and when at last he has "sinned away the day of grace" and his conscience has ceased to struggle against his animal self, a prey to Karma-Nemesis, every evil thought and deed returning to him who sent it out, the demons of his own creation seize upon his soul and slowly devour him. Man rises or falls by his own act. This is often stated, but seldom logically applied. Karma is the necessary and invariable condition of individual existence. Individual conscious existence without action is inconceivable. This action tends always in one of two directions. It is either consonant with the Creative Will and Intelligence of Nature, or it runs counter to Nature and is personal and selfish. The evil and selfish will of man creating a world of his own begetting, becomes himself the center of that world, Thus "good Karma" runs along nature's lines and is beneficent, while evil Karma is a debt due unto nature for which she exacts the last farthing by the necessary conditions of the law of action. The selfish and vicious are therefore at war with nature because they build to themselves, looking to results, while the unselfish, seeking no reward, but doing the good and following the right *because it is right*, presently destroy Karma altogether by at-one-ment with nature.

"* * * Differentiated conscious existence is evolved out of the one current of life which sets the evolutionary machine in motion." * * *
* this very current of life gradually gives rise to individual organisms as it proceeds on its mission. Furthermore it begins to manifest what we call conscious life, and, when we come to man,

we find that his conscious individuality is clearly and completely defined by the operation of this force. In producing this result, several subsidiary forces which are generated by the peculiar conditions of time, space, and environment cooperate with this one life. What is generally called *Karana Sarira* is but the natural product of the action of these very forces that have operated to bring about this result. When once the plane of consciousness is reached in the path of progress that includes the voluntary actions of man, it will be seen that those voluntary actions not only preserve the individuality of the *Karana Sarira*, but render it more and more definite, as, birth after birth, further progress is attained, and thus keep up the continued existence of the *Jiva* as an individual monad." — Notes by T. Subba Row, p. 26-7.

"* * It is only through a vehicle (*Upadhi*) of matter that consciousness wells up in us as '*I am I*', a physical basis being necessary to focus a ray of the Universal Mind at a certain stage of complexity." — S. D.

Now these *Upadhis*, or vehicles in which the one life focalizes and consciousness wells up, may be in one case the physical body, in another the astral body, and again it may be the *Karana Sarira*. It is in the last named that the higher individuality of man exists. To illustrate these *Upadhis* and their relations to the *Logos* and to each other, Mr. Subba Row makes use of the following. "Suppose, for instance, we compare the *Logos* itself to the sun; suppose I take a clear mirror in my hand, catch a reflection of the sun, make the rays reflect from the surface of the mirror — say upon a polished metallic plate — and make the rays which are reflected in their turn from the plate fall upon a wall. Now we have three images, one being clearer than the other, and one being more resplendent than the other. I can compare the clear mirror to *Karana Sarira*; the metallic plate to the astral body; and the wall to the physical body." (*Ibid.*)

It must be remembered that it is the Light of the Logos that shines upon the clear mirror. The Logos itself is unmanifested. We see not the Logos, but its manifested light. Furthermore, it is the same light that is manifested or reflected from the mirror, from the metallic plate, and from the wall. The increasing dullness or feebleness of the light is due solely to the character of the reflecting surface, and not to any change in the light itself.

Applying this illustration to the complex and composite nature of man we find it has exceeding force. But first we must get a starting point in the nature of man, some point within the range of universal experience in order to make our subject practical and apprehensible. This basis is very clearly given in the quotation from the *Secret Doctrine* already made. Consciousness is the basis of all personality, and of all individual life. It is the continuity of consciousness in some form that constitutes the thread of existence running through all personalities. Whenever the *Upadhi* (Vehicle of matter) which directly receives the light of the Logos or divine ray, viz. the *Karana Sarira*, has reached the plane of self-consciousness — "I am I" — it has then started on the line of evolution from which there is no escape, and all subsequent experience along the evolutionary chain involves personal responsibility. The light of the Logos "welling up in us" having evoked individual self-consciousness, must eventually emerge again in its original source, bearing with it the self-consciousness of its immediate vehicle, the higher ego, or it must finally separate from the vehicle and return alone. Contaminated and degraded it can never be. No principle of Atavism can ever apply to it. Just here lies the great fallacy of the doctrine of Metempsychosis. The light of the Logos never evokes self-consciousness below the human plane, and having evoked it on that plane it can never be carried lower, or dragged down to the animal plane.

Whenever man descends to the animal plane and loses his human birthright, he does so at the sacrifice of his higher ego, or the *vehicle* of self-consciousness. This descent is never a matter of accident or misfortune, but of *conscious will*. Nature is patient and beneficent. The journey is long and painful in either direction, because it concerns the progressive evolution of full and complete self-consciousness through the whole range of human experience, culminating in at-one-ment of individual consciousness with universal divine consciousness. This is the meaning of human life and the responsibility of self-consciousness, and never until man has stifled the voice of the Higher Self, the divinity within him, by his own deliberate acts can he encounter this "second death", or "sin against the Holy Ghost".

How, it may be asked, can man retain consciousness and suffer throughout his long descent, if he has alienated the vehicle of consciousness, the *Karana Sarira*? The *Karana Sarira* being the immediate vehicle of the light of the Logos, consciousness is reflected from one vehicle to another, as shown in the illustration of the mirror, till it reaches even the physical body and manifests in its lowest form as physical sensation through the "body of desire" (*Kama rupa*). The consciousness in these lower vehicles has never any permanency of its own, and is only renewed and retained by continual renewal from the primary vehicle. When, therefore, that becomes alienated and finally separated, it can no longer be renewed.

It may now be seen that the word "Soul", as ordinarily used, has a vague and very indefinite meaning, and it would be well that it should become entirely obsolete. Western people are, however, so unfamiliar with the philosophy lying back of all the world's great religions, not excepting the Christian religion, that the word

"soul" is likely still to be retained, together with all its confusion and obscurity.

To all students of Eastern Metaphysics, and certainly this must include at least all members of the T. S., this term *Karana Sarira*, the vehicle that directly receives the light of the Logos, and in and through which self-consciousness "wells up in us", becomes a matter of great interest. Bearing in mind the seven-fold division of the composite human being, as given in the *Key to Theosophy* and the *Secret Doctrine*, it may be said that the Logos proper (unmanifested) corresponds to *Atman*. The *light* of the Logos — its immediate vehicle — corresponds with *Buddhi*: while those endowed with self-consciousness in man at the dawn of his evolution receive the endowment of *Manas*. The "Higher Self" would be the Atman-Buddhi. The Higher Ego, Atma-Buddhi-Manas. Here the use of the terms "Self" and "Ego" has led to confusion in the minds of students, though this is unnecessary if they will carefully consider the bearings and relations of consciousness and its vehicle. *Karana Sarrra*, then, is a generic term, meaning vehicle of the immediate light of the Logos, or Atman; generic, because it may be either separated from or conducted with manas, its next vehicle, and thus be the basis of self-consciousness in man. Atman as related to man corresponds with Parabrahm as related to Cosmos; Buddhi as related to man corresponds to Mulaprakrita as related to Parabrahm, its "veil", from which matter and force endowed with intelligence, Akas-Fohat-Mahat, emanate.

It may thus be seen that a substantial basis lies back of every manifestation in nature, and that what we term matter and force on every plane of nature are inseparable from intelligence, thus giving the *raison d'etre* of Law. In all manifestations of life it is the light of the Logos welling up in and manifesting through its vehicle or *Upadhi*, that constitutes the main-spring or fountain of

life.

On every plane of nature where life takes form and consciousness manifests, such manifestation occurs through a vehicle. In man these vehicles are several because his life is not confined to a single plane. These vehicles are related in concrete degrees, and while the physical body is the lowest vehicle, the life force manifesting in each interpenetrates all. The more compact or the grosser the physical body through its appetites and passions, the weaker the life current in all the other vehicles. In other words, the more man lives on the animal plane, the less he manifests the human and the divine. These are self-evident propositions, axiomatic, drawn from common experience in every-day life.

The germ of self-consciousness residing in the Higher Ego progressively expands and unfolds with the varied experience of life. This germ furnishes the light of reason and the guiding principle of conscience. Each successive embodiment in matter furnishes its fund of experience, and thus progressively unfolds Manas. Manas is thus the adjustment of experience to the laws and processes of Eternal Nature, the incomplete and imperfect personal Kingdom of man. The basis of consciousness in man is *Mahat* — cosmic intelligence — "welling up in man" through its immediate vehicle, *Karana Sarira*. The expansion and range of unfolding of consciousness in man occurs through Manas, the *active* aspect of consciousness; while its passive aspect is conscience, the "*Voice*" of the higher self. Most persons get confused in regard to *memory*, the *steps of man's progress*, the details of his varied experience; and these can never be fully retained even for a single day except as a precipitate or general result of experience. In this regard nothing is ever lost, or lived in vain. We may now deduce some idea of the "Soul", or what is meant by the immortal part of man, and its permanent possession by the individual or its final loss. The problem turns on the point

of *consciousness*, and its expansion through experience. The battle ground is the central factor in man's composite life, viz. Manas: and by the Higher and the Lower Manas is meant the *direction* in which man's experience tends under guidance of his will. He may crown his life experience by leading it up through the higher manas till he anchors it in its immortal vehicle, *Karana Sarira*, and thus merge his life in the Higher Self; or he may lead it downward, toward the animal plane, till at a certain point he cuts the slender thread and thus alienates his Higher Self, when his lower "vehicles", drawn originally from the physical and animal planes, gradually descend, consciousness slowly fading out, till at last his being dissolves. This is the "second death". 'Tis not the *fact* of annihilation, but its horrible details, its blank despair, its terrible retribution, that appall us: the Karmic details of Eternal Justice, the opportunity and the rewards or penalties of Human Self-consciousness. No one need fear being tripped unconsciously into this "eighth Sphere" this hopeless doom. Neither is it to be incurred from impossible intellectual belief of irrational dogmas. It is as far removed from priestly anathema as is any Higher Self from an anathematizing priest. It is the penalty for all uncleanness; for wilful sacrifice of all other interests to the animal self; and finally, to the love of evil *for its own sake*. Many pitiable degraded human beings are on their way to it, and yet not beyond hope. Hypnotism, Necromancy, and other forms of "black magic" lead directly towards it. One may be unconscious that such practices are black magic, but no one can be unconscious of their own utter disregard of the rights and the best interests of others, and when they consciously and deliberately disregard these and seek an imagined good for themselves regardless of the pain and degradation of others, they should be reminded that sure destruction lies that way, by a law that has no variableness or shadow of turning, a law that never forgets and never forgives till the last jot and tittle be fulfilled.

The materialism of the age tends in this direction, with its vivisection and hypnotism, with its selfish haste to get rich, and its disregard of the great hungering, toiling, suffering mass of humanity. And it is not the toiling millions that tend toward destruction, but the selfish, favored, greedy few, whose broader intelligence and larger opportunities serve only to increase the unhappiness of others now, and make sure their own destruction hereafter. Step by step in future incarnations must these retrace their way: measure for measure will it be meted to them again, Dante's *Inferno*, and Margrave and Mr. Hyde are no idle dreams of depraved imaginations, but tragedies of self-destruction, being enacted all around us by the intrinsic selfishness of man. The sacrifice of all to self leads inevitably to self destruction.

(To be continued.)

The Path

REWAD FOR UNMERITED SUFFERING — *A Student*

KARMA AS JUDGE, GUIDE, AND REWARDER.

In the *Key to Theosophy*, on page 161, the author uses a phrase which has been objected to on the ground that a strict construction of it overthrows the whole doctrine of Karma. The words referred to and the contiguous sentence are:

"Our philosophy teaches that Karmic punishment reaches the Ego only in its next incarnation. After death it *receives only the reward for the unmerited sufferings endured during its past incarnation.*"

The italicised portion is the part objected to, and the objection raised is that, if all that happens to us so happens because it is our Karma, then it cannot be *unmerited*: hence, either the statement is incorrect or Karma is not the law of justice, but there must be some other one governing man and the vicissitudes of his life.

Let us go further down the same page and see if some sentences in the same paragraph do not bear upon the meaning of the author. She says: "If it may be said that there is not a mental or physical suffering in the life of a mortal which is not the direct fruit and consequence of some sin in a previous existence; on the other hand, since he does not preserve the slightest recollection of it in his actual life and feels himself not deserving of such punishment, and therefore *thinks* he suffers for no guilt of his own, this alone is sufficient to entitle the human soul to the fullest consolation, rest, and bliss in his *post-mortem* existence. Death comes to our spiritual selves ever as a deliverer and friend."

All students of theosophy known to me believe that Karma is the great governing law, that all suffering and reward come from and through Karma; and, as I understand from the published and

unpublished views of H. P. Blavatsky, she holds the same opinion. Therefore, such being the case, what we have to enquire into is the meaning intended to be conveyed by the passages cited. There is no doubt whatever that the author of the *Key* agrees, except perhaps about hell, with the Buddhist priest who, writing several years ago in the *Theosophist* (1) upon this subject, said:

"In this light Karma may be defined as * * that irresistible force which drags the criminal into the hell fire amidst his loud lamentations, the powerful hand that rescues the wretch from the merciless hands of the infernal angels and takes him to a happier place for the amelioration of his miserable condition, or the heavenly angel *who bears away, as it were, the enraptured soul to the blissful abodes above* and takes it back after a very long course of heavenly enjoyments to this world, or to hell itself, paying little or no attention to the sorrowful tales of the reluctant soul."

Construing together the sentences in the paragraph from the *Key to Theosophy*, we find that she says, in effect, in the later sentences on the same page, that all suffering is the direct fruit and consequence of some sin committed in a previous existence, but that as the *personality* in the life when the suffering comes has no recollection of the cause which brought it about, the punishment is *felt* by that personality to be undeserved, and another cause is thus set up which has its action in the *post mortem* condition. The difficulty raised by the objection put is that the whole matter has been made objective, and Karma has been looked upon as a material or objective law, and the *post mortem* state placed in the same category. The true Ego neither suffers nor enjoys, and is not bound at any time by Karma; but as *Devachan* is a subjective condition in which the Ego therein creates for itself out of its own thoughts the surroundings fit for

it, so we may say, without at all interfering with our conceptions of Karma, that after death this Ego receives the reward for the sufferings which *thought* were unmerited in the life just quitted. The word "unmerited" as written in *The Key* is not to be construed as being used by any Karmic power, but as the conception formed by the Ego during life of the propriety or impropriety of whatever suffering may have been then endured.

For, as we have seen in other studies, Devachan — the *post mortem* state under consideration — is a condition wherein no objective experiences are undergone by the Ego, but in which the thoughts of a certain sort had during life act in producing about it, or rather within its sphere, the blissful subjective experiences necessary for the resting of the soul. Hence if when in the mortal frame it considered itself unjustly treated by fate or nature, it set up then and there the causes for bringing about a so-called reward for the suffering which to it seemed unmerited, just so soon as it would be released from the body and the causes be able to act in the only place or state which will permit their action.

This blissful state, as intimated in the quotation made from the *Theosophist*, is Karmic reward in the plane of Devachan. The "Karmic punishment" referred to in the *Key* is not the opposite of this, but is the opposite of Karmic reward acting on the plane of objective earth life. For the opposite of devachanic reward or bliss must be on a similar plane, such as the "hell" spoken of by the Buddhist priest, or Avitchi. If these distinctions are clearly borne in mind, there cannot be much difficulty with any of these questions.

To me Karma is not only judge, it is also friend and deliverer. It is essentially just. The conditions are laid down. If I comply, the result inevitably follows. It is my friend because it will, just as inevitably as life and death, give me a rest in devachan where the

tired soul which needs recuperation as well as the body will find what is best for it. And a mere phrase like "unmerited suffering" invented by me in my ignorance here upon earth will be one of the factors used by this very Karma to bring about my peace and joy, albeit that still again inexorable Karma awaits me at the threshold of Devachan to mete out in my next appearance upon this terrestrial stage my just deserts. And thus on and ever on and upward we shall be led from life to life and stage to stage, until at last the conviction has become an inherent portion of our being that Karma is not only just but merciful.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Vol. 1 Theosophist, p. 199 ([return to text](#))

The Path

STUDIES IN THE UPANISHADS — F. T. S.

These notes are not technical studies of forms of speech, but simply attempts to discover the true meaning underlying the words of the Upanishads. These ancient works are full of food for reflection; they should be studied with a view of finding the inner meaning, and without being influenced by the fact that they are cast in a form which is strange to us. This caution is especially needful in the case of Hindu books, because the Indian is fond of expressing himself in a form totally different from that of his Western brother.

In 1886 I made a few references in these pages to the *Mundaka Upanishad*, which is often known as the one which shaves off error so that the truth may shine or be apparent, and shall now proceed a little further in the same direction. This Upanishad is divided into chapters or sections which are called "mundakas" and "khandas," the last being the smaller divisions included in the former: a "khanda" would therefore be something like our "section".

Thus we have:

FIRST MUNDAKA, SECOND KHANDA.

1. This is the truth: the sacrificial works which they saw in the hymns of the Veda have been performed in many ways in the Treta age. Practise them diligently, ye lovers of truth; this is your path that leads to the world of good works."

From the first verse to the end of the sixth there are statements and descriptions relating to the flames from the sacrifice and about the effects of good works, ending with these words:

"This is thy holy Brahma world — swarga — gained by thy good works."

All of these mean to inculcate that *swarga* or heaven will be gained by good works, which are here also called sacrifices or the attentive following of the Brahmanical law. Both in the fifth and sixth verses heaven or devachan is referred to, in the one as the place "where the one lord of the devas dwells", and in the other as "swarga". Indra is "the one lord of the devas", and his place, known as "Indra loka", is devachan or the land of the gods.

Indra's heaven is not eternal. The only loka admitted by the Hindu sacred books to be nondestructible is "Goloka" or the place of Krishna. Those who go to devachan have to emerge from that state when the energies that took them there are exhausted. In the Bhagavad Gita this is thus put; "When the reward is exhausted after having dwelt in the heaven of Indra for years of infinite number, they return to the world of mortals". But even if one should become Indra himself, who is the regent of this sphere, the reward would not be eternal, for the reason that Indra as a power comes to an end at the close of the manvantara. The Khanda under consideration touches upon the transitory nature of the reward for good works without knowledge in the seventh and other verses:

7. But frail indeed are these boats, the sacrifices, the eighteen in which this lower ceremonial has been told. Fools who praise this as the highest good are subject again and again to old age and death.

8. Fools dwell in darkness, wise in their own conceit and puffed up with a vain knowledge, go round and round, staggering to and fro, like blind men led by the blind.

9. Children when they have long lived in ignorance consider

themselves happy. Because those who depend on their good works are improvident, owing to their passions, they fall and become miserable when their life in the world which they have gained by their good works is finished.

The fall spoken of in these and also in the tenth is the death in devachan and rebirth into this life. Both life here and life in devachan are illusionary, and hence there is a continual rise and fall, fall and rise, from the one to the other until the time arrives when the man, by adding knowledge to good works is able to mount above the illusion and prevent himself from being drawn into the gulf of death in either this world or the world of the devas. It must follow from this that such a perfected man may, while living among men, have the experiences of devachan, if that be his wish; in Buddha's life it is said that he entered nirvana and carried on his mission upon earth afterwards.

Verse 11, referring to those hermits called Sannyasis who have left all concerns of this world behind, has this significant sentence:

"(those) depart free from passion, through the sun, to where that immortal person dwells whose nature is imperishable".

I am very much inclined to read this as meaning that even in their case what might be called absolute immortality is not gained.

The Hindu philosophy is full of fine distinctions, and, indeed, so is occultism. To say that "they go to that place where the highest person dwells" is not the same as saying they become that person himself. In the Bhagavad-Gita Krishna says that only a certain sort of devotion causes the devotee to become the highest person, or, to put it in other words, to be absorbed in the highest. In the

present case the Sannyasi goes to the place but does not become that highest person. And in saying "absolute immortality" I have in view the immense periods of time covered by the cycles of the Hindus, which are so long that they seem the same as eternity to us, and are often construed to have that meaning, giving to the term a shorter or lesser significance than we give it. This can be noticed in the sentence quoted from the Bhagavad Gita in the use of the word "infinite", as there it does not mean never-ending, but only an enormous period of time, so immense that the human mind is not able to conceive it and therefore has to call it eternal. The "departure through the sun" is a reference to that part of the hidden-teachings of the Hindu initiates which deals with the practical part of yoga, the ways and means for developing the higher powers and faculties, all of which are governed and affected by certain forces and centres of force in the system of which this globe is a part. Even this has its counterpart in the Bhagavad Gita in that chapter where it is said that the devotee who dies when the sun is in its northern course goes away never to return, and that the one who dies when the moon is waxing goes but to return again, ending with the statement that these two ways of white and black are eternally decreed in this world. This has been commented on by Europeans as being nonsense, but when we know that reference is meant to be made to the eternal unity of the great tides in human affairs and the adjustment of all things to universal laws, it does not seem so foolish. Of course if it be taken to apply to all men indiscriminately, then it would be the talk of children; but it is well known to all those who have had a glimmer of the inner meaning of these holy books that the persons who come under the influence of this law in the manner above given are only those devotees who follow the practices enjoined and thus bring into operation upon themselves different forces from those that bear upon the ordinary man.

In the next verse directions are given for finding the truth as:

12. Let a Brahmana (1) after he has examined all these worlds which are gained by works acquire freedom from all desires. Nothing that is eternal (or not made) can be gained by that which is not eternal (or made). Let him in order to understand this take fuel in his hands and approach a guru who is learned and dwells entirely in Brahman, and that teacher tells the truth to him.

Verse 13 ends this khanda leading to the second Mundaka wherein the truth about these matters is to be found.

FOOTNOTE:

1. "A Brahmana" here does not exclude non-brahmins, but means the man who is on Brahma's path, who is studying the wisdom of or about Brahma or spirit. ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE — *R. A. Campbell*

AN ACROSTIC.

Dedicated to H. P. B.

However clear our intellects,
Pure though our aspirations are,
Beside our souls the truth will shine
Like noon-day sun beside a star,
And when the inner realms of life —
Vacuity to outward eyes —
Are studied, seen, and fairly known,
The inner truth still onward lies.
Seek then the living truth to know;
Keep in the path; go sure though slow;
You thus to Higher-self will grow.

The Path

HIDDEN HINTS IN THE SECRET DOCTRINE — *William Q. Judge*

(From p. 128 top. 160 Vol. I.)

NIRMANAKAYAS. First reference to these on p. 132, *note*, where they are called "the surviving spiritual principles of men", and in the text they are those who *reincarnate for the good of the world* if they choose.

ELECTRICITY AGAIN is mentioned as *Life*, p. 137, 4th line; also p. 139, line 17; also a form of "Fohat"; also p. 145, (b).

ETHER only partially manifested, and not to be fully so until the 5th round, p. 140.

THAT ENTITIES ARE CONSTITUTED of many units, each an entity. Thus that "Fohat", elsewhere called "an Entity", is not one undivided entity but is made up of others; and that there are as many Fohats as there are worlds. *Note 2*, p. 143, and p. 145 (b).

ELIXIR OF LIFE. A hint thereupon. *Note 2*, p. 144.

ELEMENTALS CONCERNED in all forces, *e. g.* that electricity, magnet-ism, cohesion, and the like are made up of elementals. These, of course, are not all of one class, but of several, p. 146. Near the end of this page it is inferentially stated that elementals are generated in millions by other beings. This must be, in fact, a transforming process in the atoms. By referring to p. 143 a broad hint will be found as to this in the remarks upon the "fate of an atom" once caught into any world sphere, and the means of getting out through "a current of efflux". Is this *efflux* through the transforming being?

THE MOON. In what sense dead? Only as to her inner principles Her physical principles are not dead, but have a certain activity, p.

149, note 1. And her spiritual principles have been transferred to this earth, p. 155, note, and p. 156, line 6.

DISAPPEARANCE OF THE MOON will have occurred before this earth has passed through her 7th human round, p. 155 note.

ARCHETYPAL MAN ON GLOBE A. p. 159, last para. Here is a most interesting hint not often referred to and opening up a vista of thought. In the 1st round of the monads in this chain of planets, the monads from the preceding chain of words — say the moon's chain — *become human beings* on Globe A. But in the 2d round the process alters, and it is in the 4th round that man appears on this earth, the 4th Globe. To quote: "on globe A man rebecomes a mineral, a plant, an animal, on globe B., C, etc. The process changes entirely from the 2d round, but —" This abruptness is to give the hint to intuitional investigators, and opens up as great a problem as the 8th sphere seemed once to be and still perhaps is. But we may ask if on Globe A — unseen by us — the archetypal process does not obtain?

The Path

TRANSMIGRATION OF SOULS — *Hadji Erinn*

"Is there any foundation for the doctrine of transmigration of souls which was once believed in and is now held by some classes of Hindus?" is a question sent to the *PATH*.

From a careful examination of the Vedas and Upanishads it will be found that the ancient Hindus did not believe in this doctrine, but held, as so many theosophists do, that "once a man, always a man"; but of course there is the exception of the case where men live bad lives persistently for ages. But it also seems very clear that the later Brahmins, for the purpose of having a priestly hold on the people or for other purposes, taught them the doctrine that they and their parents might go after death into the bodies of animals, but I doubt if the theory is held to such an extent as to make it a national doctrine. Some missionaries and travelers have hastily concluded that it is the belief because they saw the Hindu and the Jain alike acting very carefully as to animals and insects, avoiding them in the path, carefully brushing insects out of the way at a great loss of time, so as to not step on them. This, said the missionary, is because they think that in these forms their dead friends or relatives may be living.

The real reason for such care is that they think they have no right to destroy life which it is not in their power to restore. While I have some views on the subject of transmigration of a certain sort that I am not now disposed to disclose, I may be allowed to give others on the question "How might such an idea arise out of the true doctrine?"

First, what is the fate of the astral body, and in what way and how much does that affect the next incarnation of the man? Second, what influence has man on the atoms, millions in number, which

from year to year enter into the composition of his body, and how far is he — the soul — responsible for those effects and answerable for them in a subsequent life of joy or sorrow or opportunity or obscurity? These are important questions.

The student of the theosophic scheme admits that after death the astral soul either dies and dissipates at once, or remains wandering for a space in Kama Loka. If the man was spiritual, or what is sometimes called "very good", then his astral soul dissipates soon; if he was wicked and material, then the astral part of him, being too gross to easily disintegrate, is condemned, as it were, to flit about in Kama Loka, manifesting itself in spiritualistic *seance* rooms as the spirit of some deceased one, and doing damage to the mental furniture of mortals while it suffers other pains itself. Seers of modern times have declared that such eidolons or spooks assume the appearance of beasts or reptiles according to their dominant characteristic. The ancients sometimes taught that these gross astral forms, having a natural affinity for the lower types, such as the animal kingdom, gravitated gradually in that direction and were at last absorbed on the astral plane of animals, for which they furnished the sidereal particles needed by them as well as by man. But this in no sense meant that the man himself went into an animal, for before this result had eventuated the ego might have already re-entered life with a new physical and astral body. The common people, however, could not make these distinctions, and so very easily held the doctrine as meaning that the man became an animal. After a time the priests and seers took up this form of the tenet and taught it outright. It can be found in the *Desatir*, where it is said that tigers and other ferocious animals are incarnations of wicked men, and so on. But it must be true that each man is responsible and accountable for the fate of his astral body left behind at death, since that fate results directly from the man's

own acts and life.

Considering the question of the atoms in their march along the path of evolution, another cause for a belief wrongly held in transmigration into lower forms can be found. The initiates could teach and thoroughly understand how it is that each ego is responsible for the use he makes of the atoms in space, and how each may and does imprint a definite character and direction upon all the atoms used throughout life, but the uninitiated just as easily would misinterpret this also and think it referred to transmigration. Each man has a duty not only to himself but also to the atoms in use. He is the great, the highest educator of them. Being each instant in possession of some, and likewise ever throwing them off, he should so live that they gain a fresh impulse to the higher life of man as compared with the brute. This impress and impulse given by us either confer an affinity for human bodies and brains, or for that which, corresponding to brutal lives and base passions, belongs to the lower kingdoms. So the teachers inculcated this, and said that if the disciple lived a wicked life his atoms would be precipitated down instead of up in this relative scale. If he was dull and inattentive, the atoms similarly impressed travelled into sticks and stones. In each case they to some extent represented the man, just as our surroundings, furniture, and clothing generally represent us who collect and use them. So from both these true tenets the people might at last come to believe in transmigration as being a convenient and easy way of formulating the problem and of indicating a rule of conduct.

The Path

LOSS OF THE SOUL: II — *Harij*

(Continued from March No.)

Students are often puzzled and greatly exercised over the question as to how occult power comes with a knowledge of the laws of occultism. Theoretical knowledge of spiritual things, no matter how correctly and completely given out, is altogether barren in most minds, for the reason that they see no connection between the spiritual truth and its practical application and effect on the physical plane. Many have formally accepted the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood, but how that principle can really work toward the unfolding of their own higher principles and powers, except as this unfolding is a direct reward conveyed to them by the interposition of a Mahatma, they seldom see. Most persons can see in the spirit of altruism a sufficient basis of ethics, and yet fail to see in this same altruistic spirit the occult law that leads to very high powers when honestly held and intelligently apprehended. Many members of the T. S. seem to think that they are held to the practice of altruism, while advancement in occult knowledge is indefinitely, if not unnecessarily, postponed. Expectancy thus leads often to disappointment, and finally to apostacy — not to the Society, or to its Great Teacher, but to their own Higher Self. Volumes have been written just at this point, aiming to show that if the *motive* be sincere and unselfish, and if all ulterior aims are lost sight of, the reward comes with the motive. The *Bhagavad-Gita* makes this very clear in what it says regarding devotion to the supreme spirit, and the relinquishing of the reward of action; and this as the final destruction of Karma.

This same principle is involved in the problem now under discussion. Just as the mystical *Aum* is the potential epitome of all

forces and activities in man — the rhythm and the melody, the singer and the song — even so with this divine spirit of altruism; it is potential on all planes, and by no means confined to the ethical. It involves power no less than conduct: wisdom no less than beneficence.

Let us look upon man as an expanded germ, the "*dark nucleoli*" being still, as in the original germ, the evolving and involving center (*laya-center*). Let us also make thinkable, if not tangible, man's sphere of influence, the "atmosphere" he carries with him, that magnetic sphere that all feel who touch it and are consciously attracted or repelled. Dr. Sibley summarizes this and gives a beautiful illustration in his *Occult Sciences* as the "invisible perspiration", that vapory and invisible emanation containing in solution or suspension all essences or potencies of the man. This emanation, then, is definite in power, in density, in form, and in extent. Let us call it man's *personal atmosphere*. The physical body of man, then, is *suspended* between this *laya-center* within and the "personal atmosphere" without; and here are the play and inter-play of forces, the evolution or out-flow of forces from center to environment, the involution from the universal fountain to the *laya-center*. At any moment of his life man is a focalized adjustment, a *suspended life*, between these inner forces and outer conditions. The *laya-center* is the seat of self-consciousness in man; the motor, the generator, the focalizer of his conscious life. The "personal atmosphere" is the field of differentiation, and it penetrates to the *laya-center* as the very warp of life, in which man weaves the pattern of his aims and ideals. These ideals are either personal or universal. The predominating currents are either concentric, drawing all things to itself (contractile), or they are excentric, emanations toward the universal (expansive). If the life currents expand, the field of consciousness grows, and the stream from the One Life expands

and increases also. The laya-center becomes more and more a channel of the Infinite life, and the "personal atmosphere" expands and becomes more pure and more powerful. The individual approaches the universal; the finite pushes toward the infinite; the limitations of the personal expand toward the impersonal; the temporal approaches the eternal. But suppose the predominating currents are concentric, and, as Bohme calls them, "astringent and bitter", the personal atmosphere becomes more and more dense, like a stagnant pool, or, rather, malarious like a foul morass. Man thus contracts the laya center, shuts up the windows of his soul, and differentiates downward, becoming more and more driven toward and anchored upon the animal plane. He lives in his senses and appetites till they become cloyed and turn to bitterness and pain. The laya center becomes atrophied because it has failed to expand by use, failed to draw from the fountain and to pass on that healing stream. He has, thus burned out the oil in his lamp of life, and contracted the holy vessel, the divine *Upadhi*, till it no longer "reflects the light of the Logos." He has, in short, alienated his Higher Self, and at last cut the golden thread that united his self-consciousness with the Divine *Mahat*. The light of the Logos still shines on as before, but he has defaced the mirror that reflected it down into the planes and principles of his complex being. He has sought to stem the evolutionary wave, that all-compelling breath of Brahm; and seeking the line of greatest resistance, pitting his puny personality against the Universal, he is wrecked on the sea of time and quenches his light in darkness.

That which renders man's journey through matter, sense, and time so long and so painful is his vacillation, his indecision. His wavering will is that "Satan" that "goes to and fro". Seeking continually all for self, and yet unable to silence the divine "voice" that dwells within his laya-center, he continually "sins" against

this "Holy Ghost", and as continually "repents". Incarnation after incarnation he feeds on the dead-sea apples that turn at last to dust and ashes in his grasp. He tries every avenue of escape, knock at every door of the senses, seeking happiness that way.. Unwilling to relax his hold, and trying to drag through the Golden Gates of eternal life the dead carcass of his desires, he at last either despairs or *determines*; and his final determination sets his life-currents squarely toward the eternal sea of life or toward the Stygean pool. He at last comes consciously to "the place where two ways meet", and signs the compact with his soul. It is either altruism or egotism; all for humanity, or all for self. If he inflicts pain without compunction, seeks his own desires at whatever cost to others, and thus stifles the cry of humanity, his brother's blood is upon his hands, and the *love of evil for its own evil sake* marks the last station at which he alienated his divinity and sacrificed his humanity. People have been lulled to sleep over the very fumes of this Stygean pool, by the theological juggling of vicarious atonement and the special favor or anger of a Jewish tribal deity that was made to depend, not on character, not on the altruism of Jesus, but on the orthodoxy of the Church, the judgments of men regarding intellectual belief. These intellectual and theological jugglers have oft inflicted torture without compunction, and sought power and aggrandizement at whatever cost to humanity; and they have thus glorified the apotheosis of selfishness. If one wishes to find the sum of all villainies, let him read the anathemas of the Pope promulgated against the Masons or the Spiritualists; and yet these ravings of diabolism are published in secular journals with only mild reproof! The orthodoxy of Protestantism has been no better than a timid duplicate of popery, till the masses repudiated the whole brood, only to deify selfishness in their own way and follow their several roads to destruction. Can any thing be further from the Sermon on the Mount and the altruism of Jesus? Religions thus

degenerated become, not savers of souls, but as mill-stones around the necks of all humanity to drag them to destruction. And yet even some members of the T. S. are disposed to criticize that Brotherhood that have kept for ages the Secret Doctrine from such horrible degeneracy; criticized and condemned them because they do not follow the very lead of Constantine and the "Holy See". Had this Wisdom Religion once been lost and its last custodian departed, what power in the three worlds could have helped humanity? Century after century it is filtered into corrupted religions and intuitive souls from its unseen source, where, pure as the snows of the Himalayas, it dwells from age to age. It is voiced by every one who in sincerity and in truth preaches and practices Universal Brotherhood, for in that one principle is embodied all the "law and the prophets", the Keys of Knowledge, and the sign of power. Without this, there will never be within the T. S. a "school of magic or a hall of occultism", over which a Master will preside. With it, honestly held and intelligently applied, all wisdom, truth, and power will follow. If we see one given over to cruelty, regardless of the rights of others, hypnotizing another soul into imbecility and nonentity for fame or gain to self, we may justly conclude that he is nearing the gates of destruction, and when he delights in torture, knows no mercy, and loves evil for its own sake, he has alienated the divinity which could strive no longer within the temple altogether defiled. Vivisection and hypnotism are the newest and surest roads to this horrible consummation, for their inspiring motive is the demon of CRUELTY.

The Path

IS THEOSOPHY A PESSIMISTIC PHILOSOPHY? — *Bandusia Wakefield*

I shall not discuss the question as to whether Buddhism is a pessimistic philosophy, but simply say that Theosophy is not Buddhism, neither is it any other particular religion, but the truth underlying all religions.

In answer to the question, "Is Theosophy a pessimistic philosophy," I say *no*.

Consulting the dictionaries, I find the substance of the definitions of pessimism to be (a) "Pessimism is the doctrine that this world is the worst possible." (b) Pessimism holds that the universe sprang from nothingness and is tending toward nothingness, which it may ultimately reach; this doctrine being associated with the feeling that existence is an evil, (c) "Pessimism is a tendency to look on the dark side of life and exaggerate its evils."

(a) The worst conceivable world would be one that is continually *growing worse*. Theosophy does not look upon our earth as such a world, but as a stage in the evolution of a part of the Universe, an evolution which tends ever to something higher and better, though not in a straight line but a spiral; that is, a cyclic evolution progressing through alternate periods of activity and rest, and on each renewal of activity after rest proceeding toward perfection onward from the point last attained. There is nothing of true progress lost during rest that has been previously gained during evolutionary activity. That cannot justly be called a pessimistic philosophy which teaches that things are growing better instead of worse.

(b) Theosophy does not hold that the universe sprang from

nothingness, or that it is tending toward nothingness. Neither does it count existence an evil. Theosophy teaches that the Universe sprang from One Absolute and Eternal Reality, Spirit, one of whose aspects is Substance, whose lowest manifestation is matter. While the limitations of Spirit by matter bring about what we call evil, still these limitations are necessary for the individualization of spirit. The experiences which come through these limitations, the temptations, the struggles, the failures and the triumphs, all have their part in the development of the individual soul. These are necessary to the attainment of virtue, the growth of a strong, heroic, purified soul. The antagonism of evil is essential to the manifestation of good. We need to know darkness to thoroughly appreciate the light. The soul loses nothing that it has gained through its experiences, but carries its spoils with it. So Theosophy does not consider existence an evil, but an essential condition to the attainment of the highest good.

(c) Theosophy is not "a tendency to look on the dark side of life and exaggerate its evils", for it teaches the reign of justice. It holds that each individual has his own destiny in his own hands, that his present is the result of his past, and that his future will be what he makes it, that he reaps what he sows. This is the law of Karma. Hence no Theosophist has any reason to complain of either fate, Providence, or the law of heredity; for he has inherited according to his deserts, being drawn by a law of attraction to that parentage, that home and those conditions, for which his past lives have fitted him. So, instead of complaining, he has simply to sow the seed of good, and a harvest of good will follow; but as all humanity is linked together, he must help to lift the race in order to lift himself.

KARMA — *J. Campbell Ver Planck*

The Law of Karma, or Action, is one of the chief teachings of oriental philosophy. It is stated to be a universal Law, having its root or basis in the outbreathing (action) and inbreathing (reaction) of the Brahm, the Great Breath or Unseen Mover, from whose motion in matter (substance) all things are evolved.

There is one thing which we may predicate of Action; that is, Reaction. This fact indicates the method of Karma. Karmic Law manifests on or in various planes of life, and differs with that plane wherein it acts. Newton expressed one mode of Karma upon the physical plane when he formulated his first law of Motion; viz. "Action and Reaction are equal and opposite in direction." Physiologists and psychologists tell us that this rule holds good in Emotion, and in nervous action and reaction also. The Western bible expresses Karma for the moral plane when it says: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked. What ye have sown, that shall ye reap." This ethical causation, this moral reaction, this conservation and intercorrelation of mental, moral, and psychic energy, is also Karma.

We can imagine that when a man does a selfish deed or thinks a selfish thought, it goes forth into the swift and subtle aetheric world as a specific vibration, colored, so to say, with his mental and moral coloring, bearing his stamp, as it were, in that vibratory ratio which is his own. We can fancy it issuing, a tireless energy, into that aether which powerfully responds to the tremor of a thought, and thus affecting, modern Science tells us, the far stars with its dynamic palpitation. On the confines of a system this energy must return, and it does thus react, naturally along the line of least resistance, to the sphere or base from

which it emerged and which powerfully attracts it, bringing with it all that it has gathered to itself in the course of that long journey, and taking effect in manifold ways upon the doer, the creator, to whom it has returned. Nor is this return always made in the same brief human life. Hence we have Reincarnation as the companion or extension of Karma. The soul is drawn back to earth life again and again by the return or re-awakening of its dormant energies, self-engendered and responsive to material planes of being. The one Substance, Akasa, Mulaprakriti, *Aether* — call it as you will — that from which all things are evolved, is, by virtue of its atomic constitution and magnetic laws, the great Agent of Karma. Through it, all things and beings, in it immersed and by it saturated, become the minor instruments of the Law.

Karma is, in fact, Action and Reaction, as we have said. All that is, has been, or will be done occurs by virtue of this Law of Cause and Effect; all Action is the result of previous Action. Its justice is perfect, its equilibrium unshaken. It provides that all things shall return to their source. Amid myriad tangential causes its delicate adjustments and readjustments are unerring, because every action has its due balance and effect.

Imagine the reverse of the case above stated, and conceive an unselfish man, acting only from a sense of duty, and in accord with the progressive tendency of evolutionary Law. As by its light he sees that mankind are one and inseparable, his acts will have no personal coloring. They create no specific self-condensed and contrary currents or discords in the aetheric medium, but pass out into the harmonious ocean of life about us, in waves as universal as its own. Bearing no personal impress, they have no cause to return to his sphere, which then pulsates with the surrounding harmony and broadens into the eternal.

Some persons say that Karma is "cruel", because it "punishes

those who do evil without knowing of this Karmic Law". But Karma does not punish. That is incorrect and slovenly speech. How can Action punish? Action reacts; that is all. A selfish action cannot react as a good one, any more than an apple seed can bring forth a fig tree. We must expect to receive back our action in kind. When the unconscious child puts its hand into the fire, we do not say fire is cruel because it burns the child. We recognise here the action of a Law of the physical plane. We respect it as such. But Karma is equally a Law of many planes, and cannot be bribed or bought off any more than fire can be so dissuaded. The burnt adult suffers more than the child, for his imagination enters into the matter. So he who knowingly does a selfish deed, defying Karma, suffers, in its reaction, upon moral and mental planes; whereas he who has done evil in ignorance of Karma, probably has only the lower forms of reaction to bear.

All action is Karma and causes new Karma. Deeds of men and of nations; social conditions; mental limitations, joy, sorrow, life, death, health, disease, rapture and pain; all are the effects of previous action, whether of individual men, of nations, or of races. We bear our part in national Karma, and suffer, as units of that nation, for deeds not committed by our individual selves. But Karma — our past actions — brought us into that place and nation, and to such consequences, while also in Devachan there is compensation for the individual for such trials as he has not merited in his single individual capacity.

We hear talk of "interfering with Karma", but this is absurd, impossible. If to one is awarded penance or suffering, to another it may be given to relieve that suffering. It may be your Karma to be menaced by dire consequences, and mine to avert those consequences. Suffering, too, is one means of the soul's expansion and advance, so that it may be "good" Karma, while a place amid earthly ease and immunity from sorrow is often contractive and

disastrous to the soul. More disastrous still is that repression of sympathy and help when chilled by the reasoning faculties, which forbid us to "suffer with all that lives". We cannot swerve Karmic Law. It may be retarded, but returns with compound interest.

The Law is divine. We do not make it. We only set in motion causes which this pre-existent Law of Action and Reaction returns to us as effects. We engender these causes, and, in regard to them, we exercise free will, at least until the innumerable causes, reacting, stultify that will.

In action alone is the registration of all deeds and thoughts; their impress upon the One Substance constitutes the true book of Judgment. Thus Karma is the only rightful Judge. It alone can fitly punish and reward, for in it alone is full discernment. As true Love consists in perfect Justice, *impartial to all alike*, so is this Law one of universal Love. It alone impels the soul, through experience of the misery of Self, to expansion into the Selfless and the Universal.

Yet there is one escape from Karma. That is, by Becoming it. Duty done for its own sake, regardless of results (for Duty alone is ours; the consequences are in the Great Brahm), acting or refraining from action because it is right to do so, we do thus, by our inward devotion, become one with that Law obeyed by us. No longer its unconscious instruments, we are its conscious agents, parts of itself, hearers and doers of its first great injunction.

"Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin."
(1)

FOOTNOTE:

1. Voice of the Silence ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE MASTER OF COMPASSION — *Elliott B. Page*

"To don Nirmanakaya's humble robe is to forego eternal, bliss for self, to help all man's salvation." Voice of the Silence.

He on whose shoulders falls this robe,
No more of Self shall know;
All unperceived of man and earth,
He shall through Kalpas go;
Unknown, unheeded, disbelieved,
While ages ebb and flow.

The biting wind, the cruel frost,
The blasts of fiendish hate;
The heartbreak of a wretched world,
The cruelties of Fate;
The salt, salt tears of Sorrow's sea
For the Unselfish wait.

No pause for rest, no thought of bliss,
Nor taste of heavenly joy;
Unceasing toil, unceasing pain,
Woe, woe without alloy
Must recompense that stainless one
For all his sad employ.

The Guardian Wall by such is built,
With hearts instead of stones,
By blood and tortures made secure;
Impelled by human groans,
These saintly ones for us forego
All bliss while Mis'ry moans.

HIDDEN HINTS IN THE SECRET DOCTRINE — *William Q. Judge*

(From p. 160 to p. 184, Vol. I.)

MARS AND MERCURY bear an occult relation to the earth which will not be explained. *V. I. p. 163*. This is not because no explanation exists, but because, as said (*p. 164 footnote*), these explanations belong to high grades of initiation.

FIGURES AND NUMBERS the key to the whole system; *V. I. p. 164, last line*. This has often been stated. Among the Jewish cabalists it is said that the Universe is built by number, weight, and measure, and that harmony is the law reigning over all. Now if the hint given be true, that figures and numbers *will not* be given for the above reasons, then it is useless for students to bother their minds about the occult meaning of numbers, as so many now do; for this occult meaning cannot be found without assistance.

VENUS IN HER 7TH ROUND. See italicised para, *on p. 165*, where it is said that that planet is in her last round. This must be her 7th. Hence the men there are as gods to us, and, if the argument from analogy is to be relied on, some of her great light must emanate from those beings and not all be from the sun.

MARS WITH TWO MOONS NOT HIS OWN. See *p. 164, ital. para*. This is taken from the letter by a Master who, replying to the query as to why Mercury and Venus have no satellites, says: "It is because Mars has two to which he has no right and—for other reasons". That is, we infer that Mars absorbed these moons or dragged them off into his orbit at some time enormously distant and still keeps them. They cannot therefore stand to him in the same relation as our moon does to us. One of the "other reasons" may be that, Venus being in her 7th round, all vestiges of old moons

have been sublimated and absorbed into her atmosphere.

ESOTERIC METAPHYSICS must be understood. *V. I. p. 169 last para.* This rule is laid down by the Adepts and is therefore of greater weight than if formulated by a student. It is useless to attempt to master the system on the lines of modern research, which at best are empirical, very faulty, and leading almost always to a materialization of the whole scheme. Meta-physic deals with the real because the ideal, and physical science with the phenomenal and therefore illusory and changeable.

EVOLUTION OF THE MONAD A BASIC PRINCIPLE. *P. 171, 1st line, V. I.* This is laid down with extreme clearness and should not be forgotten. It is not expanded so that inattentive minds may get it through much repetition, but it is postulated once for all. It is still altogether too customary for students to separate the Monads, first from the globes and then from the beings thereon. They cannot be thus divided off. All the globes and their objects are and ever will be monads in stages of evolution, just as we who now study the question are monads ourselves in other stages. The false notion should at once be discarded that there was a time when there were no monads on the globe but that there was here in waiting this ball of earth coming from no one knows where, and that later on monads arrived to occupy it.

If we carry out the principle laid down, then the globe is the creation of the monad; and when the globe is evolved, at once monads needing that experience enter into its corporeality to continue its existence. These later monads are those far behind in the race who will, in some succeeding period of evolution, be in a position to evolve on their own account some new-globe in ages yet far distant, for the carrying on of the same process eternally. For, as a material object cannot spring out of nothing, neither can education or knowledge or ability to plan arise out of nothing, but

must be based upon and flow from some prior experience or education. So it must be that even now there are monads encased in the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms which have never been farther than that, and will during the remainder of the race evolution continue their education in those lower kingdoms until their time shall come when, the door opening for their exit, they will pass out and higher to make room for others.

LIMIT TO NUMBER OF MONADS. Although there can be no such thing as a metaphysical limit to the monads, yet practically, for the purposes of any one manvantara, there must be a limited number of monads included within its evolutionary sweep. Since a manvantara, however vast and inconceivable by us, is wholly a finite period, it sets its own limit—within the illimitable absolute—for the monads attracted to it. This of necessity must be, since the natural world which makes experience possible, being finite because material, sets the limit by reason of its capacity being bounded. *See 1st para. p. 171, V. I.*

THE FATE OF THE ANTHROPOID APES. This interesting question is raised first on pp. 173 and 175 V. I. and not disposed of. There, in describing the course of the evolution of the monad, it is said that the laggards will not be men at all in this cycle *save one exception*. *On p. 184, 2d para*, it seems to be answered. "In this Round * * the anthropoids destined to die out in this our race when their monads will be liberated and pass into the astral human forms, or the highest human elementals, of the sixth and the seventh Races, and then into lowest human forms in the fifth Round." These descendants of men through union with animals will thus be karmically rewarded in the next round after this, instead of having to wait until another manvantara.

ONE WOMAN'S VISION — *Jasper Niemand*

One who had read a legend somewhere repeated it to me thus from memory:

"There was a Greek woman who, being visited by spirits in the guise of two Chaldeans, was dowered by them with transcendent powers and superhuman knowledge, and she was able to behold at once all the deeds that were done in all lands beneath the sun, and was raised high above all human woes and human frailties, save only Love and Death. The woman dwelt alone with the stars and the palms and the falling waters, and was tranquil and at peace, and she was equal to the gods in knowledge and in vision, and was content. Then one day a tired wanderer came and asked her for a draught of water to slake his thirst and lave his wounds, and she gave it, and, giving, touched his hand, and one by one the magic gifts fell from her, and the Chaldeans came no more! In all the vastness of the universe she only hearkened for one voice; her eyes were blind to earth and heaven, for they only sought one face. She had power no more over the minds of men or the creatures of land and air, for she had cast her crown down in the dust and had become a slave, and her slavery was sweeter than had ever been her strength — sweeter far — *for a space*. Then the wanderer, his wounds being healed and his thirst slaked, wearied. He arose and passed away; she was left alone in the silence of the desert — but never more came the Chaldeans.

Thus ran the tale; it seems unfinished and I am moved to finish it.

When the woman had made fair progress and attained into power, it was her right to be tested by the gods. Now we are most tested by Love and by Death.

So, as the tale runs, she was left mourning in the desert. She called upon the Chaldeans and their power, which she had shared; but power comes not at call; we must seize it and make it our own. She cried then to death; but death comes not quickly to those to whom he comes as a friend. It is only as dread warrior and foeman that his approach is swift and terrible. She could not die. In all the world there was left to her only her love; this she could not slay, though now she strove to cast the burden off, and then she clasped it to her burning heart. She could not lie forever thus in the desert. Her great love impelled her, and she arose, thirsting for one more sight of that distant face, determined to follow through the world that she might once more look upon it. She passed from the palms and limpid waters over the burning sands, and, all unseen, her guardian spirit and the spirit of her Ray went with her.

Thus she came into the world, and seeking saw on every hand sin, misery, disease, death, shame, and bitterness, and all the wrong man heaps on man, and all the joys of sense and soul that are the wombs of future pain. Failing to find him whom she sought, she asked herself, "What if he be wretched as these?" And, as her heart swelled with pity at the thought, she strove more and more to help the suffering, to clasp the imploring hands that clutched at her gown, — all for his sake. Learning to love them so, she hoped to forget that master love for one, and hoped in vain, for human love, is strong and tests us as a sword. At last she cried to all the gods. "Let me see him once, and die." So strong the cry, the inner heavens rang with her demand; on it she staked her all, and drew from Karmic powers, in that one gift, all that they held as treasure for her in many a life to come. Her guardian spirit hid its face and trembled, but the spirit of the Ray, the Watcher, saw unmoved.

So she beheld her lover. The man had changed. The fret of life had worn him. His sphere was dimmed by a dark, inpouring tide

that colored all his deeds, impeded his higher aspirations, and mysteriously sapped his life, by him unseen, unknown.

"Call back that evil tide!", she said. And then again, "What is it?"

Her guardian spirit could not answer for tears.

"It is thy love, whose strong barrier resists and impedes the law. Hark to the discord of his sphere," said the Watcher, the spirit of the Ray.

The woman uttered a moan of pity and of shame.

"He is changed. Dost thou love him still?" asked her guardian spirit.

"Better than ever I love and long to comfort him," she answered.

"Behold," said her guardian to the Watcher, "how strong is this love, now purified by pain. Shalt thou not deliver the woman?"

The unmoved Watcher spoke. "When the man came to her in the desert, did she speak to him of the starry Truths of the darkness? Aye, I know that she spoke, but her words were forms devoid of life while her voice — their carrier — cooed the notes of love. Aye, I know that she taught and tended him in tenderness and pity, but did she not ask reward, the reward of his love? What free gift asks a great gift in return? She only asked to serve, sayest thou? Know, Spirit, that in heaven's high hosts are thousands who wait through the passing of cycles for permission to serve, and sometimes ask in vain. Accepted service is the gift of gifts in the power of the Divine. Saw she his soul-spark yearning for freedom from personality and separation? Under that crust which is the outer man, saw she his inner self, the radiant, imprisoned, emmeshed in the web of matter, awaiting a deliverer? No. She saw but her own reflection, the mirrored flame of her own desire. Her image she projected towards him. Her glamour she cast

about him; her own fond yearning, it was that she loved. The imprint she stamped upon him faded, for his guardian spirit stood near. Then the radiant one within impelled him from her. Life bore him away. He passed on to other scenes, dragging after him, unknown but not unfelt, the dark and ever-lengthening chain of her recalling thought. The woman loved herself, so loving love; she to whom power was entrusted by the gods cast it, for self aside."

"Ah! say not so!" the guardian spirit cried. "Was no pure flame behind the smoke; no living germ within the husks of love?"

"Look!" answered the Watcher.

As the woman gazed, spellbound, she saw, above her lover, a shape of superhuman beauty, glorious and full, one of a band of mighty ones, filling the world, strong to aid and to save, interlinked, interdependent, all in one and one in all, the immortal hosts, the higher selves, the higher self of man. Seeing the loved one thus transfigured, thus translated, a cry of joy broke from her lips. "He is free!" she cried.

Then the Watcher bent above her, while the guardian spirit held his breath.

"Shall he become as one of these and pass beyond thee?"

"Oh! take him to that blessed place," the woman said.

"That place is one which men themselves attain. By fortitude; by duty; by self sacrifice; by entire acceptance of the law; he may attain. Or wilt thou — O caviller at the law, constructive of thine own desire, destructive of the universal trend of things — wilt thou detain him on the way?"

"Why may he not go there with my love?" she asked.

"With thy *love*, yes; for *love* makes free what it loves. But not with thy *desire*. The law has parted you in the flesh; who shall withstand that law and not be broken? But love coheres, inheres, and knows not space nor time."

The woman bent her head. From her heart a wild complaint arose. But she had seen the glorious vision; she longed to see her beloved on that way, the path of law. "Set him free", she said.

"But if thy desire recall him —?"

"Hast thou forgotten, Stainless One, or hast thou never known, that true love loves the better self, the shining ideal? I was blind, but now mine eyes are opened. I give him to his higher life, that life which is the law. And I — I bless that law, though it deny me, because it sets him free."

As she spoke, something seemed to break in her heart. Before her swept the great, blinding, glorious vision of a freed humanity, lifted upon the sorrows of such as she, lifted by very force of woe endured, into that shining host. The world that suffered and the world that conquered were one, and all, above, below, were types of souls freeing and set free by higher Love.

"I love the world," she cried, "for all is one."

Upon the face of the guardian spirit there shone a great joy. "Thou hast conquered by love," he said. "There remains only death for thee to meet and to subdue."

The Watcher spoke, "Nay; death is overcome. The only true death is the death of self. She lives for all, her powers reclaimed, restored, for the power of powers is universal love."

Thus runs the tale of truth. If woman knew her power to uplift, before the eyes of man, the splendid ideal, knew her power to nourish and sustain it, she, loving thus, would teach man how to

love, and, freeing him, retain him forever in the higher bonds that knit all souls to Soul.

The Path

IS SELF ANNIHILATION THE END AND AIM OF LIFE? — *Bandusia Wakefield*

No. According to Theosophy our earth-lives are for the purpose of acquiring through experience an education and development which we could not acquire without such experience. Here in the flesh, with the lower self at war with the higher, we must learn to conquer the lower, to sacrifice it to the higher. He who thus loses his life shall find it. This is no small task to accomplish, and one short life is not sufficient for it; hence the necessity for more, if we are to complete our development. We can conquer selfish desires and temptations to do wrong only in the realm where these enemies assail us, in the realm of matter and the body of flesh.

Theosophy does not teach the annihilation of the individuality, either in what is known as Devachan, the rest between earth-lives, or in Nirvana, the rest which comes after a great cycle of development. Those who are not in sympathy with the doctrine of Reincarnation look upon re-entering earth-life as being equivalent to a destruction of the individuality; but such is not the case. The Individuality, or Higher Ego, which consists of the higher mind and the spiritual soul, is that which continues; and it carries with it whatever of each personality is worthy to be preserved; but the present condition of matter in most organisms is too dense for the Higher Ego to impress its knowledge upon the lower mind of each personality, though sometimes in dream and trance states it does this, and there are people who in their normal state believe that they remember past lives. Pythagoras was such an one. When matter becomes more spiritualized in the upward curve of the cycle, and we inhabit more finely organized bodies than our present ones, then will our Higher Ego be able to

impress our lower mind with the memory of the past. Nirvana, which is "conscious rest in Omniscience", or union with the Divine, is not loss but gain. It is entrance upon a larger life, a fuller consciousness, a higher bliss, an ineffable peace. The length of this period of rest corresponds to that of the previous period of activity, and when it is over, then from out the bosom of the Infinite emerge again the Universe and all beings to enter upon another cycle of still higher evolution.

The Path

ATTITUDE TO KARMIC LAW — *Alexander Fullerton*

The consciousness of being under Law affects different minds in different ways. With some it arouses bitter, indignant revolt, a dim sense of helplessness making that spirit more intense. With others there is a feeling of despair: "What matters it how we struggle, since the Law will have its way, caring nothing for tears or agony or desolation?" Others treat the matter with indifference: "As the machinery of the universe is confessedly not in our hands, and as we are anyhow the product of a system of evolution, we might as well act conformably to that stage we have reached, letting the Law look after us, which, indeed, it is its business to do."

Any one of these attitudes would be justifiable if the Law was arbitrary, or one-sided, or imperfect, or mechanical, or heartless, or merely punitive, As a piece of cold mechanism, or as a purely disciplinary force, it certainly can evoke neither good-will nor glad compliance. Some perception of this has influenced the preaching of the modern pulpit. Jonathan Edwards's famous sermon on "Sinners in the hands of an angry God" would be as impossible today as a mediaeval harangue upon the Devil. Priest and layman have alike come to see not only that terrorism will not produce piety, but that penalties which are remote, factitious, and evadeable do not permanently influence conduct. Consequently all modern preaching assumes a different hue. Hell and the Devil are not formally abolished, but are locked up in ecclesiastical museums, where they are treated with great respect, indeed, but whence they are not permitted to emerge. The present appeal is to the Goodness of God, the Power of Motive, the Development of Character, the Christ Principle within, the essential Divinity of Man, and the like. There is less pungency,

but more reality; the lurid has given place to the sunful.

Still, no change of mental tone will abolish facts. If the theological outlook is more good-natured, as well as more hopeful, it has in no wise more clearly perceived either the omnipresence or the wisdom of the great Law of Karma, the fundamental truth in any system which purposes to take men as they are and make them what they should be. And therefore it is that Theosophy proclaims every other system as mistaken and misleading, offering palliatives or nostrums instead of the only remedy which goes direct to the seat of the evil and effects a genuine cure. *Law* is emphasized as unflinchingly as by an Edwards or a Calvin, but it is not imaginary or brutal, it is as replete with rewards as with punishments, and it embodies the perfection of Justice and Wisdom.

A perception of this perfectness, this all-roundedness, is the antidote to every feeling towards Law other than that of cordial homage. Nobody will venerate a power which is ever on the alert for peccadilloes and sins, but passes by good deeds as without its scope. To be really fair, it must be as open-eyed to every worthy act as to the opposite, and recompense right as unfailingly as wrong. Once perceived as utterly just, it can be respected, trusted, obeyed. Men will esteem a record which is photographically accurate, and confide in an administration which they know is honest. Why should they not, when they realize that a high thought, a gentle word, a kind act is as sure of its result as a meanness, a selfishness, or a brutality?

When Law is felt to be absolutely fair, resentment towards it ceases. This is on the same principle as is exhibited in schools where the teacher is seen to be invariably just. Boys do not ask for *no* rule, for the total abolition of all control or oversight, but only that the rule shall be reasonable and right, the control

impartial and judicious. A teacher who is as quick to see merit as shortcoming, who has no favorites and never vacillates, is the one who evokes respect, confidence, and obedience. And in the great Karmic field, the perception that Karma has no distinction of persons or qualities, notes every thought or act of every kind, is beyond all influence and above all cajolery, is spotless in its impartiality and rectitude, brings about confidence, confidence evokes respect, and respect arouses friendship.

It puts an end, too, to despair. The Law cares nothing, indeed, for tears, since dislike to discipline is no reason for withholding it; but as sorrow comes only as effect, never spontaneously, there is no question of a sullen submission to evils arbitrarily inflicted and impossible of escape. When a man knows that there is nothing whatever to prevent his own abolition of suffering, the very consciousness of his resources suffuses him with hope.

Indifference also is cured. True we are evolving. But equally true that we are evolving along the line we prefer. If that line crosses the normal order, and if we are content, for the sake of present satisfaction, to accept all the consequences which *must* follow selfish opposition, the way is certainly open. But, then, neither those consequences nor the contrary ones from enlightened obedience are mere experiences of a stage in development: they are the fitting results of what was a choice. No man is unconcerned over a choice wherein he himself is entirely free, and whereof he himself receives the returns.

Concede the Law of Karma, vindicate its complete pervasiveness and its utter impartiality, show it as full in its notice of good as in its notice of wrong, and you strike the note to which human nature will respond. Men crave Justice from the Higher Powers. They do not ask for unlimited licence, but for fair and equitable treatment. Make them see that Karma, and it alone, supplies this,

and they are content. The moral sentiment is met, the claim to liberty is allowed, the motive to reverence is stirred. And as the grandly generous nature of that Law is disclosed, its copious reward blessing the worthy and its very inflictions tender with reform, it assumes the countenance of a friend, a friend who may be implicitly trusted and should be unswervingly served.

The Path

IF METHUSELAH EXISTED, WHY SO SHORT OUR LIVES? — F. T. S.

At a Theosophical Society meeting the other day, it was stated that in the early races, say the second and third, referred to in the *Secret Doctrine*, man had a much more ethereal body, which lived many more years than Methuselah, the aged. In elaborating this, the objection was advanced that the body of man is now much more compact and stable than it was in those early races, because the atoms of which it is composed know their business better now than then, have greater affinity for certain combinations and for each other, and are not so readily scattered and disintegrated; and, if so, how is it explained that the length of human life now is only threescore and ten years, against several hundred in primitive times?

At first sight this seems to be perhaps a strong objection, but a careful consideration will dissipate it.

In the first place, when the human body was in a nebulous state the friction between the particles was much less than when they had drawn closer together. If the theory of ultimate atoms is admitted, we must also assent to the law that there is friction between them which will develop heat or tend to reduce the cohesive power. The heat evolved will have a tendency to destroy the intervening medium, or at least to so alter its state as to make it useless as a medium for cohesion to act.

Further, if we suppose, as is perfectly justifiable, that there are large and small combinations of atoms in each of which the units are closer to each other, the heat evolved will destroy the constitution of the element, whatever it may be, that is between that combination of atoms and the adjoining one. And, still further, the friction between any two such bodies will also tend to

rub off or draw off atoms from either of two to unite with the stronger, or be thrown entirely out of both collections.

Such a process as described will in the end bring about the disintegration of the entire mass of atoms. Thus at first, the atoms being farther removed, the destructive means can only act at intervals or more slowly than when the union is more intimate, and from this we reach the reason why the age of the combination of atoms would be greater in the one case than in the other.

Coming down to the present period we find that, in addition to the closer association of atoms in the physical frame, there is also another disturbing element tending to destruction of the union, that is, the force of the mind and the emotions.

It is well known that as man increases his brain use and power and the play of his emotions he is able to affect his physical frame thereby. Today many hold that the American people are becoming too nervously organized. This reacts upon the atoms in the body, and must make the average age less than those ancient races when the mental and emotional natures did not have such sway over the human being.

This is perfectly in accord with the *Secret Doctrine*, as it is shown that in the early ages everything went slower in all departments and that now in Kali Yuga all things move with great rapidity.

So it may be properly concluded that the great law of conservation of energy, of correlation of forces, makes it now out of the ordinary for men to live to the age of Methuselah.

H. P. B — *William Q. Judge*

A LION-HEARTED COLLEAGUE PASSES.

"On the shore stood Hiawatha,
Turned and waived his hand at parting;
On the clear and luminous water
Launched his birch canoe for sailing,
From the pebbles of the margin
Shoved it forth into the margin,
Shoved it forth into the water;
Whispered to it, "Westward! Westward!"
And with speed it darted forward.
And the evening sun descending
Set the clouds on fire with redness,
Burned the broad sky, like a prairie,
Left upon the level water
One long track and trail of splendor,
Down whose stream, as down a river.
Westward, Westward Hiawatha
Sailed into the fiery sunset,
Sailed into the purple vapors,
Sailed into the dusk of evening.

Thus departed Hiawatha,
Hiawatha the beloved, * *
To the Islands of the Blessed."

That which men call death is but a change of location for the Ego, a mere transformation, a forsaking for a time of the mortal frame, a short period of rest before one reassumes another human frame in the world of mortals. The Lord of this body is nameless;

dwelling in numerous tenements of clay, it appears to come and go; but neither death nor time can claim it, for it is deathless, unchangeable, and pure, beyond Time itself, and not to be measured. So our old friend and fellow-worker has merely passed for a short time out of sight, but has not given up the work begun so many ages ago — the uplifting of humanity, the destruction of the shackles that enslave the human mind.

I met H. P. B. in 1875 in the city of New York where she was living in Irving Place. There she suggested the formation of the Theosophical Society, lending to its beginning the power of her individuality and giving to its President and those who have stood by it ever since the knowledge of the existence of the Blessed Masters. In 1877 she wrote *Isis Unveiled* in my presence, and helped in the proof reading by the President of the Society. This book she declared to me then was intended to aid the cause for the advancement of which the Theosophical Society was founded. Of this I speak with knowledge, for I was present and at her request drew up the contract for its publication between her and her New York publisher. When that document was signed she said to me in the street. "Now I must go to India".

In November, 1878, she went to India and continued the work of helping her colleagues to spread the Society's influence there, working in that mysterious land until she returned to London in 1887. There was then in London but one Branch of the Society — the London Lodge — the leaders of which thought it should work only with the upper and cultured classes. The effect of H. P. B.'s coming there was that Branches began to spring up, so that now they are in many English towns, in Scotland, and in Ireland. There she founded her magazine *Lucifer*, there worked night and day for the Society loved by the core of her heart, there wrote the *Secret Doctrine*, the *Key to Theosophy*, and the *Voice of the Silence*, and there passed away from a body that had been worn out by

unselfish work for the good of the few of our century but of the many in the centuries to come.

It has been said by detractors that she went to India because she merely left a barren field here, by sudden impulse and without a purpose. But the contrary is the fact. In the very beginning of the Society I drew up with my own hand at her request the diplomas of some members here and there in India who were in correspondence and were of different faiths. Some of them were Parsees. She always said she would have to go to India as soon as the Society was under way here and *Isis* should be finished. And when she had been in India some time, her many letters to me expressed her intention to return to England so as to open the movement actively and outwardly there in order that the three great points on the world's surface — India, England, and America — should have active centres of Theosophical work. This determination was expressed to me before the attempt made by the Psychological Research Society on her reputation, — of which also I know a good deal to be used at a future time, as I was present in India before and after the alleged *expose* — and she returned to England to carry out her purpose even in the face of charges that she could not stay in India. But to disprove these she went back to Madras, and then again rejourneyed to London.

That she always knew what would be done by the world in the way of slander and abuse I also know, for in 1875 she told me that she was then embarking on a work that would draw upon her unmerited slander, implacable malice, uninterrupted misunderstanding, constant work, and no worldly reward. Yet in the face of this her lion heart carried her on. Nor was she unaware of the future of the Society. In 1876 she told me in detail the course of the Society's growth for future years, of its infancy, of its struggles, of its rise into the "luminous zone" of the public mind; and these prophecies are being all fulfilled.

Much has been said about her "phenomena", some denying them, others alleging trick and device. Knowing her for so many years so well, and having seen at her hands in private the production of more and more varied phenomena than it has been the good fortune of all others of her friends put together to see, I know for myself that she had control of hidden powerful laws of nature not known to our science, and I also know that she never boasted of her powers, never advertised their possession, never publicly advised anyone to attempt their acquirement, but always turned the eyes of those who could understand her to a life of altruism based on a knowledge of true philosophy. If the world thinks that her days were spent in deluding her followers by pretended phenomena, it is solely because her injudicious friends, against her expressed wish, gave out wonderful stories of "miracles" which cannot be proved to a skeptical public and which are not the aim of the Society nor were ever more than mere incidents in the life of H. P. Blavatsky.

Her aim was to elevate the race. Her method was to deal with the mind of the century as she found it, by trying to lead it on step by step; to seek out and educate a few who, appreciating the majesty of the Secret Science and devoted to "the great orphan Humanity", could carry on her work with zeal and wisdom; to found a Society whose efforts — however small itself might be — would inject into the thought of the day the ideas, the doctrines, the nomenclature of the Wisdom Religion, so that when the next century shall have seen its 75th year the new messenger coming again into the world would find the Society still at work, the ideas sown broadcast, the nomenclature ready to give expression and body to the immutable truth, and thus to make easy the task which for her since 1875 was so difficult and so encompassed with obstacles in the very paucity of the language, — obstacles harder than all else to work against.

REINCARNATION — *Katherine Hillard*

In Mr. Judge's remarks on Reincarnation last week, he reminded us of the necessity of distinguishing clearly what it *is* that re-incarnates. At the risk of repeating much that has been said already, I should like to say once again, for it can hardly be said too often, that a right understanding of the more abstruse teachings of Theosophy depends upon our being able to free ourselves from materialistic conceptions of spiritual things. The tendency of the human mind is always towards the embodiment of abstract ideas in a concrete form, particularly in the Western World, where the intellect has not been trained in the subtleties of Eastern metaphysics for countless generations. The ordinary intellect, plunged into the sea of abstract ideas, is like a man who does not know how to swim, and is distractedly baffling with the waves. It is in vain to tell him that the human body is lighter than water, and *must* float, if he will but put himself in the proper position and keep still; he clutches wildly at the smallest plank, and feels that only a rope or an oar, or something tangible that he can grasp with his hands, can possibly be of any use to him. Not even when Peter *saw* Jesus walking upon the water, was he able to follow his example.

So the Western mind, launched upon the sea of Oriental metaphysics, grasps eagerly at an image, a metaphor, a diagram, anything that can be seen with the eye and leave a definite trace upon the memory. It is certainly better to have a life-preserver when we are compelled to jump over board, than to be drowned, but we must be very careful that the life-preserver keeps its proper place, and does not hold our heels above water instead of our head. There are certain truths that can be impressed upon the mind by means of images and metaphors, but there are others

that only the intuition can apprehend, and where that is silent, it is in vain to force the intelligence, which is as incapable of the higher insight as Peter was of treading the waves over which his Master passed so lightly.

We are often warned in the *Secret Doctrine* and other books against the danger of accepting as a fact what is meant to be an allegory, but we need to have that warning repeated at frequent intervals. The moss of concrete conceptions will gather on the walls of the temple of Truth, and needs to be scraped away again and again, if the beautiful marble is to be seen in all its purity.

It is impossible to take a right view of the doctrine of Re-incarnation unless we have, to begin with, a proper conception of man's nature. We may talk glibly of the seven-fold constitution of man, and name the seven so-called "principles" in proper order, but let us beware of thinking of them as seven *things*. We might as well try to construct a rainbow by repeating the names of its seven colors. Every day almost, we hear some one say: "I can't bear the idea of Re-incarnation; I don't want to come back to this weary world; when I leave it, I long to have everlasting rest; better annihilation than a return to such a life."

When you ask such a person *what* they think is to return, you will invariably find that it is the *personality*, the man of today, thickly incrusting with a weight of bodily ills, mental fatigues, and physical accumulations of every kind, whims, idiosyncracies, fixed habits. It is the John Smith who stands before you, tired out beneath his earthly load, which he cannot dissociate from his real Ego. He expects to return as John Smith behind the mask of a new body, nothing changed but the flesh; the memory in abeyance, to be sure, but perhaps to revive occasionally in dreams, or in shifting, half-caught glimpses of a former existence;

"Some vague emotion of delight,

In gazing up an Alpine height,
Some yearning towards the lamps of night."

But were the constitution of man as taught in theosophy properly understood, that weary mortal would realize that with death he will lay down *all* the burdens of this life, and that with the body must pass away every thing but the thinking principle, the consciousness, that real entity, whose intelligence, passions, desires, all the lower faculties of mind, in fact, are but aspects of the immortal being within. "There is but one real man", says the *Key to Theosophy*, "enduring through the cycle of life, and immortal in essence if not in form, and this is *Manas*, the mind-man, or embodied Consciousness."

It is difficult indeed to realise the idea of unembodied Consciousness, of immortal mind; perhaps the best way is to recall our own experiences in our highest moments, to recollect how independent of all *personality* was the soul at such moments; how we might have been a King or a beggar for aught we knew or cared when absorbed in the higher existence, even though it were only on the intellectual plane that our freed soul disported itself, and all the mysteries of the Spirit were still far beyond our ken. But such moments of keen thought, of intense feeling, of deep affection, give us glimpses of a state of pure consciousness apart from personality, and this is the reincarnating Ego.

So that the tired mortal may lie down to his last sleep, safe in the thought that he has done with *all* his personal incumbrances, and that not a trace of the existence he has left behind will remain in the being who returns. Not a trace of the *personality* that is, but Karma waits for the reincarnating soul, and as it has sown in this life, the harvest will be reaped in the next.

The farmer may fix his mind upon results, and work purely for the sake of the bushels of grain that he will garner in the fall, but

we must learn, while making every effort to sow the seed of better harvests for the future, to keep our eyes fixed upon the duty nearest us, and give ourselves no concern for consequences. To do the right because it is the right, not because it will be better for us in this life or another, is the true principle.

"Whoever in acting dedicates his actions to the Supreme Spirit and puts aside all selfish interest in their result, is untouched by sin, even as the leaf of the lotus is unaffected by the waters," says the Bhagavad Gita. Let us then devote ourselves to working, each in our own place, for the benefit of all, secure in the knowledge that so eternal Justice and eternal Law shall work with us, for Duty is their child.

"I slept, and dreamed that life was Beauty:
I woke, and found that life was Duty.
Was then my dream a shadowy lie?
Toil on, sad heart, courageously,
And thou shalt find thy dream to be
A noonday light and truth to thee."

The Path

LOSS OF THE SOUL: III — *Hadji Erinn*

(Continued from April No.)

In the study of the occult science and philosophy one is continually coming upon paradoxes, and these at first seem irreconcilable. They seem like flat contradictions, and sometimes so remain for the individual student for two reasons. First: because he is unable through lack of knowledge to apprehend the broad and complex relations involved, and thus to view the subject from opposite grounds or points of observation, and so to reconcile the paradox. A second reason for the obscurity remaining in many minds is the fact that nothing short of a full explanation from the esoteric point of view is capable of reconciling the apparent contradiction; and this the teacher is not at liberty to give; is, in fact, solemnly bound not to give except under strict rules and conditions, and here is the reason why the leader of the present T. S. movement in the visible world, H. P. B., has often been misunderstood and severely criticized. Not even all members of the T. S. seem to have understood the difference between a reconcilable paradox, provided one has the requisite knowledge, and a falsehood. Cases under the first class are too numerous to mention, where lack of knowledge or of ability to apprehend has allowed the paradox to remain a seeming contradiction. As a case under the second class, the discussion in *Theosophist* on the classification of the "principles" in man by a learned high caste Brahmin and H. P. B. may serve as an example.

The idea that all human beings spring from one common root, that all are nourished from one common and eternal fountain of life, and that this common root and this living fountain inhere also in all lower forms of life, seems irreconcilable with that other

idea, that human beings exist in every possible degree of power and of unfolding, and that some are even souless, having lost the divine element, while others are far advanced in the line of the higher evolution and the divine consciousness. It is from the first idea, that of a common inheritance, that the Universal Brotherhood of man logically flows; while it is from the second idea, that of degrees of development and inherent power, that the "sin of separateness" seems logically to arise. With no distinct memory on the part of the individual of any previous state of existence, here *seems* to be an irreconcilable paradox. Children of one common "Father" and heirs of one common life-inheritance are unequal.

Let us suppose that the inheritance was originally equal, and that the difference now seen is the result of profit made by *use* of the original capital; and let us suppose that the law is so framed that he who has given away the most, who has done most to help his weaker brother, has now the most valuable possession. The paradox is thus explained, the law of action thus revealed. The original inheritance was indeed equal, and while the pains and penalties of the poorer brother have been self-inflicted, the more fortunate proves himself a worthy son of his "Father" by dividing his inheritance again and again with his poorer brother. The rich and fortunate, is therefore, not he who selfishly accumulates and tenaciously holds, but he who generously and continually gives. This is, indeed, quite the opposite of the worldly standard, where people honor the rich and despise the poor, and where the intelligent and the powerful despoil the ignorant and the weak. All real, and even all apparent, differences among individuals are the work of their own lives, the issue of their own hands. Man reaps as he has sown, and the problem of individual existence could only be solved through the efforts of the individual himself in working out either his own salvation or his own damnation.

The true doctrine of the vicarious atonement has been misinterpreted and misapplied. "*Christos*" (Buddhi-Manas) suffers not *for us*, but has suffered *like unto us*; has reached the state of at-one-ment through like passions and trials, and through overcoming evil as we must also overcome it. How else could he be our "elder brother"? The sympathy and helpfulness of *Christos* dwell in the "man of sorrows" who *remembers* the poor and the afflicted, the sinning and the sorrowing *which he once was*. *Christos* must have been at one with humanity through suffering, before he could be at-one with divinity through participating in the divine nature.

The elements of weakness, of sin, and of possible failure are then due to man's own efforts; these possibilities are the very terms upon which both personal and individual existence are based. Were it otherwise, were man made perfect and incapable of falling, or diabolical and incapable of rising, he could be nothing in and of himself.

The question was recently asked, "Do you *really* believe in the existence and immortality of the soul?", and the reply was, "Do you *really* question or deny it?" Here both question and answer proceeded from the plane of consciousness. Certain teachings, and even certain forms of intellectual belief that induce certain habits of thought and modes of life, may undoubtedly modify consciousness itself. One may contract or expand, cultivate or destroy, certain forms of consciousness. When the monad reached the human plane and became endowed with self-consciousness, that consciousness involved that divine light from which the higher consciousness springs. This is man's human inheritance, involving also his divine birthright. Then begins the struggle for the Kingdom, for dominion and power, the elements of man's lower animal nature drawing him back, and the powers of his diviner nature drawing him upward toward his immortal

destiny.

Thus the price of self-consciousness is the necessity of conflict; and the experience of conflict is suffering; while its reward is divinity restored to full consciousness in man. The penalty for final failure is not being born in the bodies of animals (metempsychosis), but descent to the animal plane and the final loss of self-consciousness, or the human birthright.

The double inheritance of man from the Lunar Pitris and the Manasa Putras (see *Secret Doctrine*), giving to the original monad Form, Desire, and Mind, constitutes him a complex being. Form and desire ascend from the lower plane; they are evolved. Mind descends from the higher plane; it is involved. Man in his present life is therefore anchored to all below him and heir to all above him. He is up-borne and overshadowed. Were it otherwise, the "germ" — that "*dark nucleole*" — could never expand and become incorporated in full consciousness with Eternal Nature. Man, the microcosm, is potentially Adam Cadmon, the heavenly man or microcosm. Man, therefore, as we know him in the present life, is a potency, a possibility, rather than an actuality. The actuality must be a Power, at one with its creative source, Divinity; otherwise there must eventuate two supreme powers and these antagonistic, which is an absurdity.

Man's present environment and narrow limitations hedge him about like a wall that he cannot overpass; and the more he dwells in his appetites and passions that spring from matter and belong to his animal ego the more closely press the walls about him.

Suppose we consider the planes of man's consciousness as the Spiritual (higher manas), Mental (lower manas), Sensuous (Kama rupa), and the Physical (prana or jiva). Every one is familiar with these planes by experience; hence they may serve to illustrate our subject.

Consciousness in man is derived from Mahat, the universal principle of cosmic intelligence; the foundation principle of all law, proportion, relation, number, form, etc. This principle is what Plato calls "the world of divine ideas". This is the *basis* of consciousness in man, and it is *diffused* throughout all the planes of consciousness in man; the spiritual, the mental, the sensuous, and the physical, as already named. While, therefore, Mahat is *the basis* of consciousness in man, it is not his self-consciousness *per se*. Something more is necessary, viz. a *laya center*. This laya center is the monad, the incarnating ego, that "dark nucleoli" whose impenetrable essence is a "spark" of the one absolute Life and Light. To and from this nucleole ebb and flow the tides of life, of feeling, of thought, and of desire. The under-lying principle, Mahat, gives to these ebbing and flowing tides rhythm, form, proportion; in other words, their Law of Action and modes of expression *potentially*. Their *actual* expression comes from man's desire, his *motive* of action. Through his diffused consciousness man senses, "tastes" experience of action on all the planes named, and from this varied experience he must *choose*. The laya-center holds the *light* to his understanding so that he is not left without a "witness".

Now while the Mahatic principle is diffused through all planes in man as it is diffused through all planes of nature, giving shape to his body as it gives form to the crystal and proportion to chemical compounds, this diffusion occurs in regular order and in concrete degree, because it is coupled with that "spark" of the one life which is the dark and impenetrable center of the "monad". It is the relation and interaction of this center and the Mahatic principle that constitutes *self-consciousness* in man. Each of the "planes of consciousness" in man is a field for the display of his *self-consciousness*, his *field of battle*, and on each plane the "light of the Logos", *i. e.* the radiance from the spark of divine life in the

heart of the monad, is *focalized*. There would thus arise a series of self-consciousnesses, so to say. Each plane, in other words, becomes a vehicle (Upadhi) for the light of the Logos. The Monad or real ego is alone self-existent. It alone *directly* receives the light of the Logos. The "planes" can receive the light only by reflection from the monad. The "planes" of consciousness, therefore, are not self-existent. They have no life of their own, so they receive no light of their own. It thus follows, logically, that if the monad containing the laya-center be separated, alienated, or destroyed, no further light can reach the planes thus separated from the "Father". Their dissolution would thus be only a question of time.

If now it can be shown by experience that a certain mode of life inspired by certain motives or desires tends to expand the laya-center and diffuse its light through all lower planes, and thus ministers to growth, expansion, and permanency, and that the opposite mode of life tends as inevitably to contraction, decay, and death, the consequent salvation or destruction of man's personal consciousness will have been shown to be a *matter of choice*. At every act called death, a separation of elements, and consequently of planes of consciousness, occurs. The physical and sensuous dissolve, leaving only the mental and spiritual, according to our classification of planes. If, therefore, the personal experience has been largely confined to these two lower planes, when the separation occurs at death such experience can have no conscious permanency. If the two higher planes, the spiritual and mental, have been dwarfed during earthly life from lack of use, and been starved by the encroachments of the lower planes, then, although they may accompany the monad into the next stage of existence, they cannot be supposed to convey or to retain the personal self-consciousness, *because they had none or so little to retain*. All of this pertains to the ordinary experience without considering the loss or final alienation of the soul, or

divine spark, the "monad". There can be no *memory* of experience on the physical and sensuous planes because they have no permanent vehicle or Upadhi.

The Path

HIDDEN HINTS IN THE SECRET DOCTRINE — *William Q. Judge*

From p. 184 to p. 192, Vol. I.)

THE IMPULSE OF EVOLUTION is found in the force of the spiritual breath. It is not to be supposed because "human monads" cease to come into this chain of globes that therefore there is no impulse. The term "human monad" means that *monad which having been through all lower experiences is fitted to inform the so-far perfected human body.*

MAN FIRST IN THE 4TH ROUND *p. 187.* The flow of human monads is at an end, except that those still incarcerated in the anthropoids have yet to come in. Full blown — or rather those that have been through all lower experiences — must proceed in their order through the strictly human evolution. The necessities of evolution demand this, and the turning point is reached in the fourth round which represents the square figure or number, and all monads in the lower kingdoms have to go on with the work of evolution in those until the next manvantara. At that time the monads now in human forms will have progressed beyond, thus leaving room for those below to come up higher.

OUR NATURES FROM WHAT. *p. 189.* In the note it is distinctly pointed out that the quotation from Shakespeare about our *natures* being marvellously mixed refers to the part which the Hierarchies of progressed souls throughout the system to which this globe belongs play in giving us our different combinations.

CORRESPONDENCE OF HUMAN EVOLUTION with the nebular evolution and condensation is to be found on these last lines of *p. 191*: "as the solid earth began by being a ball of liquid fire, of fiery dust, and its protophasmic phantom, so did man."

ORIGIN OF WHITE AND BLACK MAGIC. See note *on p. 192*, where it is stated that at the highest point of development of the Atlantean Race — the fourth — the separation into right and left-hand magic, or consciously good and evil thoughts, took place. Under the action of Karmic law and by the reincarnation over and over again of those engaged in these thoughts, the thoughts were preserved in the realm of mind in the double form of mental deposits and astral impressions. The mental deposits were brought back again and again to earth life, and the astral impressions affected all others who came under their influence. In this way not only were seeds sown in individual minds through their own thoughts, but a vast reservoir of good and bad impressions or pictures has been created in the ethereal medium about us by which sensitive persons are impelled to good and bad acts. And all repetitions of evil thoughts have added to the stock of evil thus remaining to affect and afflict mankind. But as the good also remains, the earnest friends of mankind are able to produce good effects and impressions which in their turn are added to the sum of good. There need be no feeling of injustice on the ground that sensitive persons are affected by evil pictures in the astral light, because such possibility of being thus impressed could not have arisen except through sympathetic attractions for them set up in former lives.

The Path

IS POVERTY BAD KARMA? — *William Brehon*

The question of what is good Karma and what bad has been usually considered by theosophists from a very worldly and selfish standpoint. The commercial element has entered into the calculation as to the result of merit and demerit. Eternal Justice, which is but another name for Karma, has been spoken of as awarding this or that state of life to the reincarnating ego solely as a mere balance of accounts in a ledger, with a payment in one case by way of reward and a judgment for debt in another by way of punishment.

It has been often thought that if a man be rich and well circumstanced it must follow that in his prior incarnation he was good although poor; and that if he now be in poverty the conclusion is that, when on earth before, his life was bad if rich. So it has come about that the sole test of good or bad Karma is one founded entirely upon his purse. But is poverty with all its miseries bad Karma? Does it follow, because a man is born in the lowest station in life, compelled always to live in the humblest way, often starving and hearing his wife and children cry out for food, that therefore he is suffering from bad Karma?

If we look at the question entirely from the plane of this one life, the personality, then of course what is disagreeable and painful in life may be said to be bad. But if we regard all conditions of life as experiences undergone by the ego for the purpose of development, then even poverty ceases to be "bad Karma". Strength comes only through trial and exercise. In poverty are some of the greatest tests for endurance, the best means for developing the strength of character which alone leads to greatness. These egos, then, whom we perceive around us

encased in bodies whose environment is so harsh that endurance is needed to sustain the struggle, are voluntarily, for all we know, going through that difficult school so as to acquire further deep experience and with it strength.

The old definition of what is good and what bad Karma is the best. That is: "Good Karma is that which is pleasing to Ishwara, and bad that which is displeasing to Ishwara." There is here but very little room for dispute as to poverty or wealth; for the test and measure are not according to our present evanescent human tastes and desires, but are removed to the judgment of the immortal self — Ishwara. The self may not wish for the pleasures of wealth, but seeing the necessity for discipline decides to assume life among mortals in that low station where endurance, patience, and strength may be acquired by experience. There is no other way to implant in the character the lessons of life.

It may then be asked if all poverty and low condition are good Karma? This we can answer, under the rule laid down, in the negative. Some such lives, indeed many of them, are bad Karma, displeasing to the immortal self imprisoned in the body, because they are not by deliberate choice, but the result of causes blindly set in motion in previous lives, sure to result in planting within the person the seeds of wickedness that must later be up rooted with painful effort. Under this canon, then, we would say that the masses of poor people who are not bad in nature are enduring oftener than not good Karma, because it is in the line of experience Ishwara has chosen, and that only those poor people who are wicked can be said to be suffering bad Karma, because they are doing and making that which is displeasing to the immortal self within.

ABOUT "SPIRIT" MANIFESTATION — *William Q. Judge*

SOME EVIDENCE FROM SPIRITUALISM.

An examination of the records of the past forty years of what is known as the spiritualistic movement discloses a strange state of things, revealing a blindness on the part of that unorganized body of people to the just and logical conclusions to be drawn from the vast mass of facts in their possession. They have been carried away wholly by the pleasures of wonder-seeking and ghost-hunting to such an extent that nearly all of them wish for and seek out only that which they are pleased to call the spirits of the departed. In a former article in this magazine this has been called "the worship of the dead"; and that it justly is.

It is not the worship of those who have died, such as the Hindu and other eastern nations have in their ceremonies for the spirits of the fathers, but it is the running after that which is really dead to all intents and purposes — corpses in fact. For these people stand on the brink of the grave and call for those who have passed away, who are still living in other states, who do not return; and in response to the cry the seekers are rewarded by the ghosts, the ghouls, the vampires, the senseless, wavering shapes, the useless images and reflections of human thoughts and acts of which the vast reservoir of the astral light is full. This and this alone is their worship. It is the seeking after dead images, senseless and conscienceless, moved by force alone and attracted solely by our passions and desires that give them a faint and fleeting vitality.

Yet from the remotest days of the past down to the present time the loudest and clearest warnings have been given against such practices. It is what was called necromancy in the old time,

prohibited in the Christian Bible and the pagan mysteries alike.

Moses, educated among the Egyptians, told his people that they must not run after these things, and the Hindus, warned by centuries of sorrow, long ago declared against it, so that today these so-called "spirits" are known to them as devils. The literature of the Theosophical Society is full of these warnings from the very first book issued by H. P. Blavatsky to this present article. But the spiritualists and their leaders, if they have any, persistently ignore not only the experience of the past but also the cautions now and then given by their own "spirits". For, as is well known to the thoughtful theosophist, mediums, being passive and open to any and every influence that may come their way, often do give out the knowledge in the possession of living men on these subjects.

Many times have learned living occultists entered into the sphere of mediums and compelled them to tell the truth, which has been sometimes recorded and preserved so that it may be inspected afterwards when found in the mass of their history as printed in their journals. To some of this I purpose to refer, for no spiritualist can say with propriety that the evidence given through their own mediums and purporting to come from the "spirit land" is not to be relied upon. If they reject any such testimony from mediums who have not been shown to be frauds, they must reject all. Enough has been given out by those who say they are controlled by spirits to prove the case made by the theosophists, or, at the least, to throw doubt upon the assertions of spiritualists about the summer land and the returning of spirits.

In October, 1887, beginning on the 13th, the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* began a series of interviews with a medium in Chicago in which questions were put to the control by the reporter of that

paper. This "control" was called Jim Nolan, and the medium was Mrs. M. J. Hollis Billing. Her reputation has never been assailed, nor has she ever been accused of lying or fraudulent practice. The place where the interviews took place was 24 Ogden Avenue.

The first question was whether Nolan understood the process of spirit materialization. He, replying from the "spirit world", said he did, and proceeded in substance thus:

"The electrical particles in a dark room are in a quiet condition; they are collected by us and laid upon one another until we have made an electrical form (still unseen). We then take magnetism from the medium or from the sitters in the circle and with it coat this electrical form. After that the form is used by the "spirit", who steps into it and uses it as a form."

This of course proves from the side of the spirits that no materialized form is the form of any spirit whatever, for certainly electrical and magnetic particles are not spiritual. Nolan then proceeds:

"Another way is this: We gather these particles to which I have referred, and, going into the astral light, we reflect upon them the face of some spirit and thus a reflected image of a spirit is seen. Or, again, we collect these particles into a sheet or plane surface, take chemicals from the atmosphere with which to coat them over, and then (at the request of the sitters) reflect upon this surface a face, and you see the features of the deceased or other person."

From this it follows inevitably that no real face of any spirit is seen, and as the images are taken from the astral light the whole thing is full of deception. At the request of the sitter the operating "spirit" finds in the astral light any desired face, and then goes through the form of reflecting it upon the prepared surface. Now

all of this on the part of Jim Nolan is very scientific, much more so than the mass of nonsense usually heard from "spirits", yet it has passed unnoticed because it is a deathblow out of their own camp to the claims of spiritualists that the dead return or that spirits can materialize, and raises up the horrid suspicion that they do not know, never can know, who or what it is that speaks and masquerades at their *seances* and behind the forms said to be materializations of spirits. It at once opens the door to the possibility that perhaps the theory of the theosophists is right, that these spirits are only shells of dead people and that nothing is heard from them except what may be found on the earth and in the earthly lives and thoughts of living people. But the second question was in regard to the identity of "spirits" among many materialized forms, and the reply was:

"It is very rarely in cases of materialization that over two or three forms are used for the whole number of reporting spirits. Really, what would be the use in building house after house for every one who wishes to go into it for some special purpose?" What use, truly, except to prove that spirits do come back in the way claimed by spiritualists? But what he says upsets the identity of any materialization. If two forms have been used by five or more spirits to show themselves in, it of course results that none of them have shown themselves at all, but that some force or intelligence outside the circle or inside the medium has done all the talking by means of access to the astral light where all the pictures and all the images are forever stored up.

Nolan. "The materialized form shown never belonged to the physical part of that spirit. It consists of chemical, electrical, and magnetic particles or elements from the atmosphere." At the sitting of October 27th in the same year he said:

"The Astral Light spoken of by ancient men is what we call

magnetic light. All the acts of life are *photographed in the astral light of each individual*; the astral light retains all those peculiar things which occur to you from day to day." And again, on the 12th of January, in reply to the sixth question, the same "spirit" said: "We gather these electrical particles together and with them form a house, as it were, into which we step; they are no more a part of the spirit than the chair on which you sit."

Nothing could be plainer than this. Out of the mouth of the "spirit" who has never been charged with being untruthful it is proved that the astral light exists, that it contains all images of all our acts and of ourselves, and that these images are reflected from that other side to this, and are mistakenly taken by the ghost hunter for the faces, the bodies, the acts, the speech of those who have gone the great journey. So, then, just as we have always contended, all these sittings with mediums and these materializations prove only the existence, powers, and functions of the astral light. As the frequenters of *seances* are not behind the scenes, they cannot say who it is or what it may be that operates to produce the phenomena exhibited. It may be good spirit or devil; more likely the latter. And therefore the great Roman Catholic Church has always insisted that its members should not run after these "spirits", accounting them devilish and asserting that all these powers and forces are under the charge of the fallen angels.

It is seldom, perhaps not once in a century of materializations, that a spirit such as that called Jim Nolan would be so foolish as to give out correct information as he has done in the sittings referred to; for the nature and habit of the elements who work at most of these *seances* is to bring about and continue delusion. But going a step farther, I say that in the case of Jim Nolan it was no "spirit" of dead man and no elemental that spoke and acted, but the spirit, soul, and intelligence of a living man who chose to take

the name of Nolan as being as good as any other, in order that the evidence might be recorded for the benefit of the spiritualists in their own camp and in their special investigations, of the truth of the matter, as an offset to the mass of stuff gathered by the elementals from the brains and confused thoughts of mediums and sitters alike. This evidence cannot be razed from the record, although so far it remains unnoticed. It must stand with all the rest. But while the rest will fall as not being in accord with reason, this will remain because it is the truth as far as it goes.

The Path

THE SOLIDARITY OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY — *Alexander Fullerton*

The one-ness in any association must result from a common conviction enlivened by motive. Unless men have something in common they will not associate, and that something is what prompts the association. But mere abstract beliefs are inadequate to cause cohesion: only when they are vitalized by a purpose does magnetism set in.

Such is the genesis of all unions. A stock company expresses visibly the facts that certain individuals are convinced that a certain business department may be profitably exploited, and that they desire to secure the gain. A Public Library means that various citizens believe in literature as ennobling and wish to bring it within their own reach. A Charity Hospital presupposes that its founders felt unrelieved suffering to be an evil, and were anxious to aid in its cure. So in every other organization of units. There is first a belief, then a motive, then a combination to effectuate it.

It is obvious also that when either the belief clouds or the motive weakens, the association is abandoned. The stockholder sells out if he scents failure in his Company, the reader resigns from the Library when he has lost interest in books, the subscriber to the Hospital withholds his subscription as his philanthropy abates. Persuasion is hopeless unless the belief is restored or the motive revived.

The Theosophical Society exemplifies the facts exemplified in every other Society. Men do not enter it, any more than other bodies, without a reason, nor amalgamate with it without an impulse, nor remain in it when these expire. There must have

been some inducement to its formation, and the same inducement must recruit its membership.

As to mere condition to entrance, nothing could be simpler, — belief in the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood, beyond which there is no exaction. But this is an abstraction, not of itself prompting to membership. Even the wish to express it would alone hardly influence a man to join, he being already a member of the Universal Brotherhood, Humanity, and not particularly needing to say so. If he joins, it can only be because he has further convictions and desires to give them practical force. If we scrutinize the motion resulting in our own entrance into the Society — a surer disclosure than dry speculation, we shall find it, I think, in the assurance that some finer truth is contained in the term "Theosophy" than is discerned elsewhere and without, and in the wish to ascertain it for our own benefit and to promulgate it for that of others. Just what that truth may be, how many or how defined its departments, what its range or certainty or value; how strong the purpose to acquire it; how vigorous the desire to extend it; may as yet be indeterminate. But that Theosophy holds truth, that some portion of it commends itself to our intelligence and moral sense, that we crave further light and fuller action, — these seem the combined facts which moved us to seek admission.

Very varied are the degrees and nature of this primary experience. Sometimes it is little more than curiosity, weariness of unsatisfying systems suggesting that this novel field may promise better. Sometimes there is an instinctual grasp of the fact that a whole region of thought and motive, so decidedly a revelation to Western eyes and so evidenced from history and literature and physical marvels, *must* contain pearls of great price. Sometimes a particular doctrine instantly evokes assent as eminently rational in itself and as solving difficulties hitherto

hopeless, and the inference arises that a philosophy so satisfying on one point may be equally so on others. But whatever the amount of life in the germinal thought, the very slightest life produces interest, and the thought and the interest point to union with the Theosophical Society.

As a member identifies himself with the studies and the work of the Society, and in exact proportion as he does so, there come a light into his mind, an assurance into his heart, a transformation into his life. The spark spoken of in *Light on the Path* enlarges, swells into a gleam, a flame, warming and shining through every part of his being. His perplexities abate, his doubts dwindle, his perception becomes more acute, and his knowledge expands. Conscience softens, sympathy grows, intelligence strengthens. Life has a new meaning, a rich purpose, as the decaying notions of earlier days are supplanted by the now developing vitalities of a real Nature. If with steady hand he represses the habits which tie him down to animal routine, and if he encourages the higher nature to every flight, and if he consecrates his means to that great aim of spreading broadcast the truths which are saving him and may save the world, — thus living the life and dispensing it, he daily frees himself more and more from the limitations which distress and thwart, and revels in that sunny liberty which only they enjoy who are in harmony with the Universe and its Law. Theosophy has not only convinced him, it has emancipated him: the Society is more than an association, it is the almoner of blessings to a world.

There is, of course, a converse process. It is where the original interest has died down, the more tangible affairs around it displacing it, and so Theosophical thought fades away, Society meetings lose charm and are deserted, membership becomes distasteful and is silently dropped or formally repudiated. As the doctrine has no longer vitality, neither has the impulse to

promulgate it, and the lack of sympathy with the Society very properly leads to retirement from it.

The real cohesiveness of members, the magnetic force which draws them together and overcomes all tendencies to disunion, is the conviction of certain truths, coupled with the desire to extend them through the world. This is the case also with a Church. But a great distinction separates the two. The Theosophical Society does not hold to a collection of doctrines as revealed by God, but as ascertained by man with the powers God has given him; nor as transcending reason and to be received with unreasoning faith, but as demonstrated by reason and verified better as it enlarges; nor as remote from practical human life, but as exemplified throughout it and in every item of it. The Society does not missionize because ignorance of doctrine loses the favor of the Almighty, but because it imperils the well-being of men; nor does it attempt to proselyte or to threaten or to persuade, but only to make known that all may examine; nor even to make known as a perfunctory duty, but because it perceives that only through knowledge of the Laws of Life can life ever be corrected and made happy and progressive. It points out evil and the cure for evil precisely as a sanitary engineer expounds the conditions to healthy homes and bodies; not at all as a policeman who enforces an arbitrary proclamation from his Chief. Hence its spirit and its motive and its method have no ecclesiastical analogy, and it is as far from a Creed as it is from a Ritual.

This distinction made, the solidarity of the Theosophical Society is evidently in the tenacity with which its members hold to Theosophy, and the self-forgetful zeal with which they disseminate Theosophy abroad. Solidarity is not in numbers. Mere formal membership creates no strength, excites no effort, produces no result. Belief in Universal Brotherhood is a dead belief until it prompts exertion for the benefit of that

Brotherhood, and the exertion is aimless if it has no definite purpose, and fruitless if the purpose be unintelligent or ill-considered. Study of Aryan religions or psychic powers gives cohesion only so long as a student for selfish objects thinks he gains by union, and will never lead to large or generous altruism. If the members of the Society are to be welded into compact strength, a strength to withstand attack from without and dissension from within, it can only be as they are pervaded with the great warmth of a common conviction and a common mission. The conviction is that Theosophy is a truth, that it expresses the actual facts in the universe and the actual mode of man's spiritual advance, that as a philosophy and a religion it is not speculative but demonstrated. The mission is that this truth shall be so proclaimed that every ear may hear and every willing heart respond, that ignorance shall be everywhere dispelled and the way thrown open to intelligent choice, that no one shall continue in darkness and mistake and progressive misery through any causes but his own will. Such union is the counsel of our Elder Brethren. In the MSS. of an Adept it is written: "Have solidarity among yourselves like the fingers on one hand. Each member should strive to feel so towards the other". Filled with Theosophic doctrine and burning with Theosophic purpose, the members of the Society will have a solidarity no antagonisms can overcome; and as their own assurance deepens with larger knowledge and more copious experience, and as their consecration becomes more heartfelt, more intense, more unreserved, they will see in limitless measure the triumph which is as yet but partial, and rejoice that the treasure they have best valued by straining to dispense has become the delight of all humanity, the common patrimony of the Universal Brotherhood.

SOLIDARITY AT ANY COST — *Jasper Niemand*

The motto of the faithful student should be: "SOLIDARITY *at any cost.*"

For when in the impersonal he sinks the personal:

When to the union of the many he subordinates the limitations of the few:

When for the centralizing instinct of the personality, he substitutes the centrifugal intuition of the individuality:

When, with Thought fixed upon the homogeneity of all, he has forgotten the attractions of his separated mind:-

When, regarding his lodge as one body and his fellow students as each necessary to the functions of that body, he cares for the right thought and right action of each unit as if it were himself:

Then he has mounted the first step of that ladder which leads to the Eternal, and has entered upon the fulfilment of the saying:

"Tis from the bud of Renunciation of the Self that springeth the sweet fruit of final Liberation."

Learning thenceforward to look upon his lodge, not as a thing physical and separate, but as an entity existing in the spiritual world only by virtue of its perfect unity, he regards thought as the essential condition from which all right action and true Being proceed, and purifying his mind he realizes that as the real battleground whereupon he and his comrades must succeed or fail.

We Always Help — *Jasper Niemand*



"INGRATITUDE IS NOT ONE OF OUR FAULTS." WE ALWAYS HELP THOSE WHO HELP US. TACT, DISCRETION, AND ZEAL ARE MORE THAN EVER NEEDED. THE HUMBLEST WORKER IS SEEN AND HELPED. ∴

To a student theosophist, serving whenever and however he could, there came very recently — since the departure from this plane of H. P. Blavatsky — these words of highest cheer from that Master of whom H. P. B. was the reverent pupil. Attested by His real signature and seal, they are given here for the encouragement and support of all those who serve the Theosophical Society — and, through it, humanity — as best they can; given in the belief that it was not intended that the recipient should sequestrate or absorb them silently, but rather that he should understand them to be his only in the sense that he might share them with his comrades, that his was permitted to be the happy hand to pass them on as the common right, the universal benediction of one and all. The Divine only give to those who give. No greater cheer could well be vouchsafed to earnest workers than the assurances of which these sentences are full. Not a sincere helper, however obscure or insignificant in his own opinion, is outside the range of that watchful eye and helping hand. Not one, if he be sincere, fails to commend himself to the "gratitude" of the highest of the hierarchy thus far revealed to us. Every deed is noted; every aspiration fostered; every spiritual need perceived. If in some dark hour the true helper imagines himself forgotten, supposes his services to be slight in value or too frail for remembrance, these sentences reassure him in all their

pregnant significance; they send him on his arduous way refreshed and strengthened with the knowledge that he can "help" Those who help all. Nothing but ourselves can shut us away from Them. Our own deeds are our Saviors.

How, then, can we best help? Another and much beloved Master — He who first communicated with the western world through Mr. Sinnett — once wrote that there was "hardly a member unable to help" by correcting prevailing misconceptions of Theosophy and by clearly explaining its teachings to outsiders. There are comparatively few of our members yet able to do this, and reasoning along this line we see that the great want in the theosophic ranks today is

A THEOSOPHICAL EDUCATION.

At the present juncture the theosophical movement exhibits, both in England and the United States, an astonishing activity, a tenacious and all-embracing vitality. Never before in its history has numerical growth been so rapid: one hundred applicants in ten weeks in the dull season here, and four new branches already since the "death" of H. P. Blavatsky. The moment of depression upon the departure of our great Leader from the objective world was so brief as to be scarcely noticeable. Then, all at once, as if inspired by gratitude, by fidelity, by all the promptings of full and loyal hearts, the Society made a bound forward, impelled by the efforts of its individual members towards Solidarity and increased usefulness. The tide of popular opinion is turning. Press comment has become more favorable and more reasonable in the better newspapers; more virulent and extreme in the lower ones, sure sign of our steady — and to them irritating — advance. Each day a swifter momentum is discernible. And on all sides theosophists are found saying and writing, "What can I do for the Cause?" This question is put forward out of lives hampered by

care, limited in opportunity, wherein ease is scant and leisure brief, yet it comes so earnestly, so frequently, that reply must be made.

The pressing need of our Society today is a theosophical education, a sound grounding in theosophical teaching. Our members require clearer comprehension of theosophic truth. They lack, in large part, ability to explain the groundwork of the theosophic scheme in simple, direct language to inquirers. They are not able to give a terse, plain account of the faith that is in them, nor their reasons for holding it. Dazzled by the vastness of the universal plan which theosophic works reveal in glimpses only, they have not realized the desirability, the necessity, in fact, that they should be able to give a clear account of our belief, to themselves in first place, and afterward to others. The composite nature of man, for example, in itself so explanatory of the problems of life, they do not wholly grasp and cannot expound. They are vague, — and Theosophy is considered vague. They are tongue-tied, — and theosophical thought is believed to halt. Their shortenings are all attributed to Theosophy. Most of our students read discursively. Many are unable to present a few fundamental ideas to the understanding of the average man, who inquires or listens, on the trains, or on the streets, at the close of a hard day and with brains already weary with headwork, a man whose life of fevered haste and effort at money getting is so crowded that he has not ten minutes to give to eternal salvation itself, if it were offered to him, while he is often as unconscious as a child to the importance of his thought as affecting his future destiny. Nor can we dispel this unconsciousness, or arrest his attention, until we are able to set before him a few well-digested and apposite facts. Practical, applied Theosophy appeals to him. Basic truths he is ready to understand. He does not yet aspire, perhaps. His devotion slumbers; his mental need is stifled: but give him plain

facts, and he listens. The unity of Religion, the Law of Action and Reaction, the necessity for Reincarnation along the line of the persistence of Energy — here are things he will grasp, retain, augment, if they are explained in their bearings upon daily life and its inexplicable, haunting sadness and misery.

Here is a service more needed than any other, which any student can render. The study of the *Key to Theosophy*, as one studies a grammar, the mastery of some one given subject, followed by an effort to write it out, or to speak it, in one's own language for one's self only at first, would assist the student to fix the chief points in his own mind, as well as to express them clearly. A few moments of such study daily, even weekly, would be of immense use to all. We do not need to read so widely, to think so discursively, to have knowledge so profound, or to run so far afield after occult mysteries and laws. We do need, and that urgently, to simplify our thought, to express it lucidly, briefly; to clarify our knowledge *and to live what we know*.

The opportunity thus afforded for doing good is incalculable. All about us are persons straining at the tether of their creeds, eager to break away to pastures of living Truth. Before the great mysteries of Life they stand dumb as the brute, but with enlarged capacity for suffering; endowed with the reason which in the brute is lacking, but which in the man of today receives little support, scant sustenance from all that he has been taught heretofore. If such a man be met, at the critical moment, by a theosophist willing and able to explain and give reason for what he believes; to indicate the bearings of theosophical truths upon the mental, social, and other conditions of the present time; to point out the relations of Karma and Reincarnation to universal law as partly known to the average mind; the value of the service rendered thus becomes evident, the need of self-education among our members is perceived.

The subject must be studied as we study any other. One branch after another may be taken up, each being the object of meditation and reading until we can render a clear account of it to ourselves in our own words, illustrated by our own experience. It is better to know a little very thoroughly, and to frankly say that we know no more (which always placates an inquirer and inspires confidence in our sincerity), than to seek to impress others by the wide range of our thought. We may incite wonder but we shall not convince or aid. It may seem an insignificant path to point out when one says, "Educate yourselves." It is, in fact, an initial step which is also the final step, for it never ends. And if the enlargement of our own minds, the amplification and serenity of our thought, the clarification of the nature, the knowledge that we have helped others towards these priceless advantages were not sufficient reward for the faithful lover of his kind, reward for labor, inducement for further endeavor, then surely the greatest, the final incentive comes when he remembers that he can help Those who "build the wall" to protect humanity, that he may become Their co-laborer, himself a part of that living wall. The truest way to help is by clearly learning and clearly imparting theosophic truths. It is only done by not straining too far, by educating one's self gradually and thoroughly from the root up, with frequent trials of our own definiteness of idea. Classes may be formed wherein the members examine each other: there are many ways when the wish and will are strong. Hand in hand with this effort goes the higher Education. It is Patience. With Patience and knowledge he develops his full power of helpfulness; he becomes great by becoming a greater servant of his fellow-men.

"Life is a sheet of paper white
Whereon each one of us may write

This word or two — and then comes night.

Greatly begin! Though thou have time

But for a line, be that sublime:

Not failure, but low aim, is crime"

Duty is the proper use of the present hour. This calls upon us to train ourselves that we may come to the assistance of our fellows who founder in quagmires of thought, in the musty accumulations of centuries. If we would help them, we must show ourselves masters of our ideas and ourselves. There is a way to it: — that way is in steady self-education.

The Path

ARE WE DESERTED? — *William Q. Judge*

Following on the departure of H. P. B. from the scene of action, some weak voices in the Society have asked, "Have the Adepts deserted us?" This question has also come from those who are not weak in character, but who certainly do not understand very clearly what the Adepts are or how They work. And in the use of the term "Adept" are included also "Mahatmas", "Brothers", "Masters".

That these beings exist we have no manner of doubt, since for those who have studied in the right way plenty of proof has been offered; for others the proofs exist within themselves. The former class has had tangible evidence in the way of letters and appearances of the Adepts before their eyes; the latter long ago concluded that the Masters are necessities of evolution. Those who received proof palpable were those whose karma and past work entitled them to it; the others, having in previous lives gone through the experience and the argument, now quickly decided that, inasmuch as there are grades of intelligence and wisdom and power below ourselves, so there must beyond us be still other grades, all leading up, *ex necessitate rei*, to the Adept or Master of whatever degree.

Now in the Society's ranks there have always been three mental positions held in respect to the question whether or not the Adepts — once admitted as existing — have anything in particular to do with the Theosophical Society. These are, *first*, that they have; *second*, that they have not; *third*, sometimes doubt about it, at others surety that they have, — in fact, wavering.

Those who think that the T. S. movement is merely a natural development of thought cannot be affected by the present

discussion; the first and third classes are interested in the matter. To those it should at once occur that in the West the idea of the existence of the Adepts and of Their connection with our movement was first brought forward in this century and in our Society by H. P. Blavatsky, who, consistently throughout her career, has declared that the Adepts — whom she was pleased to call her Masters — directed her to engage in this work and have always helped and directed her throughout. That They should so direct her and then desert the Society she founded merely because her body came to its dissolution seems so illogical as to be unthinkable. Many persons have affirmed to the reception of messages in writing from the same Masters, in which They said that some of Their efforts were for the benefit of the T. S. Among these persons we may mention Mr. A. P. Sinnett, who has never abandoned that position, and who today possesses a great number of such letters. Why should the unseen founders withdraw Their help when the work of the Society has but just begun to have its due effect upon the age? There seems to be no reasonable reply.

Once that we admit the existence of the Adepts and that They have adopted the T. S. as one of Their agents in this century for disseminating the truth about man and nature, we are bound to suppose that ordinary common-sense rules would govern as to the continuance of help or its withdrawal. Now one of the most obvious conclusions is that the Society should not be deserted until it had accomplished its mission or had utterly failed. Sixteen years of steady work show an enormous effect produced upon the thought of America, Europe, and Asia; but that portion of the work has been in the line of fighting against odds and breaking down of opposition, with a beginning in this sixteenth year of an interest in the doctrines brought to the attention of the West by the efforts of our members. From that we must, as reasonable and

foresighted beings, deduce the necessity for continuance of assistance. It is plain that our work of clear promulgation and wise building-up is still before us. Why then should the Adepts desert us? Still no reasonable reply can be found.

But considering what we know of the motives and methods held and pursued by the Adepts, we cannot for a moment suppose our real founders and constant helpers could yet leave us to fight alone. In letters and messages from Them we read that Their motive is to help the moral — and hence external — progress of humanity, and Their methods to work from *behind the scenes* by means of agents suited for the work. Those letters and messages also say that the agency is not restricted to one person, but that all sincere lovers of truth are used to that end, whether they know of it or not. The departure of H. P. B. does not remove the other sincere lovers of truth from the scene, nor does it prevent the Adepts from sending messages if needed. Such messages have been received before H. P. B's departure by persons in no way connected with her, and have since that sad event also come to encourage those who are entitled to such encouragement. The contents of these are not for the public, nor indeed for any one save those to whom they have come.

Yet even if no such messages had been received, there is ample evidence, for those who are not blind, of the help of the Masters. For, as They said long ago that the work would be helped, so it has been; no other reason can be given for the increase of the work in America, since the personal effort put forth by the members will not account for the spreading of the movement. And now let it stand as a prophecy made in the messages spoken of, that in the kingdom of Great Britain and in Europe there will in five years be seen a similar spreading of Theosophy. Let no one of us, then, be in any way cast down. As the Masters exist, so They help us; and as we deserve, so will They repay.

The Path

A HISTORICAL PARALLEL — *Rev. W. E. Copeland*

A comparison between the Christian Church during the first sixteen years of its existence and the Theosophical Society during the same period of its existence, with special reference also to the next five or ten years in each case, may bring some encouragement to those who feel that the death of Madame Blavatsky has taken the life out of the Theosophical Society.

During the first sixteen years of the Christian Church, including in that period the three years during which tradition reports that Jesus was with his disciples, the progress was slow; a few churches were formed in Asia Minor, and that was all. Twenty or thirty churches, whose membership was largely confined to the least influential people in the large cities, was all that could be shown as the fruit of much earnest work. These churches were established among people all speaking the same language and living the same lives. They were all to be found in a territory not much larger than one of the great Western States of this Republic. No one outside the membership knew much about them, and they had absolutely no influence in moulding the thought of the communities in which they were established. Their place of meeting was concealed from the public gaze. No more unpromising beginning for a great religion could well be imagined.

Consider now what has been done in Theosophy since Madame Blavatsky organized the Society in New York in 1875, just sixteen years ago. There is no civilized nation on the earth where there is not a branch of this society. In the New World and in the Old, among Buddhists, Brahmins, Parsees, Mahomedans, and Jews, as well as among Christians, it has been established. The movement

in America keeps pace with the movement among the people of India. It has succeeded in doing what Christianity in 1800 years has not done; it has organized a Universal Brotherhood into which come people of every nationality and of every religion. It has overstepped the caste distinctions of India, which have heretofore absolutely separated one caste from another.

Theosophy has taken hold of people of all degrees of intelligence, and many of the most brilliant thinkers of the world have enrolled themselves as members. In sixteen years theosophy has reached a place which Christianity had not attained in six hundred years, partly, of course, in consequence of the modern means of rapid communication and of rapid diffusion of knowledge.

Not only are these Branches of the Theosophical Society established in all parts of the earth, but true truths which make the value of the Wisdom Religion have modified the thought of the world. Newspapers and magazines devote columns to Theosophy; writers of fiction base their novels on Theosophical truths; even the priests of different religions, slowest of all to be affected by new truth, are profoundly influenced by Theosophical thought. Reports of Theosophical meetings find a welcome in the great dailies of Europe and America. There has been through the effect of Theosophic thought a great reaction from that gross materialism into which the so-called civilized nations were sinking deeper every year. Science has been compelled to modify some of her most positive affirmations, and ideas received from the Wisdom Religion are now not only tolerated but welcomed by teachers of Science who once taught only materialism. Theosophy has compelled the thoughtful people of Asia, Europe, and America to consider its claims and give a fair discussion to its prominent doctrines. All this, indeed, largely through the wonderful genius of Madame Blavatsky. That genius can work for us no longer, but

what has been gained through her prodigious efforts and marvellous self-denial will never be lost.

When Jesus died it seemed to the little band of Christians that all was over, that the seed which their loved Master had planted was doomed to die without bringing forth a single flower. But the reverse proved to be the fact. While Jesus lived the disciples leaned upon him, they did no thinking for themselves, they were content to listen to his ever new expositions of truth. After his death, when they were awakened to the value of the truth which he had entrusted to their charge, they began to think for themselves, and there appeared a missionary zeal which would content itself with nothing less than the conversion of the world. Timid Galilean fishermen became all at once bold proclaimers of the truth; men of no education enthused by the truth which had been given them travelled and preached and organized. While Jesus lived, the truths of Christianity were confined to the disciples and the small audiences which Jesus addressed. After his death these truths were promulgated to the world at large, and were listened to by people in various parts of Asia Minor and along the Mediterranean.

Now with the departure of the founder of the Theosophical Society will come a similar experience to the members of that Society. The truths of Theosophy are identical with the truths of Christianity as taught by Jesus, which were the same as had given life and power to the religions before the time of Jesus. These truths will arouse among all members an enthusiasm such as prevailed among the early Christians. No longer able to depend on the chosen instrument of those who know, Theosophists must depend upon themselves, and, devoting more time to study and contemplation, they will make rapid progress, and there will soon be quite a body of men and women able to assume the office of teacher. Even should we have no additions to the truth already

received, we shall digest that truth and make it such a part of our lives that, truth-inspired, we shall be able to do a work impossible to perform while we were always in the expectant attitude waiting for something more from our leader.

Judging from what was accomplished by Christianity in the ten years following the death of Jesus, we may expect a prodigious advance in Theosophy and nothing less than the conquest of the intellectual world, nay more, of the whole world, whether intellectual or not. When we see what has already been done, and note what progress the truths of Christianity, the same as the truths of Theosophy, made after the teacher had gone from among his pupils, we may look for a genuine conversion of the world; and what seems to many an injury will prove the greatest of blessings.

The Path

THE ALLEGORY OF THE CUP — *Katharine Hillard*

When Rabelais' hero, Pantagruel, has completed the long and toilsome voyage of discovery that he makes for the benefit of his friend Panurge, the two arrive at last at the shrine of the Divine Bottle, to which they are guided by the illustrious Lantern, emblem of the light of Truth. The whole description of their progress through the underground region in which the temple they seek is built, is full of the symbolism of initiation, through whose manifold tests the travellers are obliged to pass. The mystical seven planets, with their appropriate jewels and metals, are represented here, and the twelve signs of the zodiac, with other astronomical figures, are painted upon the dome over the fountain, which is itself shaped like a heptagon within a perfect circle. From this temple the neophyte, specially arrayed for the ceremony, is conducted to the inner shrine, a round chapel built of transparent stone of richest workmanship. Within it is another seven-angled fountain, in the midst of which stands the Divine Bottle, a pure, oval crystal. The hymn of invocation having been sung, the oracle pronounces the one word "DRINK!"

And the priestess dismisses the seekers with these words: "Here below, in these circumcentral regions, we establish as the sovereign good, not to take and receive, but to impart and give; and we reckon ourselves happy, not in taking much of others' goods, but in imparting and giving of our own to our fellows. Go, friends, in the protection of that intellectual sphere of which the centre is everywhere and the circumference nowhere, that we call God. All philosophers and ancient sages, the more surely and pleasantly to accomplish the road of divine knowledge and the pursuit of wisdom, have esteemed two things necessary — the guidance of God and the love of mankind. Now go, in the name of

God, and may He be your guide!"

It is easy to see the identity of this Divine Bottle with the sacred cup or consecrated drink of all nations. The Greek and Roman gods drank from the cup of Hebe or Ganymede (two personifications of the same idea), and the priestesses of their oracles also drank deep draughts of the sacred beverage before they prophesied, as in India the Soma juice still inspires the Brahmin at the altar. In the second Book of Esdras, ch. XIV, Esdras is commanded by a vision to re-write the burnt books of the law, and to prepare him for the task he is told by the Voice, "Open thy mouth, and drink that I give thee to drink." "Then opened I my mouth," says Esdras, "and behold, he reached me a full cup, which was full as it were with water, but the color of it was like fire. And I took it and drank: and when I had drunk of it, my heart uttered understanding, and wisdom grew in my breast, for my spirit strengthened my memory."

In the 2nd volume of *Isis*, p. 560, we are told that in the sacred rites of Bacchus (from which the ceremony of the Eucharist was derived) the hierophant-initiator presented symbolically before the final *revelation* wine and bread to the candidate, who partook of both in token that the spirit was to quicken matter, that is, that the divine *Wisdom* was to be revealed to him. And in a note to p. 228, Vol. I, of the *Secret Doctrine*, we read that "Soma is with the Hindus the father, albeit illegitimate, of Buddha Wisdom," that is, that occult knowledge comes from a thorough understanding of lunar mysteries, or, taking Soma as the sacred beverage, that wisdom, "albeit illegitimate," follows the drinking of it.

With the ceremony of the Eucharist and its sacred vessels is closely connected the symbolism of the Holy Grail, the principal *motif* in the legends of King Arthur.

The stories of the Holy Grail are all to be traced back to the legend

of St. Joseph of Arimathea, who was said to have brought to Britain from the Holy Land the sacred vessel of the Last Supper. In the French prose romance of the *Saint Grail*, it is said that St. Joseph, having obtained leave from Pilate to take down the body of Jesus from the cross, first went to that upper room where the Last Supper was held, and found there the shallow bowl from which Christ was said to have eaten the paschal lamb with his disciples. And into this cup, as the body was lowered from the cross, fell many drops of blood from the still open wounds. "According to Catholic theology, where the body or the blood of Christ is," (points out Mr. Thomas Arnold)," there, by virtue of the hypostatic union, are His soul and His divinity." The Grail therefore becomes a divine marvel and mystery, a worker of miracles and wonders. By the Grail, St. Joseph's life was sustained in prison for forty-two years without food, and from it he imbibed also the food of spiritual wisdom. Wherever we find the symbol of the bowl, the bottle, or the cup, the idea, is expressed or implied of divine wisdom as its contents. So in Hermes Trismegistus, as translated into French by Menaro, we read: "God did not create all men with Intuition, because he wished to establish it in the midst of the souls of men as a prize to strive for. He filled a great bowl with it, and sent it by a messenger, ordering him to cry to the hearts of men: 'Baptise ye, ye who can, in this bowl; ye who believe that you will return to Him who has sent it, ye who know wherefore you are born!' And those who answered the call, and were baptised in this Intuition, these possess the *Gnosis*, and have become the initiated of the Spirit, the perfect men. Those who did not understand the call possess reason but not Intuition, and know not wherefore and by whom they were formed. Composed alone of passions and desires, they do not admire that which is worthy to be contemplated, but give themselves up to the pleasures and appetites of the body, and believe that this is the end of man. But those who have received

the gift of God, judging by their works, O Tat, are immortal, and no longer mortal. They embrace, by intuition, all that is in the earth and in the heavens, and all that there may be above the heavens. Disdaining all things corporeal and incorporeal, they aspire towards the One and the Only. This is the wisdom of the Spirit, to contemplate Divine things, and to know God. This is the blessing of the Divine Bowl."

Sometimes the symbol of the *cup* is transmuted into that of the *well* or *the fountain*. In a note to p. 551 of *Isis Unveiled*, V. II, H. P. B. says: "The 'well,' in the kabalistic sense, is the mysterious emblem of the Secret Doctrine." "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink," says Jesus (John vii, 38), and therefore Moses, the adept, is represented sitting by a *well*, to which the *seven* daughters of the Priest of Midian come for water. And in the story of the woman of Samaria Jesus sat by a well, and used it as the symbol of spiritual wisdom. "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again," said Jesus, "but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." (John iv, 13-14.)

As the fountain of Moses had seven priestesses, the fountain of Rabelais seven angles, so the mystic fountain of Boccaccio (in the *Ameto*) is surrounded by seven nymphs, for "Wisdom has rested her house upon *seven* pillars." Prov. ix, 1.

When we come down from the symbolism of the Middle Ages to that of modern times, we find the story of the Holy Grail most beautifully retold by Tennyson. If he has omitted the incident of the drops of blood that fell from the figure upon the cross into the Cup, he has restored another point in the old legends of King Arthur quite as significant, the story of the "Siege perilous" of Merlin, that magic chair that always stood vacant, for Merlin had

declared that therein

"No man could sit but he should lose himself."

But Sir Galahad, the maiden knight, burning with desire to find the Holy Grail, caught the true meaning of the oracle, and crying "If I lose myself, I save myself!", sat down in Merlin's chair.

"And all at once, as there we sat, we heard
A cracking and a riving of the roofs,
And rending, and a blast, and overhead
Thunder, and in the thunder was a cry.
And in the blast there smote along the hall
A beam of light seven times more clear than day:
And down the long beam stole the Holy Grail
All over covered with a luminous cloud,
And none might see who bare it, and it past.
But every knight beheld his fellow's face
As in a glory,"

and then it was that all the knights present swore a vow to ride for a year and a day in search of the Holy Grail, because they had seen not itself, but only the cloud that covered it. But Sir Galahad, having "lost himself, to save himself", had seen the Holy Grail descend upon the shrine, and move before him like a blood-red star, to guide his steps. Sir Percival comes up with him as he is nearing the end of his quest, and Sir Galahad bids his friend come with him to watch his departure to the spiritual city. And Sir Percival went, and saw, stretching out across a great morass, an ancient way

"Where, link'd with many a bridge,
A thousand piers ran into the great Sea.
And Galahad fled along them bridge by bridge.
And every bridge as quickly as he crost

Sprang into fire and vanish'd, tho' I yearned
To follow; and thrice above him all the heavens
Opened and blazed with thunder such as seemed
Shoutings of all the sons of God: and first
At once I saw him far on the great Sea,
In silver-shining armor starry-clear;
And o'er his head the holy vessel hung
Clothed in white samite or a luminous cloud.
And with exceeding swiftness ran the boat,
If boat it were — I saw not whence it came.
And then the heavens opened and blazed again
Roaring, I saw him like a silver star —
And had he set the sail, or had the boat
Become a living creature clad with wings?
And o'er his head the Holy Vessel hung
Redder than any rose, a joy to me,
For now I knew the veil had been withdrawn.
Then in a moment when they blazed again
Opening, I saw the least of little stars
Down on the waste, and straight beyond the star
I saw the spiritual city and all her spires
And gateways, in a glory like one pearl —
No larger, tho' the goal of all the saints —
Strike from the sea: and from the star there shot
A rose-red sparkle to the city, and there
Dwelt, and I knew it was the Holy Grail,
Which never eyes on earth again shall see."

In *Lucifer*, for Oct., 1888, Mr. Ashton Ellis had a fine article on the *Parsifal* of Wagner, whose hero is identical with Tennyson's Sir Percival. Speaking of the Holy Grail, Mr. Ellis says: "Is not this the Divine Wisdom of the ages, the *theosophia* which has been ever jealously-guarded by bands of brothers, and to which, in the

words of the drama, there leads no path, nor can any one find it unless it guide his footsteps?" (as Sir Galahad was guided). . . "Sought by no earthly paths, found by no course of learned study, set in a spot whence Time and Space have fled away, this is the eternal well of changeless truth." And as Mr. Ellis points out, "when the spirit of Love and divine Compassion has conquered the world, then the command shall be 'Unveil the Grail, open the shrine!'"

And so we come back to the teachings of that great, but grossly-misinterpreted soul, Rabelais, to find that his priestess also declares that the two things necessary to the pursuit of Divine Wisdom are the guidance of God and the love of man. The oracle of the Divine Bottle has but one word to say to the listening soul, — "Drink!"; but is not this one word equivalent to the saying of Jesus, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink"? Both oracles imply the same thing, an effort on the part of the applicant. The water of Wisdom is to be had for the asking; but that "asking" is not a mere formula; it is labor as well as prayer. "To reach Nirvana one must reach self knowledge," says the *Voice of the Silence*, "and self-knowledge is the child of loving deeds." Before a man can become a vessel of honor fit for the Master's use, he must have purified himself from all sin, and then the Divine Wisdom will fill his soul.

In studying the words of the seers upon the subject of Intuition, or Spiritual Wisdom, we must remember that the spirit has to do with things of the spirit, not with the concerns of every-day life. When Rabelais' hero first set out in search of the oracle, the question upon his lips related only to the advisability of marriage, but to such queries the oracle gave no response. When Laurence Oliphant felt that "intuition" bade him follow another man as a god, he mistook the nature of intuition, which is not active upon this plane and could take no cognisance of individuals. That is the

property of *instinct*, and is but an extension of that faculty of the animal soul that we see developed to such an extent in the likes and dislikes of dogs, for instance. Give to Caesar the things which are Caesar's; do not expect the Divine Spirit to do your fortune-telling, or to direct your daily comings and goings.

There is another source of confusion, sometimes, in the fact that wisdom, or intuition, is spoken of in both an active and a passive sense, as a process and as the result of that process. So we may think of intuition as the clear light that shines in upon the soul and enables us to see truth, or we may think of it as the sense of vision by which we apprehend that truth. In the teachings of theosophy we speak of *Buddhi* as a passive principle, the vehicle of Atma, or as an active principle whose vehicle is Manas. All depends upon the point of view; upon whether we begin at the top or at the bottom of the scale. But though, in thinking of the prism, we may think of the yellow as following the green or preceding the orange, we cannot place it between the violet and the red. Instinct may guide the reason, but intuition enlightens the soul. For intuition is one with that Wisdom which is "privy to the mysteries of the Knowledge of God," and "in all ages entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God and prophets."

The Path

HIDDEN HINTS IN THE SECRET DOCTRINE — *William Q. Judge*

(From p. 192 to p. 200, Vol. I)

THE ASTRAL LIGHT is not in its nature truth revealing or "good". *Note 2, p. 197.* "It stands in the same relation to Akasa and *Anima Mundi* as Satan stands to the Deity. They are one and the same thing *seen from two aspects.*" It may be said that the astral light is the next step above material concerns. It is the first field into which the seer steps in his progress, but it is dangerous because misleading, and misleading because it reverses all things, as well as being the chief reservoir for the bad or material deeds and thoughts of men. Because it is strange, new, and extraordinary, it influences those who see in it, since it presents images of a weird character, and just from its newness and vividness those who see in it are apt to consider it to be of consequence. It is to be studied but not depended upon. Somewhat as the brain has to accustom itself to the reversed image on the retina — turning it straight by effort — so the inner senses have to become accustomed to the reversals made by the Astral Light.

THE FALL INTO GENERATION is explained from p. 192 to p. 198, *Stanza VI.* Necessarily this raises the question "Why any fall whatever?" The author says: "It was the Fall of Spirit into generation, not the fall of mortal man." Hence, if this be true, man has not fallen, but is, for this period of evolution, on the way upward. Spirit in order "to become self-conscious must pass through every cycle of being culminating in its highest point on earth in man. * * It is an unconscious negative abstraction. Its purity is inherent, not acquired by merit; hence, to become the highest Dhyān Chohan it is necessary for each Ego to attain to full self-consciousness as a human, that is, a conscious, being — Man." (192-193) So the

question, why any fall if it was pure originally, is based on the assumption that to remain in a state of unconscious abstraction is better. This cannot, however, be so. When a period of evolution begins, with spirit at one end of the pole and matter at the other, it is absolutely necessary for spirit to proceed through experience in matter in order that self-consciousness may be acquired. It is a "fall" into matter so far as the fact is concerned, but so far as the result and the object in view it is neither fall nor rise, but the carrying out of the immutable law of the nature of spirit and matter. We ignorantly call it a fall or a curse, because our lower consciousness does not see the great sweep of the cycles nor apprehend the mighty purpose entertained. Following the lines of the philosophy elsewhere laid down, we see that at the close of each grand period of evolution some Egos will have failed to attain the goal, and thus some spirit — if we may say — is left over to be again at a new period differentiated into Egos who shall, helped by Egos of the past now become Dhyān Chohans, once more struggle upward. Such is the immense and unending struggle.

STATES AND PLANES OF CONSCIOUSNESS in Kosmos and Man. *p. 199, 2nd and 3rd paras.* It is here stated that of the seven planes of consciousness three are above the entire chain of globes to which the earth belongs, and that the earth is in the lowest of the lower four. But in man, as said here, there are seven *states* of consciousness which correspond to these seven *cosmical planes*. He is to "attune the three higher states in himself to the three higher planes in Kosmos." Necessarily he must have in him centres or seats of energy correspondingly, and, as the author points out, he must awaken those seats to activity, to life, before he can attune them to the higher planes. They are dormant, asleep as it were.

FIRST AND SEVENTH GLOBES of the chain are in the Archetypal plane. *Page 200, note to diagram.* That is, that on the first globe of the chain — A — the whole model of the succeeding globes is made or laid down, and upon that evolution proceeds up to the 7th, where, all having reached the highest stage of perfection after seven rounds, the complete model is fully realized. This is distinctly hinted in the note, for she says: "not the world as it existed in mind of the Deity, but a world made as a first model to be followed and improved upon by the worlds which succeed it physically — though deteriorating in purity." The reader will remember that in another place it is plainly said that on Globe A man appears, but that in the second round the process changes. If we assume, as we must, conscious Beings at work in the scheme of evolution, they have to create the mental model, as it were, of the whole planetary chain, and this has to be done at the time of the first globe. The plan is impressed on all the atoms or particles which are to take part in the evolution, and is preserved intact in that plane. The seventh globe is the receiver of the entire result of evolution in each round, and transfers it once more to Globe A, where it proceeds as before, and again the whole mass of evolving beings is impressed with the original plan. This is repeated for every round.

THE THREE HIGHER PLANES OF CONSCIOUSNESS spoken of in *second note to diagram on page 200* as being inaccessible to human consciousness as yet, does not involve a contradiction. For the attuning of our three higher *states* of consciousness to the three higher *planes* is possible, although attainment to those planes is impossible for ordinary human consciousness. The attempt has to be made so as to come into harmony in ourselves with those planes, so that the potentialities may be made active and development of new faculties made possible.

The Path

LOVE — *E. T. S.*

It is to those who show dislike to us that we must make constant effort in sympathy, patience, and self-sacrifice. Towards all those who love us these things flow from us spontaneously; they are the natural return for what we receive. Yet in their case also constant effort must be made to excel all our previous experiences in unselfishness.

These highest standards attainable by us, with those who love and trust us, and whom we in our turn can love and trust, become bright beacons, guiding us in our efforts towards attaining the same attitude to all mankind.

There is no limit to love; that is to say, the divine, unselfish love which we may have for our fellows: its intensity towards one does not limit it in regard to another; rather does this fervor stimulate us to further effort to stand in this high regard towards as many of our fellow creatures as possible.

And this also is the test whereby we may know divine from human affection; the former has no jealousies, no exclusiveness; its intensity towards one individual, *whether of the same or opposite sex*, does not draw off attention from our constant duty in seeking the weal of all other persons with whom we may come in contact.

In him who is lighted with this divine love we do not find the one theme, the one form, constantly in mind, and causing abstraction from other surroundings which should also claim the attention, but it burns deeply and calmly, is ruffled by no anxieties, questions not whether it is returned by the one or many upon whom it is bestowed: takes ingratitude or deep appreciation with

equal satisfaction. It is complete in itself, and is its own perfect reward to him who knows it.

We often deceive ourselves in this love towards individuals, mistaking the human for the divine; we have to sit aside with ourselves and answer many searching questions before we can know ourselves upon this point. The more especially is this a danger where the person in question may be of the opposite sex. There the self-deception is deepest. What true human lover but falls under the marvellous glamour of believing that the object of his devotion is partly divine, and in some direction is exalted above all other women!

Apart from the fascination of sex, where this factor has not to be considered at all, we have to ask ourselves whether it is not with some special cast of mind, even of feature and expression, with which we are in love, which conforming with our ideal earns our admiration and devotion. Or whether, again, it is not because we have received some strong proof of the individual's interest in *us*, and which thus stimulates to a return; or again, through having been able to help, have we not raised feelings of affection and gratitude within that person, which finding and liking we again reciprocate.

The combinations are endless, and these are but elementary studies in regard to the question — Towards whom, of all those we meet, do we express a love which is wholly unselfish and divine?

We shall probably find that to no individual do we hold a love which is unalloyed, but that it has always something of the human element in it, and this signifies a selfish element. It is a sad discovery to make, yet we surely find this if we sink deep enough into ourselves. It is a discovery which when proclaimed makes many people, who think on the surface, very indignant.

Human love being founded upon selfishness, upon possession, upon exclusiveness, is the exact reverse of the divine element: hence it follows that the transmutation of human into divine love is a long work.

It is *the* work of humanity.

The road from one to the other of these opposites in love is covered with snares and pitfalls, with sophistries of the most subtle kind, and few there are who discern them. Innumerable have been the earnest men, founders often of sects which had much of good in them, who have come to grief themselves and led astray their followers upon this point.

Calm and critical indeed must be the mind which delving down into itself can separate the wheat from the chaff, the divine selfless love from the human and selfish.

The Path

LOSS OF THE SOUL: IV — *Harij*

(Concluded from June No.)

What is meant, then, by the loss of the soul is the alienation of that "mediator", that *Upadhi* or vehicle which stands between our personal consciousness and the divine source of all life. This vehicle, we may say, is only lent us. It is our priceless birthright, our "pearl of great price". It becomes ours only as we become merged in it and at one with it. It suffers no decay, undergoes no deterioration, cannot possibly be degraded, but it can be separated from us. We may lose it. The process by which this may be brought about is one of slow deliberate suicide, and while it may have begun long ago it may be completed during the present life, or it may have been completed during a previous existence, and the remnant, after the separation, may have been re-born "soulless" in the present life. This soulless condition does not preclude a large degree of intelligence, we are told; for *manas*, though originally derived from the higher vehicle, manifests only its lower aspect, as shrewdness, cunning, and particularly that lower intelligence that manifests as *self-interest*. The original source of this *lower manas* is a reflection from the higher *manas*, as that is a reflection of *Buddhi*, and that again of *Atman*, or the divine spark. The most potent mark of this soulless condition is supreme selfishness, with utter disregard of the rights or the suffering of others, for as we approach the higher planes their characteristic sign is gentleness and consideration for others. "The Buddha of compassion" is he who has attained full consciousness in the higher *manas*, and upon whom *Buddhi* shines (*Augoeides*) in full light and glory. (*Augoeides* = shining brightness.)

If the life experience of the individual is a progression in selfishness, rapacity, and cruelty, that person is engulfed in a maelstrom of destruction. He cannot possibly injure anyone so much as he is injuring himself. He may, indeed, cause pain and suffering beyond all expression, but even this is of brief duration and may in the end serve a beneficent purpose to his victim. Furthermore, his evil deeds may become an *embodied evil* before the final separation occurs. He may give form and impulse to certain elementals, they furnishing the substance, and he thus invokes a demon indeed; and yet one largely attached to himself, its creator. This is the "Dweller of the threshold", the antithesis of his *Augoeides*, the reflection and embodiment of his own evil deeds in the mirror of Isis, the astral light.

How strange that these plain truths could ever have been so obscured, and the soul-paralyzing dogma of vicarious atonement and the forgiveness of sin put in their place.

"There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Emanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains."

What is this but the lullaby of destruction, when we are plainly told that we must "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling"? No spasm of sensuous emotion that leaves innate selfishness unrebuked and heartless cruelty unredeemed can be anything but blinding, paralyzing, and destructive to man. And yet how many hard-hearted, selfish old sinners have gone into ecstasies over that old hymn!

It is high time that this terrible truth should be understood. The mission of Jesus sinks into a shameless farce if *Christos* be either ignored or denied. *Christos* is Buddhi-manas, the altruistic motive and consciousness of man united with the Father *Atman*. Yet this

very altruism has been degraded into a mere sentiment, and people have wept over the sufferings of Jesus who had no compassion for their fellowmen. These sentimentalists have passed as they have posed for "Orthodox Christians", and do still, if they be only rich and observe a fair degree of the "proprieties". If the earnest Christian clergyman really desires to know why people shun the churches and why "sinners" remain "unconverted", here is the reason. The longer they shut their eyes to these plain truths the more the churches go to pieces, and presently it will be too late to recover the lost ground. Nothing would so help these real Christians to bring the church back to its pristine purity and really saving power as the truths of Theosophy, and yet there is nothing in which they seemingly have less interest. Very well; the issues are drawn, and the Eternal Truth is no respecter of persons. The new age is marching on with the strides of a mighty giant, and the effort to instill into the measure a little of the old leaven is not in vain. The seed has been planted, and not all on stony ground, and when the crash comes and the churches tumble the seed will have grown into a tree, and many a weary bird will fold its wings in its branches. The church mummeries may vie with mammon and materialism to crush out the higher life of the soul, and yet it shall not altogether die.

Nowhere in the world today except in the doctrines of Theosophy is the real nature of man taught, so that his origin, his destiny, and the principles that determine his weal or woe may be apprehended. When, in answer to the question "Is the soul of man immortal?", the reply has been made "*That depends*", people have often turned away solacing themselves with the sophistry, "God is so good that he would not create any soul for destruction". Neither has he. But when the composite nature of man becomes fully apprehended, and a more definite and rational meaning is applied to the word "Soul", the question narrows itself down. Will

I, John Smith, preserve in after life the consciousness of my present personality? That depends on whether the said John Smith exercises his consciousness and employs his powers in those elements or on those planes of his complex being that have in themselves any permanency, or whether they are exercised only in the things that perish. It is not a question of sentiment, but a question of *fact*, easily deduced by philosophy and justified by analogy. If man lives solely in his body, and his body perishes, so perishes also the consciousness of that man. The monad may be again incarnated, or it may be so separated from its former associations as to begin again in the sub-human planes the long ascent toward human self-consciousness. The theosophical doctrines alone show in what sense and to what extent man is his own creator and his own savior, and equally his own destroyer. These doctrines are not the sole property of the present T. S., nor did they originate with its organization. This is what our Teacher, H. P. B., has been asserting from the beginning. They are old as the world, and have been lost to and recovered by the world again and again. In these brief and disjointed papers the attempt has been made to call attention to this Christian and pre-Christian doctrine of the possible loss of soul, with the hope of inciting inquiry and investigation. Until very recently the true doctrine in this regard was held secret and sacred in the pledge of the initiate: possibly because the Christian dogma of vicarious atonement and the forgiveness of sin had obtained such a hold on the Christian world that no other explanation would be for a moment tolerated. Since the true doctrine has now been given to the world by *those who know*, the present writer, a humble student, has availed himself of the permission thus accorded of illustrating its transcendent import by way of a few illustrations and suggestions. Those who care to examine it in detail will find many references to it in the writings of Madame Blavatsky, and may become fully informed if they choose. Again I say, if the

question were one of immediate and complete annihilation it need not so much concern us, for that were painless and easy. But if this slow decay of the soul must occupy perhaps many lives and involve untold misery before the law of Karma or Divine Justice is satisfied, the question then becomes one of transcendent import. Not an "endless torment in the fires of hell", but suffering, degradation, and despair here on this earth, either in this or in succeeding incarnations.

The Path

THE CRITERION OF MORALITY OR BASIS OF BROTHERHOOD — V. *C. Lonakar*

In *Bhagavad Gita* II. 45, Krishna says to Arjuna: "O Arjuna, rise above the three qualities to attain the pure satvic and higher consciousness — the consciousness of Higher Self, for the ordinary and lower consciousness, including even the exoteric knowledge of the Vedas, is an admixture of three qualities, *i.e.*, a mixture of pure and impure elements of good and evil tendencies."

In this single verse of *Bhagavad Gita* we find the whole development of philosophic thought contained as in a nut shell. Rightly understood, it embraces all moral science and philosophy; it is the keystone of the arch of morality as well as its criterion, and is expressed and embraced by the first object of our Society, — Universal Brotherhood.

Modern science divides itself into two schools as regards the test of moral sentiments. These schools are (a) the intuitive: (b) the experimental. The first points to conscience, or the inner moral sense, as criterion; the other relies upon the experience of this material plane; each takes cognizance of certain definite phases of consciousness and omits others: hence both classes of thinkers must be regarded as having a vague and incomplete method.

Bhagavad Gita, or Aryan philosophy, mentions, in this regard, three menial modifications which it calls prakritija or mayavic gunas (mental qualities). After the differentiation of Sat and Asat, Purush and Prakriti, Spirit and matter, from the undifferentiated Sat, we have two cosmic forces or centres of energy, *viz.*, Spirit and matter, working together. This combination of two forces may be said to work in three different ways, *viz.*, the two separate

and combined, so that we may say we have three distinct forces working together in what are called prakritijagunas or qualities produced from Prakriti by the contact of Purusha. These three gunas, Satva, Rajas, and Tamas, are three modifications of cosmic mind, which point to three attributes of the divine manifestation, namely, the creative, the preservative, and the destructive powers. By careful study of Bhagavad Gita we find that the terms Satva, Rajas, and Tamas are used in three different senses. 1st. They are used for the modifications of the cosmic mind alone. 2nd. For modifications of all minds from cosmic to human minds of various grades, and planes. 3rd. For modifications of the human mind on this material plane only. In this case they correspond to three ordinary states of the human mind known as the right, the erroneous, and the vicious states. Of these, the first is a moral state; the other two are immoral. The point which determines the morality of any given state is the feeling of non-separation. This consciousness of unity, of undividedness, distinguishes the true moral sentiment, and that of personality, of separation, indicates immoral sentiment, as taught by Aryan philosophy. (1) Shre-Shankaracharya defines right thought as undivided thought.

We shall now endeavor to test this idea in its application to daily life and see whether it serves as a test of true morality. We must then ascertain what the moral and unmoral sentiments are as facts of human nature, and then point out the difference between them. *Moral sentiment* is a term of mental and moral science indicating the fact of human nature, of life and mind, known as the feeling of universal altruism or love; this feeling regards the interests of all as one whole. Feeling is a mental fact. What an event is to external nature, feeling is to mental nature. *Unmoral sentiment* is another term of mental science expressive of a converse fact of human nature, which is the feeling of selfishness,

the tendency to regard the interests of one or a given number of personalities to the exclusion of others. In the one fact, we find a tendency to represent all: in the other, a prevalent representation of one to the exclusion of others. One represents the universal republic of Thought: the other sets up a single soul as absolute arbiter and judge.

In this latter consists an usurpation, to that extent, of divine authority, and this is done whenever a man thinks that his view is alone the right view and that his duty is to convert the world to that view. This is his inner attitude, his latent spirit, called by Bhagawatgita "Asuri-Prakriti" when applied to this plane. (XVI, 7-22.) Moral feeling manifests itself in equanimity, impersonality: concern for the interests of all as one whole: acceptance of personalities as part and parcel of the whole; and preservation of the functional balance of the universal Organism in every movement of thought and life. The immoral feeling is the direct reverse of this, and disturbs the functional balance of the universal Organism by the undue stress laid upon personality, by actions arising from a fixed sense of separateness. The line of cleavage between the moral and the immoral lies along the question of Separation and Non-Separation; the former leads in every injustice, deceit, and aggression; the latter preserves from them all. The modern tendency to personality in thought and action, whether business or social, destroys the universal order of "give and take". In forming a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood we have pledged ourselves to sustain the integrity of this divine order; to keep up the criterion of moral activity: to stop, so far as we can, the division and separation of interests arising from personality and competition: and to maintain that natural position which is one of synthesis and not of analysis. Our Universal Reformer and Teacher of Theosophy, H. P. B. (whom time may prove to be *the prophet of the 19th century*), has

followed the method of occult wisdom, or Gupta Vidya of the ancient Aryans, by bringing within the brief compass of the first object of the T. S. the spirit of the whole of universal philosophy. "Universal Brotherhood" is the expression of all philosophy in occult symbolical language. The second object of T. S. is instrumental to the first, and the third is the natural outcome of the first.

This first object is the highest object known to man, for its development and full realization lead to the expansion of individual consciousness into universal consciousness: this is the chief duty of man on this earthly plane of action and duty. This conclusion is that of all Religions, of all true Science and Philosophies, of Rishis and eminent thinkers of all ages and nations. Viewed in its totality it is *Paramarth*, it is *Dnyan* or *Yoga*. it is the Sat. The Yoga and ordinary life are two opposite poles of Thought and Action. To examine more closely these two sets of ideas and to prove that the Yoga attitude of Non-Separation is the true attitude, we must ascertain where lies the point of badness or evil in selfishness and desire of aggrandizement over other personalities. The factors of personal power are Force and Deceit. There is also a difference to be made between the selfishness of error and the selfishness of vice. The former shows more aggressiveness: the other, less. This aggressive tendency of personal force is *Ahankara*; it is shown in the two-fold aspect of authority and flattery, indicated in the man of power and the man subservient to power. The feeling of Non-Separation is Satvic; that of Selfishness is Tamasic; the Rajasic or erroneous state is the connecting link between the two, and has a qualitative and quantitative admixture of both. The right, the erroneous, and the vicious feelings may be called respectively the Sat, the Sadasat, and Asat states of mind, or Theosophic, Mixed, and Untheosophic states. Commonly, we find a mixture of these three

together, and in occultism, or Theosophy proper, we have the Satvic feeling alone (Bhagavad Gita II. 45.) The first step in occultism is to cease to do evil to others; the second step is to do good to others; the third is to have universal consciousness. As in ordinary life this mixed or two-fold division of state exists, and now good, now evil predominates, by keeping to the right direction we destroy this two-fold division, and the main force of our organism, instead of being separated into two branches and acting in opposite directions, thus neutralizing the effects of both, now works in a single direction, and its full strength is utilized as an undivided force. This is what we do in Yoga or Samadhi. To define:

Occultism is a mode of working in thought and life sphere towards the preservation of purity and universal justice and equilibrium. It is the symbol of spirituality and ancient civilization.

Ordinary Life is the direct opposite of occultism. It is the symbol of materiality and modern life.

The first step can only be taken when the nature of our evil tendencies their causes and effects, are studied theoretically and then mastered practically. "It is our duty to know the soul of good in evil, and the soul of evil in good, as we have a mixture of them in ordinary life" (Bhagavad Gita). By such study several secrets of occultism could be better revealed to many, and it is our duty to master scientifically these three states of mind. Both good and evil tendencies must be mastered; the study of one alone leads to error, and all our great Teachers tell us not to neglect any, as the mastering of all the gunas prepares one to place his foot in the sacred precincts of the sanctuary of occultism. Therefore these three mental states must be studied in all their details side by side, the good as well as the evil and the mistaken.

Vice, in the form of deceit of all kinds in particular, has almost become an ethical and commercial trade of modern times, and the phenomena of vice have come to occupy a place side by side with the higher intellectual phenomena, both in ethical importance and multiplicity of details: they even pass for wisdom, tho' of a false order. Sham and false authority are at the root of modern life. The study of the character of our present humanity, in its totality, requires the study of wisdom in its true and false aspects. The phenomena of vice, error, and deceit have their own laws and have to be studied in ourselves and in others with scientific observation. This idea of their study on a scientific basis and for guidance in the opposite and true direction first came to me from noticing the reverse course of some Indian people, with whom the study of the phenomena of egotism and vice is pursued for purposes of black magic. I have observed especially that in vicious phenomena words and deeds have no accord, while the constant search after truth, and of seeing the soul of truth in untruth (which is, in evil, to know the exact point which is evil and why it is so), unifies the thoughts, speech, and action. This process of constant mental and ethical analysis forms one of the principal factors of Dnyan, or occultism proper, as said in Bhagavad Gita XIII, I-II.

There is no part of the world where this study can be so well prosecuted as in the East, for there only do we find the highest spirituality and a most glorious past, side by side with the lowest vices and present degeneration. There are several classes of people in India who make a special and scientific study of vice for selfish and vicious ends as family and class pursuits, just as yogis are also to be found there. Many of us believe that India has paid the price of her present degeneration for indulgence, by some of her peoples, in the former vicious extreme. Only the persistent study and pursuit of Universal

Brotherhood through the elimination of selfishness and the mastery of the gunas can help our material civilization, by supplying it with a spiritual motor power.

FOOTNOTES:

1. And Emerson defines virtue as being the adherence, inaction, to the true nature of things. [Ed.]. ([return to text](#))

The Path

A MONUMENT — *Lily A. Long*

The Teacher was dead.

This was the news that spread quickly one stormy evening through the little western village, where, a few days before, he whose quiet would nevermore be broken had been a sharer in the keenest life of the place. The calls of Death in a small community are more than a matter of statistics. They touch the public interest even when made upon the humblest, — and the teacher had been the most widely known, the best loved, and best hated man in the town. Friends and detractors alike dropped their careless talk as the word "Dead!" went from lip to lip, and among those who had sought shelter from the storm in the bar-room, as among those who, driven by anxiety for their homes, had gathered in groups along the dark banks of the dangerously full river, stories of the dead man were rife.

Some told how he had come, no one knew whence or why, to take up his abode in this unknown corner of the world and fulfil the humble calling of a district school-teacher. He was a queer teacher, to be sure, and if there had been money in the township to pay for a qualified instructor he would not long have been tolerated, but as he gave his services for next to nothing and the treasury was empty, the board had been constrained to overlook his eccentricities. It was quite his habit to carry the children off into the woods on a bright day and talk to them for hours about bugs and bird when they should have been learning the kings of England, and many a morning had he spent in telling them wonderful stories of knights and heroes that did them no good instead of keeping them on their tables. There were others who could tell of long, strange talks had with him during some lonely

tramp through the woods or at night over his fire, — talks that had never been forgotten. Queer, impracticable ideas he had about the meaning of life and the things worth striving for, but there was no denying that a man was the better for talking with him. His thoughts were uplifting and bracing as mountain air. Still others told of some quiet deed of helpfulness, and were surprised to have their accounts matched by many others, all unknown before.

But not all the stories were laudatory. His tongue had had power to lash as well as to inspire, and there were not wanting victims ready to take verbal revenge. The tales told in the bar-room were mostly of this color, for the frequenters of that popular but demoralizing place had more debts of this sort to settle with the sharp old man than they had scores with the bar-keeper himself. Who was the teacher, after all, they questioned, and what reason had he had for burying himself here? It was very clear that he possessed a degree of learning which would have won him honor and companionship in the centers of culture. Why did he surrender both to fill an ill-paid and unrecognized post among people who were not of his kind? According to these practical philosophers, the reasons which prompted so anomalous a course of conduct could not be creditable ones. They could understand that a man might give his life to accumulating wealth if it chanced that money stood to him for the most desirable thing in the world, or that he might give it up to the pursuit of happiness by way of the whisky-glass if he had a correct appreciation of good whisky. Of such devotion they were themselves living examples. They could even understand that an artist might choose to paint visions in a garret rather than to waste divine days in drudgery that he might spend his sleeping hours in a palace. Such whimseys were inborn. But to maintain that a man might be born with a controlling inclination and talent for helpfulness and that he

might select his home for the same reasons that would influence a merchant in selecting a favorable location for his business was to set at naught the wisdom of the world, which holds that a man is to be considered guilty of self-seeking even when he is proven innocent. Oh, they were not to be caught by such chaff as that. It was some shameful secret, undoubtedly, that had driven him into hiding.

But if the majority of his little public brought to his coffin pitying wonder or insult, there were a few (as there are in the larger world, thank Truth) who recognized simple honesty and felt the reality underlying his unconventional life. Four of these friends, three men who had known his purposes most intimately and a youth who had come under the inspiration of his teaching, were now gathered in a little room adjoining the chamber where the body had been laid awaiting the morrow's interment. They had been talking quietly of his uncommon character and the unusual course of life which he had chosen until far into the night.

"The pity of it is that it should all be forgotten," said one restlessly. He was an eager-faced man, whose every feature and attitude, even in his present quiet mood, suggested repressed activity. "Years and years of work for others, and then, — the door swings to and not even a memory remains."

"It is always so. Why expect anything different here? There may once have been a race of men who held gratitude in honor, but if so the very tradition has been lost." The speaker swept a melancholy glance toward the silent form of his dead friend, and, with a gesture expressive of resignation and sorrow, crossed the room and threw open the door to the night. The muttering of the dying tempest was still in the air, and the tall forest trees that overshadowed the little house sighed an echo to the hopeless words. There was a moment's hush in the room, and then the

third watcher crossed to his side.

"That may be true enough in general," he said sturdily, "but there are ways to make people remember. If we want it done we can do it. We can give the town a monument that will keep his name and his memory alive as long as there is a man here to see it."

"That is a good idea," exclaimed the first. "Not a pile of marble or granite — that wouldn't suit a life like his — but some institution to help the people and so continue his work in a way."

"That is better. What do you suggest?"

The man with the melancholy eyes shook his head slightly at the question and pointed to a star in the west which a break in the riving clouds had just revealed. It seemed to tremble on the edge a moment, and then the black, rolling masses swept over it relentlessly.

The boy, who had not spoken, turned sharply away in impetuous protest.

"I shall remember," he whispered under his breath.

At that moment the echoing sound of a horse's feet at full gallop broke upon the night, and while they waited in suspense the horseman dashed into sight.

"The breakwater is down" he shouted to the men clustered in the doorway, and then he was swallowed up again in the darkness.

The breakwater down! That meant destruction to the lower part of the town. The men looked at each other in dismay for a minute, and then sprang for their hats.

"We must be needed there. Boy, watch here till we come back!"

The teacher's lonely house was a full mile from the village proper

which clustered by the river bank, but the three men ran the distance in silence. The ominous rush of the water grew louder and louder, and when they reached the main street they found that it formed the channel of a new stream which was sweeping tumultuously about the foundations of the buildings on the riverside and bearing upon, its surface the wreckage of accomplished disaster. The stouter houses withstood the onset, but already several wooden structures had been whirled away and others were tottering.

The three friends had been separated in the crowd, and the foremost found himself pushed to the edge of the torrent. The rush of the water was deafening and men were shouting hoarsely on every side, when suddenly a thrill of horror swept through the responsive people. From the upper window of a threatened house directly across the way a child's face was looking down with piteous bewilderment. Frontiersmen have many faults to answer for, but indecision and cowardice are not among them. There was not a man in the crowd who would not have risked his life without a second thought in answer to that mute appeal, and it was no mark of exceptional virtue when the last man to join the throng fastened about his body the long rope tossed to him and plunged into the mad stream. The torrent caught him and carried him out, but, swimming when possible, yielding to the current when necessary, now swept under the surface and now tossed helplessly out, he fought the infuriated water as though it were a conscious antagonist. Breathless but triumphant he reached the opposite side and in a moment had the child in his arms. Then the battle again, sharp and hard, but with the steady pull of friends standing waist deep in the water it was over, and the child, trembling and terrified but *alive*, lay on the breast of the father, while the crowd cheered till the crash of the falling house as it went at last was overpowered and lost.

The father lifted his face at last and his rough features were working with emotion.

"How can I make it square?" he asked hoarsely. It was the barkeeper. The rescuer started with astonishment as he recognized him, and then a gleam of gay triumph shot into his eyes. It was the opportunity he would have coveted!

"Take her life as the gift of the teacher," he said in a low voice.

There was a questioning look, a meaning glance in reply, and the two men clasped hands over the form of the child.

But death as well as life was abroad that night. When the three friends were separated, one of them had been hurried off by a man who recognized him in the crowd.

"Gabriel Done is dead — killed by a falling timber. I've been trying to find a priest, for though Done wasn't a churchman his wife is stanch, and she is going on now enough to make a man shiver. Can't you come and talk to her? She thinks that because Gabriel was killed in his sins, as sir says, he has gone straight to hell. It would be lucky for the rest of us if we had no more sins to answer for than he, poor fellow!"

They hurried up the deserted street to the house where Done had been carried, but at the door the guide quailed.

"You go in alone. I don't think I can stand much more of it."

His companion might have truly pleaded equal helplessness, but when he entered the room and saw the widow in silent, dry-eyed despair beside her dead, he wholly forgot himself in a desire to bring help to her, and his melancholy face lightened with a look of sympathy that saved the need of words.

She recognized his presence without greeting.

"It is not that Gabriel is dead," she said at once with a nervous insistence. I could bear that, — I could learn to bear it in time. But to think that he is lost —" Her lips stiffened and she leaned back rigidly in her chair.

He took her hands in his and forced her eyes and her thoughts to himself.

"But Gabriel was a good man."

"He did not believe!"

"But he was a *good* man."

She quivered under the pressure of his words, but something like a gleam of hope came into her strained eyes.

"If a man like Gabriel, — honest and true and kind, — can be lost, then I have no reason for believing that the spring sunshine will bring joy to the earth, or that the fruit of the apple-blossoms yonder will not prove deadly. Do you believe that goodness rules the universe, or evil?"

She caught the thought beneath his words as a drowned man catches his first breath of air. The mental habits formed by a lifetime of clerical instruction might have withstood all unenforced argument, but the anguish of the hour had lifted her above her own level, and the perception that came to her overmastered her dogmatic loyalty as dawn conquers night. She laid her hand upon her heart for a moment, and then she moved to the side of the dead with a composed and lofty air and uncovered his face.

"Forgive me, Gabriel, that I could have doubted. I know it is well with thee," she murmured. Then nature conquered and she sank on her knees beside him in a burst of saving tears.

"Come away now. You have done all that could be done in giving her that hope. Let us leave her," whispered a new voice. It was the third of the three friends. "Tomorrow I shall see her," he continued when they were outside, "and take care of affairs until they are settled. She will be left pretty poor, I am afraid, and the boy ought to be at school."

"She will not heed any other trouble much, I fancy, if she can be rid of her greatest fear. How can people believe such irreligious atrocities?"

"Because they were so taught when they were young. But how did you think of just the right thing to say to her?"

"Why, the teacher used those words one day, and they came back to me now."

His friend smiled. "And yet you said his influence would pass away and be forgotten!" After a moment he added: "I shall see about the schooling of Done's boy. That shall be my part. "

And his friend answered his smile.

In the little house under the trees the youth had watched alone through the night by the beloved form of the teacher. To him more than to the others the loss had been a personal bereavement, and his sorrow was like the sorrow of a son. So beloved, so needed, so rare a nature, why had death claimed it? Bitterly he questioned thus during those lonely hours, and then his thought widened out to all the sorrow that the wide world holds. Was it all necessary and right? Was that what life meant, — the life that lay before him and which he had so eagerly yearned for? Was it all a delusion of enchantment to hide an unquenchable pain which lurked at the foundation of all things?

Baffled and heart-weary, he went out into the night. The storm

had passed, and only a low, spent sighing in the forest depths recalled the tempest that had tossed the trees a few hours before. Overhead the sky was serenely clear. Folding his arms upon his breast he gazed silently into those depths of peace. The clouds that had rolled across had not dimmed their purity or ruffled their calm. A word of the teacher's came back to him suddenly, — "Lift your thought above the storm level." Ah, he understood it now. Climbing by that he found the answer to his passionate pain, and as he stood watching while the flooding dawn crept up to the stars, a percipience of the meaning of living came to him which somehow illuminated the backward-stretching years of the teacher and those which lay before himself. It transcended words as the day-dawn did. But when the three friends returned and found him there, he turned to meet them with a new light in his face and a new strength in his words.

"You were speaking of a monument to keep his memory alive. Let *us* be the monument. Let us carry on ourselves his mission of helpfulness." And the three men, remembering the events of the night, bowed their heads in silent acceptance of the trust.

The tablet over the teacher's tomb reads simply; —

"Here lies one
whose life was consecrated to service,
and whose influence
has been a consecrating chrism to others.

KARMA AND FREE WILL — A. Keightley

Every student of Theosophy is aware that the meaning which is ordinarily given to the Sanskrit word Karma is "Action". Further there is attached to it the kindred idea of "Reaction", and these two meanings, when sufficiently expanded, give a very wide and logical explanation of the action of the Law of Karma as affecting the general life of man. It is only, however, when study is carried deeper that students begin to perceive that men seem to be bound by a "circle of necessity" from which there appears to be no escape; while others declare at first sight that the Law of Karma is but another expression for the Mohammedan "Kismet", and a more or less plausible pleading for the adoption of "fatalism" as affecting mankind. No amount of discussion will serve to convince such persons that the flaw which they think that they have found is no flaw at all, and this is, it would seem, because they have never yet realised that the Law of Karma or "Action" applies not merely to man but to the whole Universe of which man is but a small and insignificant part. Moreover, there arises in the mind of the student another idea which is mistaken. As Mme. Blavatsky has long ago pointed out, Karma is not only Karma-Nemesis or the reaction following upon evil conditions, but it also bears with it the reward for efforts towards good actions. Thus, then, if we regard the Law of Action in its true proportion, we see that it governs the whole Universe, ordering the stars in their courses as well as men in theirs; that, in reality, if we carry the consideration from the moral and physical planes of action to the metaphysical, the statement of the Law of Karma in its entirety is but another expression for the great Law or Principle of which we neither know nor can know anything save that three of its expressions or manifestations are Life,

Consciousness, and Motion or action. Consequently the Law of Karma or the Law of Action is also the Law of harmonious action in which action and reaction are balanced and equal. In other words, the Law of Karma is the Law of Harmony in the Universe.

It is only when the Unity of Harmony is separated into its component parts of Tune and Discord or Action and Reaction that we are then able to appreciate the fact of differentiation, and then, being able to choose and therefore responsible, we become the subjects in place of the allies of the great law of harmony divided into its component parts of action and reaction.

Thus Karma is not really opposed to "Free-Will" when Karma is properly understood. It is also true that Free-will has not really received its full meaning. Generally it is understood to mean that a man is absolutely free to choose between two courses of action or the possession of certain qualities in himself, and in fact is a law to himself in every particular. Such a view can and does proceed from selfish, self-centered individuals alone, the product of this age of denial and materialism. It is, however, opposed by all religious systems, and is actually opposed by the practical social work of the most advanced materialist thinkers. It is only one of those attempts which selfish man makes to realise his idea that he is the sum and crown of all nature, and that, if he chooses, everything in nature must be subservient to him. In other words, the one man who follows this idea may be free while all others who come in contact with him must be his slaves. Even if this were possible, there is one enemy which such a man would have to conquer before he became all-powerful, and that enemy is the law of change, and he would have to conquer the great change called death. Therefore, since the laws of nature are stronger than the will or desire of individual, or, rather, personal man, freedom of will is only possible for man when he is in close alliance with nature and her laws.

If we regard nature we can plainly see that, however much we may be able to modify our surroundings, we commence with a certain capital in hand, as does everything from a planet in its orbit to the stone of which that planet is formed. In other words, everything in nature is within what is called the "Circle of Necessity". Everything has had its origin in the one universal principle and acts according to the laws which are inherent in that Principle. These are the natural laws which are universally applicable, and therefore may be called universal or natural law. Upon them depends the very nature of existence, and, whatever may be the appearance which we see, the real nature and essence of everything in the universe depend upon and conform to these laws. Therefore it follows that this "circle of necessity" is the necessity for manifestation arising in the great principle, which, from being unmanifested, becomes manifested during the great periods of time which are called Manvantaras in the Orient. Within this "circle of necessity" — this great general scheme of evolution and development — there are other possibilities. One of these possibilities is that the products of evolution can diverge from the general line; in other words, that while the general manifestation of will and purpose arising in the one great principle is fixed and determined for a certain progress during a certain time, the units of evolution manifesting such will, can, and do vary in the rate of manifestation. That this is the case is particularly seen with the evolution of mental processes. When this point is arrived at in the general scheme, the divergences from the general law become more and more marked. In fact, in the evolution of the animal world the entity known as man has arrived at the age of responsibility, and, having become self-conscious of his relation to his surroundings, has chosen to act for himself and deal with his own actions as seems best to him. He has had the choice before him of either slowly following the

general line of the evolution of the animal races strictly according to the line of evolution in the "Circle of Necessity", or he may go beyond and outside of it in a measure by retreating into the more subtle region of his own nature, and so quicken up the processes of manifestation. In the end, however, he finds that this means acting more and more strictly according to the laws of nature. Still, as with light passed through a convex lens, the nearer the approach to the lens or the source of light the less time is found to be required to go over all the rays, and the nearer together they are found to be, so with man's nature. The nearer he gets to the origin of his own being, the greater the intensity of action and reaction resulting from divergence.

Further, through the choice which has been made to quicken up the processes, or by reason of mistakes arising through ignorance or through deliberate errors because they are found to be more pleasing to the external nature of the animal man, habits and customs have sprung up which have an ever-increasing tendency to repeat themselves. Further than this, these habits and customs blind men to the real nature of the customs, and, because they are found to exist in large numbers in common, they are therefore thought to be right. In fact, men bind themselves by these habits and customs, and in this way they limit their free-will. They have made for themselves a false "Circle of Necessity" from which they neither can nor do desire to free themselves. But at the same time a feeling of pride causes them to assert that they are free, and therefore this question of free-will and fatalism causes them to revolt against the Law of Karma. There are many who insist that they are free, and feel themselves to be so until they are brought face to face with nature. By this I do not mean to say that they are swept away in a storm or by any other natural convulsion, but they are brought face to face with facts within their own nature which they are unable to control. They then find that with all

their boast of power they are but puny mortals after all, and that the immortal powers exist in nature and themselves in spite of all they can say or do to the contrary.

Thus there is the choice before man in his present existence. Either he has to choose a course of action which is in harmony with the real true laws of nature, or he has to take the opposite course. As a general rule it may be said that the growth of the habits and customs which cause man to take this opposite course is due to ignorance of his own true nature and therefore of nature at large. A slight divergence from the general and natural line of harmony will have a tendency to widen more and more until it is scarcely possible to trace the line in all its windings and deviations. Thus when man finds himself face to face with the retributive and restorative action of the harmonious law, he is apt to be so short-sighted as to cry out against it and say that he has not deserved the punishment. He, as a rule, is totally ignorant of the larger sphere of life provided by the law of moral compensation working through Reincarnation. He is unable and at times unwilling to perceive the dictates of his own real nature, and depends entirely upon external conditions. Therefore his will — his natural will — is fettered by ignorance, and it is his own will that punishes him. The personal man is not free, but the individual man is free to follow the laws of nature, and does so follow them that it places the personal man in the position in which he can correct the faults and error from the law which he has caused. In short, will which is eternally free is identical with Karma, each having its rise in the one great Eternal principle of the Universe. As the *Bhagavad Gita* states it in Chap. VIII,

"Karma is the emanation which causes the existence * * * of creatures."

HIDDEN HINTS IN THE SECRET DOCTRINE — *William Q. Judge*

(From p. 200 to p. 212, Vol. I.)

FUNCTION OF COMETS. Comets are the wanderers who, in the great struggle and rush of matter in any place where a system of worlds is to come into existence, act as aggregators or collectors of the cosmic matter until at last sufficient collections are made to cause the beginning of globes. *Italics on p. 201, v. I.*

CYCLES. There is always much discussion respecting this vast and interesting subject, not only in theosophical circles but outside as well. Indeed, the discussion was begun ages before our T. S. was formed. It will hardly be finished in our life. The dispute or difficulty has not been as to whether there are cycles governing men and affairs, for the most materialistic are wont to talk of the cycles of recurrence of diseases, wars, and the like, but about when any cycle begins, and especially the larger ones. One of the Moon's cycles is known, and that of the great sidereal vault is approximated, but when we come to such as the latter there is considerable vagueness as to what was the state of things 25,000 years ago. On page 202 of Vol. I. the hint is given that the fundamental basis controlling number and ground-work of the cycles is laid in the very beginning of the cosmic struggle anterior to the aggregation of matter into globes and suns. For (*at foot p. 202*),

"This is the basic and fundamental stone of the secret cycles. The assertion that all the worlds (stars, planets, &c.) as soon as a nucleus of primordial substance in the *laya* (undifferentiated) state is informed by the freed principles of a just *deceased* sidereal body — become first comets, and then suns, to cool down to inhabitable worlds, is a teaching as old as the Rishis."

Now in each system to "struggle" is different from every other, a different proportion arises, and, the percentage of loss or remainder being variable, the cyclic bases in each system differ from others. It is very plain, then, that our present-day scientists can know nothing of these original differences and must remain ignorant of the true cycles. Only the eagle eye of the high Adept can see these numbers as they are written upon the great screen of time, and in the whispers that reach us from the ancient mysteries can be found the information we are seeking. Who shall hear aright?

THE VERY BEGINNING. Definitely as to the very beginning of manifestation — not of this little system of ours, but of the one vast whole — it is not possible nor permissible to speak. But a hint of seductive nature is thrown out on *p. 203, 3rd para.*, where, taking us back to the first act in the great drama of which our puny play is but a short sentence, H. P. B. says that the secret science declares that when the one great all has been thrown out into manifestation seven special differentiations of IT appear, and from those seven all the countless fires, suns, planets, and stars are lighted and go forth. So that, although in various systems of worlds the cycles and the numbers and bases may differ and be any whole number or fractional number, the great and perfect number is still *seven*. But no man now among us can understand that great *seven* when it includes all numbers the mind may reach by chance or by calculation.

The Path

THE IDEAL AND THE PRACTICAL — *Pilgrim*

It must be admitted that to be of any use in the world the ideal must be capable of being proved practical, but from this it does not follow that the self-dubbed practical people of today are the fittest judges of the practicability of any ideal theory; indeed, their very nature disqualifies them from judging of the wider fields of vision.

The charge of being unpractical is often made against the idealist who deals with the higher ethics by those who trudge along the well-worn track of daily duty, but though the latter may be incapable of soaring beyond the well-beaten way, the study of history in all departments of life might teach them that the visionary's dreams of one age may form the basis of practical work in the next. What good thing is there that the race has ever achieved that was not in the first instance shadowed forth by one whom the practical workers of his day regarded as an idealistic dreamer? The poets and prophets of all ages stand in advance of their time, but a modesty of demeanor in face of a revelation they are incapable of grasping would be a more appropriate attitude for the practical workers than the assumption of omniscience which their ignorant criticism implies.

It is also beside the point to dwell on the fact that the idealist's life may not be on a par with his teachings; it may indeed fail to come up to the level of the conscientious duty-performer without in the least detracting from the value of such teachings. And it must also be remembered that "man is not, according to any analogy, observation, or experience, a straight line. Would that he were, and that life, or progress, or development, or whatever we choose to call it, meant merely following one straight road or another.

The whole question, the mighty problem, would be very easily solved then." Man's nature is as complex as the Universe of which he is the microcosm. To instance two of the parallel lines of advance, the awakening of his spiritual perception is quite as important a part of his development as the progress of his moral nature towards altruistic thought and action. But all the force of the nature is required to effect real advance on either plane. Alternate life-times may be so consumed, with the apparent result that the one or the other is taking precedence in the development of the individual man. It ill becomes any, therefore, to belittle the results that are being achieved because they may not be on the particular lines on which they themselves are advancing.

It is also a fact in Occultism that the attainment of knowledge as to the real facts of existence and the ultimate possibilities of the soul produce great Karmic results. "That is because it is impossible to give any attention to occultism without making a definite choice between what are familiarly called good and evil. The first step in occultism brings the student to the tree of knowledge. He must pluck and eat; he must choose. No longer is he capable of the indecision of ignorance. He goes on either on the good or on the evil path, And to step definitely and knowingly even but one step on either path, produces great Karmic results. The mass of men walk waveringly, uncertain as to the goal they aim at: their standard of life is indefinite; consequently their Karma operates in a confused manner. But when once the threshold of knowledge is reached the confusion begins to lessen, and consequently the Karmic results increase enormously, because all are acting in the same direction on all the different planes; for the occultist cannot be half-hearted, nor can he return when he has passed the threshold. These things are as impossible as that the man should become the child again. The individuality has approached the state of responsibility by reason of growth: it

cannot recede from it." The outcome of all this is that the evil in the Occultist is more rapidly brought to the surface than in the case of ordinary men. This is of course due to the greater intensity of purpose in the former, and it also requires a greater intensity of purpose to rid himself of the evil, but while that process is going on it is only natural that the evil which lay deep seated in his nature, and which has been brought to the surface, should be very apparent to the eyes of men. The initiatory stages of occultism — that short cut to Perfection — may therefore easily appear to the eyes of the ignorant as a descent instead of an ascent.

A vivid illustration of the high ideality of a very material conception may be found in Mr. Edward Bellamy's novel *Looking Backward*. But to the majority of readers it will also stand as an illustration of the impracticability of an ideal theory. It must indeed be a trumpet call to action to one who can so shut his eyes to facts that he is capable of believing such an organization of Society as there pictured could by any possibility be realized by humanity as now constituted. Whether realizable or not, it should be to all of us a beautiful picture to which it is a delight to turn from the hideous reality of today. Though severed from all the spiritual aims that could alone give it great value, it is in some sort of way a vindication of the higher Socialism, the Socialism taught in the life of Jesus Christ, whose animating motives are love and charity, and whose end is justice — a contrast truly to the socialism whose animating motives are greed and envy and whose end is plunder!

Writing on (1) Christianity and Socialism in an article which breathes the atmosphere of sound common sense, and also that of an enthusiastic sympathy such as may well quicken the pulses of the reader with a like hope, Dean Plumptre points out that Socialism's real antagonist is not Christianity but the terrible

culmination of Individualism which we are now reaching — individualism which finds its utterance in the question "May I not do what I will with mine own?," and which is summarized in the motto of universal competition, "Every man for himself and devil take the hindmost".

There are so many false notions prevalent about Socialism that his description is worth repeating. "The ideal of Socialism", he writes, "is just the opposite of this (Individualism). It assumes as the result of experience that there is in every man, either inherent in his nature or as the result of the environment by which his character has been fashioned, an evil selfishness which needs control; that the struggle for existence implies a fierce warfare of class with class and man with man — bellum omnium contra omnes — and is productive of an immense amount of evil. It holds that it is the function of the State to moderate this warfare and to remedy these evils. It insists on the principle that the rights of the individual are subordinate to the well-being of the whole Society; that right to freedom of action and to property is the creation of the State, and may therefore be limited and controlled by it. Even the Socialist theories which postulate the natural rights of man both to freedom and to a share of the land look to the collective action of Society as the means of asserting and perpetuating them. It lies in the nature of things that this may be the ideal of any form of government — Monarchic, Aristocratic, Democratic. It is found in the theocracy of Israel under its judges or its kings. It may be represented in ideal pictures of a patriot king, such as we find in Dante's *De Monarchia*, Fenelon's *Telhnaque*, or Ken's *Edmund*, or of government by the wisest, as in Plato's *Republic*, the *Utopia* of Sir T. More, the *New Atlantis* of Bacon. The language of the late Emperor Frederick in his rescript to his Chancellor was altogether that of one who desired to be a patriotic, and therefore Socialist,

King; ready to "support every movement towards furthering the economical prosperity of every class of society and reconciling their conflicting interests".

But to return to Mr. Bellamy's book. An Utopia where every desire of the senses should receive instant gratification is an ideal which will no doubt satisfy many men. To the poor of this world who are able to satisfy so few of their desires, it may indeed seem an Eldorado, but even granted that state to be attained which Mr. Bellamy so ably pictures, what advance towards any permanent bliss will man have made? Life must still be a struggle, blinded with ignorance and bounded by the grave. There will still remain the whole vast infinitude between the unrest of conditioned existence and the Nirvana of pure Being, between the pain-goaded and pain-causing struggles of man and the unutterable Peace of God. "Teach the people", says one who stands on the very threshold of that Peace of God, or who, indeed, may have renounced it in order more effectually to succour Humanity, "teach the people to see that life on this earth, *even the happiest*, is but a burden and an illusion". While the solution, one by one, of the varied problems of the hidden life may be practically attained by every individual, the Socialistic dream of material perfection, though it may become practical in some modified form to the Humanity of a far-off future, remains today in the realm of the beautiful ideals that are utterly impracticable.

While no real comparison can be made between the fanciful story we have been discussing and a great ethical work, it is a satisfaction to turn to such a book as Dr. Buck's *Study of Man and the Way to Health*. Though it may not be given to man to mould outward circumstance in accordance with his ideas of divine justice, the betterment of his own inner nature, the conquest of self, and the gradual enlargement of his sympathy are in the highest degree practical.

The *Study of Man* is undoubtedly a valuable addition to the Theosophical literature of the age, inasmuch as, while barely mentioning the word Theosophy and hinting only in a vague way at the fundamental doctrines of Karma and reincarnation, it yet appeals to the general reader, and more particularly to the scientific one, in terms which, if the train of thought suggested be carried out, are likely to lead to some apprehension of the divine Wisdom, which alone can offer to men, capable of reason, any adequate explanation of the mystery of existence.

It is, however, in some ways a disappointing book to lay down, particularly after the expectations raised by the laudatory notices with which it was ushered in. Perhaps too much stress must not be laid on the fact that for the general reader — indeed for all save those who are versed in the medical science of the day, many passages in the book would require further analysis to render them intelligible. But this, after all, is a minor point.

All able exposition of ethical doctrine must doubtless find readers whom it will benefit, but for those who only respond when the highest key is struck this book must be considered a failure.

To inculcate the love of one's neighbor, or, in a word, Altruism, has been one of the objects of all teachers of morality, and only praise can follow the perusal of any work devoted to such an end. But some efficient cause must exist. Without the highest sanction Altruism is impossible. "No man can be good without God", writes Seneca in his 14th Epistle; "God is nigh unto thee, He is with thee, He is within thee. If thou shalt see a man unappalled by dangers, untouched by illicit desires, happy in adversity, calm in the midst of tempests, looking on men as from a higher place, on gods as from an equal place, will there not enter into thee a reverence for such a one? Wilt thou not say, there is here something greater, something higher than can be believed to be of mere kin to the

mortal body in which we behold him with our eyes? And such there is: that power within him hath come from God."

(To be concluded.)

FOOTNOTE:

1. "Christianity and Socialism" by E. H. Plumptre, Dean of Wells, in the *Contemporary Review* of November, 1889. It argues well for the Church of England to find in its ranks so worthy a successor of such Christian Socialists as Robertson, Maurice, and Kingsley.
[\(return to text\)](#)

The Path

THE NATURAL LAW OF ALTRUISM — *Archibald Keightley*

Is such a conception possible, and, if so, is it equivalent to Atheism? The whole question depends on the meaning attached by each individual to the idea of Deity. In the very attempt to give definition and say what the idea of Deity means to him, each man puts a limit to Deity by confining it to the terms of his understanding. It then becomes for him personally a God, but it is not Deity for any other man, since there is no perfect identity to be found between two human minds. Therefore one essential aspect of Deity is to the finite human intellect incomprehensible. From this point, if the various attributes of Deity are considered, it is seen that all the attributes end in becoming a personal or individual God to the individual mind which considers them. Finally, Deity surrounded by all these attributes becomes an aggrandized personal God anthropomorphized in terms of the human understanding, and thereby loses its essential character of Deity. In short, beyond the fact that "in it we live and move and have our being," Deity as such is not related to the manifested Universe.

But Deity in itself is Absolute, and its Absoluteness of energy and consciousness is incomprehensible to us, and therefore to us is latent and unconscious. But none the less is there activity and consciousness which, by processes incomprehensible to man, render themselves into manifestation. Unity becomes polarised and diversified: energy and consciousness become interaction, guided by intelligence. In other words, there is proceeding from Unity a Trinity of Cosmic Substance, Cosmic Ideation, and Cosmic Energy. By some they are called Matter, Force, and Intelligence, and by others Spirit, Matter, and Force. But in reality these three have — by a process unintelligible to *our* consciousness —

become in space and time the aspects of Absoluteness unconditioned by space and time. Thus it may be said that there are three stages in the passage of the concealed Deity into manifestation. It is not until the third stage — the differentiation of Cosmic Substance under the Energy guided by Cosmic Ideation — that the "Creative Powers" of the various religions are found. It is by these powers or forces interacting and differentiating that the manifested universe was formed. These are the Hierarchies of Archangels, Amshaspends, Elohim, &c, which collectively personify the attributes of Deity but are not Deity itself. In thus dealing with religion by basing it on a conception of Abstract Deity, a Unity manifested in an infinity of creative powers, it becomes evident that these creators are the instruments through which the workings of Universal Law are made manifest, and that there can be no question of caprice, such as we find in the sacred scriptures of many nations. It is plain that the creative powers are the ministers of that which is mind, will, and righteousness. In this way order is evolved from "Chaos", and the mind dwelling on the workings of its origin — the Universal Mind — is eminently reasonable because adjusted to the most permanent conditions of the manifested Universe.

The Hierarchy of Being is incessantly engaged in the process of its own evolution, and within the Universe it might be said that, following the lines of universal evolution, there is an analogous Hierarchy for each Solar System and also for each Planet. Thus for the period of planetary existence within space and time there is an in-breathing after an out-breathing of cosmic energy as applied to this earth. In other words, the relative unity as applied to this earth emerges into diversity and then returns again to unity after accomplishing its evolution within a "world-period". It may, then, well be that powers hitherto unrecognised as natural powers may lie within the reach of those who press forward

more eagerly than others in the line of evolution, and it would indeed be unfortunate for the general average of mankind if there were no restriction on the exercise of these powers. But as we see that self-denial leading from the assertion of the individual to the rights of mankind as a whole is one of the conditions of the involution from diversity to unity, the very fact of the acquisition of such powers carries with it the safe-guard. Such is the law, it would seem, of natural evolution. Thus supposing that some outstripped their fellow-men and, acquiring these powers, used them for selfish purposes and to gratify their own ambition, does it not also follow that nature, being mightier than the individual man (even though he be possessed of such extended powers), will inevitably put an end to the individual strength of such a man as opposed to the fixed line of her general evolution? In this way the power of the evolutionary Hierarchy of the Earth personified as Nature irresistibly follows the Law of its being, and so becomes a "providence" to those within its operations.

Thus those men who are spurred on to follow with the utmost forces of their being the law of evolution find the love of humanity entailed upon them, and in place of tyrants become the servants of nature and therefore of humanity. The higher they rise in the human hierarchy, the more they have to serve, until, as regards the total progress to be accomplished within a "world-period," they reach the limit of attainment. They may then be said to be on the threshold of Nirvana and to have returned from the evolution of individual self-consciousness to the unity of divine consciousness. Thus Nirvana is not the annihilation of self-consciousness, but it is union with the divine in nature, and rest from the labors of evolution. The work is accomplished, but there are those who, according to oriental philosophy, sacrifice this Nirvana and return to their labors, thus giving up their rest in

order to become the quickeners and saviors of men who endanger themselves through delay in their evolution.

This very briefly is an outline of a religion with Deity and many Gods. It is a manifested Pantheism based on a concealed Unity, and its inconsistent with itself. As such, for the benefit of a large number of men it solves a number of difficulties both from the materialistic and the theological standpoints. It at least demonstrates why altruism and the love for humanity is a law which has its origin in the very foundation of Being, and the ethics of altruism therefore become a logical necessity. This is a feeble rendering of the Theosophy which Mme Blavatsky brought before the world, the said Theosophy being, as she repeatedly declared, no new idea, but older than humanity itself.

The Path

THE SYNTHESIS OF OCCULT SCIENCE: I — William Q. Judge

The impassable gulf between mind and matter discovered by modern science is a logical result of the present methods of so-called scientific investigation. These methods are analytical and hypothetical, and the results arrived at are necessarily tentative and incomplete. Even the so-called "Synthetic Philosophy" of Spencer is, at best, an effort to grasp the entire method and modulus of nature within one of its processes only. The aim is at synthesis, but it can hardly deserve the name of philosophy for it is purely speculative and hypothetical. It is as though the physiologist undertook to study the function of respiration in man through the single process of expiration, ignoring the fact that every expiratory act must be supplemented by inspiration or respiration cease altogether.

Taking, therefore, the facts of experience derived from the phenomena of nature and viewing both cosmic and organic processes purely from their objective side, the "missing links", "impassable gulfs", and "unthinkable gaps" occur constantly. Not so in Occult Science. So far as the science of occultism is concerned, it is both experimental and analytical, but it acknowledges no "missing links", "impassable gulfs", or "unthinkable gaps", because it finds none. Back of occult science there lies a complete and all-embracing Philosophy. This philosophy is not simply synthetical in its methods, for the simplest as the wildest hypothesis can claim that much; but it is *synthesis itself*. It regards Nature as one complete whole, and so the student of occultism may stand at either point of observation. He may from the stand-point of Nature's wholeness and completeness follow the process of segregation and differentiation to the minutest atom conditioned in space and

time; or, from the phenomenal display of the atom, he may reach forward and upward till the atom becomes an integral part of cosmos, involved in the universal harmony of creation. The modern scientist may do this incidentally or empirically, but the occultist does it systematically and habitually, and hence philosophically. The modern scientist is confessedly and boastfully *agnostic*. The occultist is reverently and progressively *gnostic*.

Modern science recognizes matter as "living" and "dead", "organic" and "inorganic", and "Life" as merely a phenomenon of matter, Occult science recognizes, "foremost of all the postulate that there is no such thing in Nature as *inorganic* substances or bodies. Stones, minerals, rocks, and even chemical '*atoms*' are simply organic units in profound lethargy. Their coma has an end, and their inertia becomes activity". (S. D. Vol. I. p. 626.)

Occultism recognizes ONE UNIVERSAL, ALL-PERVADING LIFE. Modern science recognizes life as a special phenomenon of matter, a mere transient manifestation due to temporary conditions. Even logic and analogy ought to have taught us better, for the simple reason that so-called "inorganic" or "dead" matter constantly becomes organic and living, while matter from the organic plane is continually being reduced to the inorganic. How rational and justifiable, then, to suppose that the capacity or "potency" of life is latent in all matter!

The "elements", "atoms", and "molecules" of modern science, partly physical and partly metaphysical, though altogether hypothetical, are, nevertheless, seldom philosophical, for the simple reason that they are regarded solely as phenomenal. The Law of Avogadro involved a generalization as to physical structure and number, and the later experiments of Prof. Neumann deduced the same law mathematically from the first principles of the mechanical theory of gases, but it remained for

Prof. Crookes to perceive the philosophical necessity of a primordial substratum, *protyle*, and so, as pointed out in the S. D., to lay the foundations of "*Metachemistry*"; in other words, a complete philosophy of physics and chemistry that shall take the place of mere hypothesis and empiricism. If one or two generalizations deduced as logical or mathematical necessities from the phenomena of physics and chemistry have been able to work such revolutions in the old chemistry, what may we not expect from a complete synthesis that shall grasp universals by a law that compasses the whole domain of matter? And yet this complete synthesis has been in the possession of the true occultist for ages. Glimpses of this philosophy have been sufficient to give to minds like Kepler, Descartes, Leibnitz, Kant, Schopenhauer, and, lastly, to Prof. Crookes, ideas that claimed and held the interested attention of the scientific world. While, at certain points, such writers supplement and corroborate each other, neither anywhere nor altogether do they reveal the complete synthesis, for none of them possessed it, and yet it has all along existed.

"Let the reader remember these 'Monads' of Leibnitz, every one of which is a living mirror of the universe, every monad reflecting every other, and compare this view and definition with certain Sanskrit stanzas (*Slokas*) translated by Sir William Jones, in which it is said that the creative source of the Divine Mind. . . . 'Hidden in a veil of thick darkness, formed *mirrors of the atoms* of the world, and *cast reflection from its own face on every atom.*' " — S. D., Vol. I, p. 623.

It may be humiliating to "Modern Exact Science" and repugnant to the whole of Christendom to have to admit that the Pagans whom they have despised, and the "Heathen Scriptures" they long ridiculed or ignored, nevertheless possess a fund of wisdom never dreamed of under Western skies. They have the lesson,

however, to learn, that Science by no means originated in, nor is it confined to, the West, nor are superstition and ignorance confined to the East.

It can easily be shown that every real discovery and every important advancement in modern science have already been anticipated centuries ago by ancient science and philosophy. It is true that these ancient doctrines have been embodied in unknown languages and symbols, and recorded in books inaccessible to western minds till a very recent date. Far beyond all this inaccessibility, however, as a cause preventing these old truths from reaching modern times, has been the prejudice, the scorn and contempt of ancient learning manifested by the leaders of modern thought.

Nor is the lesson yet learned that bigotry and scorn are never the mark of wisdom or the harbingers of learning; for still, with comparatively few exceptions, any claim or discussion of these ancient doctrines is met with contempt and scorn. The record has, however, been at least outlined and presented to the world. As the authors of the *Secret Doctrine* have remarked, these doctrines may not be largely accepted by the present generation, but during the twentieth century they will become known and appreciated.

The scope and bearing of philosophy itself are hardly yet appreciated by modern thought, because of its materialistic tendency. A complete science of metaphysics and a complete philosophy of science are not yet even conceived of as possible; hence the ancient wisdom by its very vastness has escaped recognition in modern times. That the authors of ancient wisdom have spoken from at least two whole planes of conscious experience beyond that of our every-day "sense-perception" is to us inconceivable, and yet such is the fact; and why should the modern advocate of evolution be shocked and staggered by such

a disclosure? It but justifies his hypothesis and extends its theatre. Is it because the present custodians of this ancient learning do not scramble for recognition on the stock exchange, and enter into competition in the marts of the world? If the practical outcome of such competition needed illustration, Mr. Keely might serve as an example. The discoveries of the age are already whole centuries in advance of its ethical culture, and the knowledge that should place still further power in the hands of a few individuals whose ethical code is below, rather than above, that of the ignorant, toiling, suffering masses, could only minister to anarchy and increase oppression. On these higher planes of consciousness the law of progress is absolute; knowledge and power go hand in hand with beneficence to man, not alone to the individual possessors of wisdom, but to the whole human race. The custodians of the higher knowledge are equally by both motive and development almoners of the divine. These are the very conditions of the higher consciousness referred to. The synthesis of occult science becomes, therefore, the higher synthesis of the faculties of man. What matter, therefore, if the ignorant shall scout its very existence, or treat it with ridicule and contempt? Those who know of its existence and who have learned something of its scope and nature can, in their turn, afford to smile, but with pity and sorrow at the willing bondage to ignorance and misery that scorns enlightenment and closes its eyes to the plainest truths of experience.

Leaving, for the present, the field of physics and cosmo-genesis, it may be profitable to consider some of the applications of these doctrines to the functions and life of man.

"The intellect derived from philosophy is similar to a charioteer; for it is present with our desires, and always conducts them to the beautiful."

— DEMOPHILUS.

(*To be continued.*)

The Path

THE FORGOTTEN ARTICLE OF THE APOSTLE'S CREED — W. E. Copeland

Jesus says "I and my Father are One", and again prays that his disciples may be one in him as he is one in the Father. In the proem to John's Gospel it is written, "And the Word was with God and the Word was God; and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth". And again it is said, "John was not that Light; but that was the true Light which lighteth every man who cometh into the world". In this remarkable chapter of the New Testament the "Light" is used as the equivalent of "Word", Light of God and Word of God meaning the same thing. All this proem to the Fourth Gospel seems at first very mystical, and we cannot understand it, but as we appreciate the real meaning of the words and connect them with other words used by Jesus, as reported in the same Gospel, we begin to comprehend their full meaning and find that the passage reveals more of truth than any other chapter in the whole Bible. Only, however, when you possess the key does it give any information; to most persons it is the blindest part of the Sacred Writings. But to Christianity in America as to Buddhism in Ceylon, Theosophy brings the key which will unlock the long-closed doors and reveal the inner meaning.

This Proem to the Fourth Gospel, which is so much of a puzzle to most persons, even to Theologians, accords entirely with the general teaching of Jesus, and, whether written by the Apostle John or not, was certainly composed by one who had comprehended the full significance of the oft-times mystical language used by Jesus, and who must have been in very close communion with him, receiving the full instruction imparted only to the inner circle of brothers who were deemed worthy to

understand the meaning of the parables used for the multitude, since "it was not fitting," Jesus said, "to cast pearls before swine".

What Jesus wished to teach was the Deity of Man, an idea common to all the Mysteries and taught by all the Great Masters, but entirely forgotten by the Jews when Jesus came to lead the world from darkness to light. Except the students of the Kabala, who were usually men living apart from the world, the Jews in the time of Jesus had forgotten their origin and the fact, once known, that they possessed a divine nature. So immersed were they in materialism and the external that Jesus tells them that their father is the Devil, that is, the man of the earth, material and earthly. "Ye claim Abraham as your father, but ye are children of the Devil". The same would be said today to the Christian church, were Jesus to appear again; the same must be said by the successors of Jesus and the other Adepts who lived in the Spirit. The Jews had lost their life and had joined the children of darkness over whom, according to the Magians, Ahriman or the principle of darkness presided. When the light shined into the darkness men did not understand that it was the light and would have none of it. In precisely the same condition stands the Christian Church. Theosophy, the same light which Jesus placed before the Jews and for bringing which they caused him to die, is now offered to the Christian Church, which, immersed in materialism and the worship of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, rejects it with scorn. And the central thought of Theosophy is that humanity is divine; God and Man are one, or Man is God; which was also the central thought of the message which Jesus presented at the beginning of the Christian Era.

In the *Pistis Sophia* (1), said to have been written by one of the Apostles and accepted by all of the Gnostic and many of the Orthodox Christians as directly inspired by God, we find the following passage which shows how man was regarded during

the second and third centuries. "And the Spirit of the Savior was moved within him, and he cried out and said, 'How long shall I bear with you, how long shall I suffer you? Know ye not and do ye not understand that ye are all Angels and all Archangels and Lords and Gods? Cease not to seek day and night, and stay not yourselves until ye have found the purifying mysteries which shall cleanse you and make you pure Light, that ye may inherit the Light of My Kingdom. Now therefore, thou Andrew and thy brethren, because of your Renunciations and all the sufferings and peril which ye have undergone, and your Reincarnations in different bodies, and your afflictions, and that after them all ye have received the Fructifying Mysteries and have become exceedingly pure Light, and shall be Kings in the Kingdom of Light forever.'"

In further proof that this was the position of the early Christian Church I will quote the words of Justin Martyr, A. D. 139.

"One article of our faith, then, is that Christ is the first begotten of God and we have already proved him to be the very Logos (universal reason) of which mankind are all partakers; and therefore those who live according to the Logos are Christians, notwithstanding they may pass with you for Atheists. Such among the Greeks were Socrates, Heraklitos, and the like; among the barbarians were Abraham, Elias, and many others. Those who have made the Logos or Reason the rule of their action are Christians and men without fear."

Theosophists have no difficulty in saying with the Catholic Church "Christ is God", or "Jesus is God", but we must also say, as did Jesus, "Ye too are Sons of God". When Jesus is called in the New Testament "God", allusion is always made to the Christ, or the Logos, or the Higher Self. Jesus was God: we have no quarrel with the Church over that doctrine; but we call attention to the

long forgotten doctrine which lies at the base of Esoteric Christianity, "All men are God", unless they have altogether driven away the God part, have divorced the Higher and Lower Selves, and, like the Jews in the time of Jesus, have the Devil for father. The all-important doctrine of Theosophy, as it seems to me, which overtops all others, or, rather, on which all others are founded, is "Man is God". All men are Sons of God, for in all dwells the Light, in all is incarnate the Word; else are we not men at all, only bodies having the appearance of men, from which the Higher Self has departed. This is the forgotten doctrine which was made the most important part of that Esoteric Christianity which was imparted by Jesus to his disciples and by them to the brothers, until the time when the Church and the State were united under Constantine and every one was admitted among the brothers with no proper instruction. After the Union the secret meaning of the parables was forgotten, for the Church, married to the Mammon of Unrighteousness, could neither see the Light nor hear the Word. Consider the ever-famous parable of the Prodigal Son, in which the Prodigal after wasting his substance in riotous living "comes to himself and straightway hastens to return to his Father's House, just as all men will do when they also come to themselves. I need write no more in proof of the fact that the Deity of Man was a central doctrine with Jesus and the early Christian Church.

But it is one thing to affirm a doctrine and believe in it, quite another to know the truth which is expressed by the doctrine. What Jesus taught his disciples, what the Great Masters of all time taught their disciples, what "Those who know" are through Theosophy teaching all who will devote themselves to the study, is that Men are God. In olden time, such was the effect of teaching this great truth that, when imparted in the Eleusinian Mysteries, men came forth from the initiation entirely changed. It seemed,

indeed, as though they had been baptized with the Holy Ghost and born from above. Knowing that we are God, all things are possible; as Jesus told his disciples, "Greater things than these shall ye do." Moses said to the Israelites that God had revealed himself in the burning bush as "I am that I am": a better translation for individual man is, "I am that I will to be". Then, if we are God, we can be what we will to be and do what we will to do, and can do greater things than the Nazarene. Until the year 300 A. D. the faithful did do greater things than the Master, but when they forgot that they were God, the power departed. Theosophy proposes to restore to men this power which belongs to them. Now have we indeed stepped from darkness to light. Before we were blind, now we see; before we were deaf, now we hear; God speaking to us, not in a Bible written long ago, but in a Bible being written today, and, better than in any Bible, speaking in the closet where, having entered, we close the door and hear the Voice of the Silence.

When we remember the effect of this divine knowledge among the so-called heathen and among the early Christians, among the disciples of all the Great Teachers, may we not expect that when men and women of today through the influence of Theosophy come to know that they are God, may we not expect a genuine conversion of the world and the coming upon the earth of a grander race of men than have yet dwelt upon it, even of a people who know that they are God and to whom all things are possible?

FOOTNOTE:

1. First completely translated into English, we believe, by G. R. S. Mead, F. T. S., in *Lucifer*. [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

DEATH — *Alexander Fullerton*

Theosophists who were not brought up under "Evangelical" influences have no adequate perception of the change Theosophy makes in the view of death. To an orthodox, death is a penal infliction indicative of Divine wrath, the close to all hope of change or reformation, mysterious and awful and terrifying in every aspect, but especially because it introduces into the immediate presence of God a soul which is then to receive assignment of woe or bliss. Which shall be assigned can never be foreseen, for, as not character but faith is the determining factor, and as no one can say whether the faith of the deceased was sufficient to "justify", there must be painful uncertainty in every case short of conspicuous saintliness. The harrowing fears, the agonies of doubt and misgiving undergone by pious relatives over every open grave, no arithmetic can ever compute.

But the conception keeps also the living in terror. St. Paul most justly describes those who "through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage". Not knowing when it would come, but only that it was horrible in its details and incalculably momentous in its consequences, with no security as to its outcome beyond a sentiment known to be fickle and avowed to be deceptive, is it any wonder that orthodoxy kept them shuddering along every step of the way towards the open tomb at which it ceaselessly pointed?

It is one of the measureless blessings of Theosophy that this odious libel on God and Nature is demolished, the whole demoniacal conception obliterated, and the aspect of death completely revolutionized. With an indignant sneer Theosophy shatters the terrorizing image, and substitutes for it a benignant,

rational, and kindly figure.

The notion that death is a punishment for sin is the basis for the orthodox erection, and this is blasted to atoms by proof that death is a natural step from lower to higher planes, the necessary transfer from scenes one has exhausted to those still in store. It is no more arbitrary, no more terrific, than birth. But, in itself, it is not even a calamity. Far worse would be the fate of one doomed never to die, ever to pass centuries of wearied disappointment without hope of relief or change. Even the orthodox have occasionally sensed this, and, momentarily blind to the slight on the Divine judgments, have sung, "I would not live always; I ask not to stay".

Having thus removed the ground-work of the misrepresentation of death, Theosophy proceeds to erect a true conception. As death is but a door, a transit from earth-life to life beyond earth, all must turn on the view of each. Now earth-life, says Theosophy, is that era during which an incarnate individuality undergoes experience, forms character, and suffers whatever evil its demerits demand; life beyond earth is the era during which the individuality, no longer incarnate, digests the results of that experience, reposes in the wealth of that character, and enjoys whatever good its merits deserve. Here, in this mixture of right and wrong, and turbulence and serenity, and peace and warfare, we have our partial reward and also our copious discipline: there, in the calm sunlight of subjective existence, sorrows have passed away and heavenly rest comes to soothe and refresh the one who has ceased from his labors. But when that rest has fulfilled its needs, when full reward has been given and the time has come for another pilgrimage, the individuality returns to earth-life, assumes a different personality, and begins again the formation of its character.

Observe, says Theosophy, the contrast between earth-life and the other, and so the new view we must take of death. There is no "Day" of Judgment, for Judgment is daily and unceasing. There is no nearer presence of God, for, whether with bodies or without them, "in Him we live and move and have our being". There is no "final doom", for no finality is possible while character is forming, and "doom" has no meaning apart from desert. "Hell" is not a future and outside torment into which sinners shall be dropped when the loss of their bodies makes it possible to get at them, but a present and interior state which they create for themselves through their passions and wrongs. "Heaven" is not a remote and exterior scene where saints are to congregate in resurrected bodies and imperfectly disciplined souls, but a condition of the internal man, realizable on earth so far as his development has made it possible, and off the earth in a measure unattainable while en fleshed. Punishment is not future, but present; not there, but here; not beyond the earth, but on the earth. And happiness, though found here too, is there without alloy.

This being so, we see at once the different aspect Theosophy gives to natural death. Not the introducer to an uncertain future, with the chances greatly in favor of woe, but to certain, assured peace and happiness. Never the stern avenger, he is ever the kind friend who opens the door to bliss. No pain enters the unseen world, and we, with knowledge that only bliss is ever found within it, can lose all fear as we contemplate that door afar or see it opening for our approach. For where is the pain, where the discipline and sorrow that we know must follow our many faults? In *life*. Birth, not death, is what introduces us to sorrow and ensures that every sin shall meet its recompense. If we are to be terrorized at any of Nature's processes, it must be the cradle, not the grave. If any one is free from either danger or uncertainty, it must be that which ushers only to joy and peace.

What an unspeakable boon has Theosophy thus given to men appalled with the horrors of a mistaken creed! As true conceptions of life and death make their way throughout the land, what wretchedness will they dispel, what agony of spirit for self and loved ones, what hardness and coldness towards the Author of all good. If Theosophy did nothing to uplift higher motive and finer endeavor, if it disclosed no better ground for human fraternity and mutual help, if it solved no mysteries and lighted no gulfs and cleared no doubts, if it gave no rational interpretation to existence and furnished no adequate impulse to development — and it has done all these; yet it would have conferred this incalculable blessing, — emancipation from imaginary but bitter terror, the transformation of Death from an enemy to a friend, the resurrection, not of a disintegrated carcass, but of a rational belief.

The Path

THE IDEAL AND THE PRACTICAL — *Pilgrim*

(*Concluded.*)

Altruism truly will have to be realized and expressed in action during our journey to the great goal, but it cannot be called the great goal itself. It may be a means, a necessary means, but it is not the only means. The very word, too, has a ring of coldness in it, and there must be many who require to light the flame of their love and devotion at a more fervent centre than any thought of Humanity can kindle! Indeed, is the Humanity of today either in the individual or in the mass such as to elicit either our love or our worship? Scorn, loathing, and pity seem more like the emotions raised in contemplating alternately its meanness, its vice, and its suffering. True it is that none are so fitted as the Occultist to return the world's scorn with princely interest, for none are lifted so immeasurably above the world with its bounded vision and its trivial aims, but though scorn may only be the reflex action which would make it exactly commensurate with the intensity of worship in the soul, it is of the very essence of separateness, and it must be remembered that all sense of separateness has to be killed out. The scorn must be replaced by an infinite compassion. But how is this to be done? The divine alone provides a bridge for the scattered fragments. It is only through the Deity — the Perfect — the All-pervading — the Unutterable Essence of our own inmost Being — that man can truly become one in love and worship with his fellow-man. Yoga is the watchword, Yoga is the means, Yoga is the end. It is written. "Counsels of perfection are the aliment of all strenuous souls," and one who in this bitter and arid desert of illusion has once seen the vision of the holy grail can never cease to thirst for its draught of sacramental wine.

Union being, then, our watchword and our aim, we must not be too much cast down at the apparent disunion which seems to precede the attainment of each stage in the progress. It is sad beyond expression, the feeling of disunion when the ardent affections of childhood and youth are gradually dissipated through the failure of the old friends to respond to the newer ideals before us. The closest earthly union of all — that of the married souls — would indeed so fill the whole horizon of life with bliss that it would far more than compensate for the sad severance of the other ties, but when this also is denied, there often rises in the heart a feeling of loneliness and homelessness so accentuated as to be almost too bitter to bear. But is not this merely the prelude to the heart's greater expansion? to the soul's wider vision of its object and its end? It is long indeed before the "great orphan" Humanity can claim its own in us! before we are capable of giving birth even to the germ of that world-wide sympathy which so infinitely transcends all personal claims, and which, when grown to full stature, is the very blotting out of self, is the very gate of Heaven!

The practical person may here step in and say that this identification of self with Humanity can only be achieved by practical work for the race in every-day human life. Doubtless the race needs its champions and deliverers today as of old. Let Hercules again step forth, girded to cleanse the Augean stables! Let the troubled and careful Martha continue her work of service! There are many laborers wanted in God's vineyard. But let not the hands that work say to the brain that guides them "We have no need of thee." The practical person has work to do in the world: let him do it! but "counsels of perfection" were not written for him! It is the same old problem of (1) "Meditation and Action" which so few of the western people are yet fit to grasp, — within the quietistic term meditation being embraced all the battles of

the hidden life, including the "great battle."

A pointed illustration of Europe's incapacity for right thought may be found in Draper's great work, *The Intellectual Development of Europe*. Words are of course mere counters which may bear different significations in different ages, or to different individuals in the same age, but no mere juggling with the counters will account for a fundamental difference of conception as to the thing, and when a writer (and the point is only accentuated when the writer is so distinguished for ability and wide-mindedness) uses the word quietism as synonymous with apathy, it is similar to mistaking the top rung of a ladder for the bottom one — an absolute perversion of vision. A little knowledge of the Vedic philosophy teaches that the active emotional nature of one lit with the fire of Passion ("Rajas") is greatly superior to the apathy of one sunk in the ignorance of Sloth ("Tamas"), but far above the passionate nature stands the one who has transferred his energy from the outer on to the inner plane, and has thereby attained some amount of equilibrium, some amount of self-control. When the inner struggle is continued with such intensity — aided and guided by the concentration on the Supreme — that all outer things lose their importance, a stage of "quietism" is reached which in external appearance may resemble the debased apathy of the ignorant boor, but does it not imply absolute perversion of vision to mistake the sublime heights of Serenity ("Satwan") for the depths of ignorant sloth? It must be apparent that the above misunderstanding is no mere verbal difference, and can only be accounted for by the fact that a material-minded race is incapable even of believing in the existence of states of spiritual exaltation.

Before the battles of the inner life all else truly sinks into unreality, and the great teacher whom the Western people honor has in the story of Martha and Mary left a record of his thought

on the subject of "Meditation and Action" which may be summarized in the lesson that it is greater and nobler and better *to be* than *to do*, that the race is ultimately more benefited by the thinking of the thoughts and the living of the life than by all the actions of all the philanthropists. The real battle has to be fought within, and any finding of external spheres of energy or beneficence is a mere postponement of, though it may be a necessary preliminary to, that awful struggle.

It is only by slow degrees that the lesson contained in each pregnant paradox of *Light on the Path* is painfully learned through payment of heart's blood. First in the book but last in realization comes the rule (No. 5) "Kill out all sense of separateness." When the disciple has learned this in its entirety he is one with Humanity, for he is one with God. But the painful process is described in the antithesis, "Yet stand alone and isolated, because nothing that is embodied, nothing that is conscious of separation, nothing that is out of the Eternal can aid you." It is this standing alone that is the hard task, but it must surely be the prelude to the greater expansion of the whole nature, it must surely be a step nearer to the merging of the self in the All! Bitter beyond description is the learning of the lesson, when the whole passion of the passionate nature is concentrated in the cry — the unavailing cry — for the sympathy of the friend, for the love of the lover. It is poor consolation to say that to find content in these things would be to satisfy the immortal hunger upon husks. It is a very mortal and human hunger that cries out. Nevertheless it is but reasonable to admit that only by such means can the mortal hunger be replaced by the immortal, that only by such terrible strangling of our personal human desires can man attain to the wider sympathy, the greater wisdom, and the all-embracing love of the God.

Many, O weary pilgrim, may be thy journeys back to earth, many

thy tortures on the ever-recurring wheel of life, many thy shrinkings of soul from the terrors of the "dire probations." But take courage, Lanoo, and keep the fire burning, the fire that burns within, for its light must grow and must increase, until when the last great battle shall be won, "its light will suddenly become the infinite light," and then to thee may be addressed the words — words that may even convey to our still earth-bound understanding some faint description of that indescribable achievement — the realization of the loftiest conceivable *ideal* as an absolute *practical* fact: "Behold! thou hast become the light, thou hast become the sound, thou art thy Master and thy God. Thou art *Thyself* the object of thy search: the Voice unbroken that resounds throughout eternities, exempt from change, from sin exempt, the seven sounds in one, the Voice of the Silence." (2)

FOOTNOTES:

1. See the article on Meditation and Action in *Problems of the Hidden Life*. ([return to text](#))
2. From *The Voice of the Silence*, being extracts from the Book of the Golden Precepts translated and annotated by H. P. B. Light on the Path is a work deserving of the highest praise. The Voice of the Silence is beyond all praise. It is more light on the path to those capable of understanding it. — Pilgrim. ([return to text](#))

The Path

HYPOCRISY OR IGNORANCE — *Eusebio Urban*

There are some members of the Theosophical Society who expose themselves to the charge of indulging in hypocrisy or being ignorant about their own failings and shortcomings. They are those who, having studied the literature of the movement and accepted most of its doctrines, then talk either to fellow-members or to outsiders as if the goal of renunciation and universal knowledge had been reached in their case, when a very slight observation reveals them as quite ordinary human beings.

If one accepts the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood, which is based on the essential unity of all human beings, there is a long distance yet intervening between that acceptance and its realization, even in those who have adopted the doctrine. It is just the difference between intellectual assent to a moral, philosophical, or occult law, and its perfect development in one's being so that it has become an actual part of ourselves. So when we hear a theosophist say that he could see his children, wife, or parents die and not feel anything whatever, we must infer that there is a hypocritical pretension or very great ignorance. There is one other conclusion left, which is that we have before us a monster who is incapable of any feeling whatever, selfishness being over-dominant.

The doctrines of Theosophy do not ask for nor lead to the cutting out of the human heart of every human feeling. Indeed, that is an impossibility, one would think, seeing that the feelings are an integral part of the constitution of man, for in the principle called *Kama* — the desires and feelings — we have the basis of all our emotions, and if it is prematurely cut out of any being death or worse must result. It is very true that theosophy as well as all

ethical systems demands that the being who has conscience and will, such as are found in man, shall control this principle of *Kama* and not be carried away by it nor be under its sway. This is self-control, mastery of the human body, steadiness in the face of affliction, but it is not extirpation of the feelings which one has to control. If any theosophical book deals with this subject it is the *Bhagavad Gita*, and in that Krishna is constantly engaged in enforcing the doctrine that all the emotions are to be controlled, that one is not to grieve over the inevitable — such as death, nor to be unduly elated at success, nor to be cast down by failure, but to maintain an equal mind in every event, whatever it may be, satisfied and assured that the qualities move in the body in their own sphere. In no place does he say that we are to attempt the impossible task of cutting out of the inner man an integral part of himself.

But, unlike most other systems of ethics, theosophy is scientific as well, and this science is not attained just when one approaching it for the first time in this incarnation hears of and intellectually agrees to these high doctrines. For one cannot pretend to have reached the perfection and detachment from human affairs involved in the pretentious statement referred to, when even as the words are uttered the hearer perceives remaining in the speaker all the peculiarities of family, not to speak of those pertaining to nation, including education, and to the race in which he was born. And this scientific part of theosophy, beginning and ending with universal brotherhood, insists upon such an intense and ever-present thought upon the subject, coupled with a constant watch over all faults of mind and speech, that in time an actual change is produced in the material person, as well as in the immaterial one within who is the mediator or way between the purely corporal lower man and his Higher divine self. This change, it is very obvious, cannot come about at

once nor in the course of years of effort.

The charge of pretension and ignorance is more grave still in the case of those theosophists guilty of the fault, who happen to believe — as so many do — that even in those disciples whose duties in the world are *nil* from the very beginning, and who have devoted themselves to self-renunciation and self-study so long that they are immeasurably beyond the members of our Society, the defects due to family, tribal, and national inheritance are now and then observable.

It seems to be time, then, that no theosophist shall ever be guilty of making pretension to any one that he or she has attained to the high place which now and then some assume to have reached. Much better is it to be conscious of our defects and weaknesses, always ready to acknowledge the truth that, being human, we are not able to always or quickly reach the goal of effort.

The Path

THE VISION OF HORIL — *Stanley Fitzpatrick*

Horil awoke in the morning an hour before the dawn. It seemed to him that some one had been standing close beside his couch and he had been listening to a long discourse. Also it appeared as though his physical senses had awakened suddenly and he had caught, with both inward and outward ear, the last sentence spoken.

But as had happened on former occasions, the moment he was fully awake to outward things he could not recall the sentence, nor any word of all that he had heard. He was troubled at this, desiring greatly that he might remember all that had been shown to him in dreams. But this he could not do, and, as he lay pondering on these things, suddenly he heard a voice close beside him, though he saw no man. Yet a vision was opened to his sight. Then the Voice said unto him:

"Look and behold, O Horil! thou disciple whose feet are at the entering of two ways."

And as Horil gazed, a beautiful green valley between high mountains lay spread out before him. Through the midst ran a gently winding path, and there were purling streams and flowering shrubs. Tall trees rose up here and there, and the smooth green turf was studded with blossoms. As Horil looked he thought how easy such a path would be for tired feet, how grateful the coolness and the quiet to a heart pierced by the world's cruel stings, and faint and weary with the conflict of life.

"But thou would'st walk alone, unknown, unthought of by the world," said the Voice.

"For the world I care not," replied Horil; "I have drunk deep of its

bitterest cup; and its praise I would willingly forego that I might walk my own way untroubled."

"That thou could'st in this path. Thine own life might be blameless, and lead thee on to rest. But for others thy voice would be silenced. The torch of Truth thou could'st not uphold; and as its light would not fall on thee, thou would'st not become a mark for the envy, hatred, and malice of those who would destroy Truth and its light-bearers. This path thou mayst choose; but look first at the other."

Then Horil turned his eyes to the right, and lo! a great mountain rose up before him. A path wound up its side, but it was steep and in many places the feet would find nothing upon which to rest but sharp points of stone. But the pathway, even from the beginning, was covered by a clear, white light, which as it ascended grew ever brighter and brighter until far up the mountain side it appeared like tongues of leaping flame. Then the heart of Horil burned within him and he said:

"Nay, but better still is the upward path. That will I choose."

"Decide not in haste," answered the Voice. "Bethink thee how cool and pleasant is the valley. Thy feet are bruised with life's journey and thy heart sore with its conflict. There thou canst rest. Here thou must renew the strife. Here thou wilt bear a torch flaming high above thy head and its light will illumine thy form, and thus thou wilt become a fairer mark for the missiles of the foe than thou hast ever been before."

Then the heart of Horil sank down in his breast, cold and heavy with dread. And he thought: "How can I walk in that path? How can I bear the finger of scorn, the laugh of derision, the speech that is sharper than the sword, that burneth like fire? I that am already faint and worn with life's battle, I am not strong enough."

And he turned slowly and sadly toward the valley.

"It is well," said the Voice. "Thou hast chosen. But give me now the torch thou bearest in thy right hand."

"Nay," replied Horil, "that was given to me by One, even the Master. That will I not yield up."

"But the torch is only for those who pass over the mountain. There, as thou ascendest and the air becomes clearer, it will burn with a brighter, purer flame. But in the valley the atmosphere is too dense. It will be quenched. Yet may'st thou walk pleasantly, in the sunlight by day, and under the moon and stars by night, and having no torch to distinguish thee from another, none will molest or make thee afraid."

Then was Horil greatly troubled, and his soul was rent within him. And he cried out in his anguish, even to the Master, saying:

"Lord! if it be possible let this cup pass from me. My enemies hate me with a cruel hatred. They lie in wait for me. When I hold up my torch they will assail me with fury. Fear taketh hold on me. Nevertheless, O Master! thy gift I cannot quench. I may not turn into the pleasant valley. Strengthen thou mine hands to bear aloft thy torch to light the children of men who faint and stumble in darkness and despair."

Then fell upon his soul words not uttered in speech — the Voice which speaketh in Silence — from the viewless it came.

Then was Horil greatly comforted, and though fear had not altogether departed, nor the dread of what his enemies might do unto him, he turned resolutely away from the pleasant path, and grasping his torch more firmly in his right hand he set his face toward the mountain.

The Path

THE FIRST OBJECT OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY — *Katharine Hillard*

The three principal objects of the Theosophical Society as laid down in the books are: *First*, "To form a nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, color, or creed." *Second*, "To promote the study of Aryan and other Scriptures, of the world's religions and sciences, and to vindicate the importance of old Asiatic literature, namely of the Brahminical, Buddhist, and Zoroastrian philosophies." *Third*, "To investigate the hidden mysteries of Nature under every subject possible, and the psychic and spiritual powers latent in man especially."

The three divisions are but three roads leading to one goal, but as St. Paul, in enumerating the theological virtues, declared that "the greatest of these is charity," so of the three objects of the Theosophical Society the greatest of these is Universal Brotherhood, the others but side-paths leading into it. The study of Oriental literatures and religions will enlighten the intellect, and the study of the hidden mysteries of Nature will develop the psychic powers, but the endeavor to promote Universal Brotherhood will assist more directly the growth of that altruism which alone can affect the spirit, and which is, indeed, the "charity" of which Paul spoke.

The outside observer who inquires as to the objects of Theosophy, as soon as he hears "Universal Brotherhood" mentioned immediately objects that there is no need of a Theosophical Society to teach us this, that Christianity has always taught it, that even agnostics and Jews and Mohammedans practise it, and that, in fact, it is a great piece of presumption for theosophists to

suppose they can make anything original out of so threadbare a doctrine. To which we would reply, in the first place, that truth never can be new, that the poet spoke of her with absolute assurance when he said "The eternal years of God are hers", and that that eternity stretches as far into what we short-sighted mortals call the Past, as into what we are pleased to term the Future, and when we learn to know the eternal verities, we shall realise that upon the dial of the Absolute there are no figures, because beyond the realm of Illusion there is no Past, no Future, only one everlasting Present.

The power and weight of truth are in its *age*, not in its newness; in the way that it appeals to our hearts as something that we have always known but somehow have unaccountably lost sight of; something that we greet like a dear friend we rejoice to see again after long absence. Therefore we will not try to claim novelty as a characteristic of the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood.

But we may claim a certain freshness in the method of our teaching. Universal Brotherhood as taught by the churches has too often far too much of the "elder brother" element in it, of a certain virtuous condescension of the truly good towards those so far beneath them in physical and moral qualities that they can afford to demonstrate the height of their own position by the amount of effort they make to stretch a helping hand towards those whom they acknowledge as their "brethren in the Lord". Outside of this rather indefinite location, the brothers occupy the usual uncomfortable position of poor relations.

Brotherhood as taught in the churches is founded generally upon a physical basis. It implies equality, but not identity; men are brothers because they have similar organs, passions, capabilities, a common lot; because they share the great experiences of birth and death and a possible immortality. They are a collection of

similar units, an agglomeration of shells upon the shore of Life. But they are not *one thing*; each has his personality which shuts him out from his kind by inclosing him within the limits of self; and between man and man that barrier of personality is ever firmly set; come as near as they can, the consciousness of the *I* and the *Thou* is ever between them.

But in Theosophy the fundamental doctrine is that of absolute identity. These outward shows of things are but illusion, a deception of our senses, themselves but a fleeting image on the screen of Time. As life departs, our bodies fade and crumble into dust, our mental faculties fail and disappear, our desires and our passions perish with the organs that gave them birth; — what remains? Only the Spirit of man, which is the Spirit of God. And Spirit — however inadequate our conceptions of it must necessarily be — we all acknowledge to be one and indivisible, the Great Reality, the Everlasting Truth; Infinite, and therefore formless and identical, whether it send its pulsating life through man or crystal, through zoophyte or star.

Only by recognizing this absolute Unity of Spirit can we possibly understand the real meaning of the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood, and realise that it means, not the equality of *men*, but the *identity of MAN*. Only when we learn to think of man as a whole, as a collective being, of which, each one of us forms a more or less insignificant part, as the separate cells in our bodies make up that physical machine which we think of as our own, only when we can grasp this idea of *identity* instead of equality, shall we begin to see what "The first object of the Theosophical Society" really implies.

It implies a common association for a common good, it implies subordination of the individual to the whole, and it implies the annihilation of self, the breaking down of the limitations of the

physical, mental, and psychic Egos that the SPIRIT may be all in all. When these barriers are at last thrown down, and the soul realises that the limitations which have hampered her never had a real existence, but were painfully built up by herself out of one false conception after another, then indeed she realizes her freedom, and knows herself as one with the Divine. And when the lover of mankind has learned (as in Jellaleddin's poem) that in the house of the Spirit "there is no room for *Me* and *Thee*", but that his brothers are *himself*, then in that soul has been attained the first great object of the Theosophical Society. He has learned his lesson, learned to feel the great heart of the universe beating in his own breast, learned to rejoice in the joys of others and to bear their sorrows as his own, learned that he is but one cell in that great Being called Humanity, and that the functions of that one cell improperly discharged will ruin the harmony of the whole organism. The doctrine of Universal Brotherhood, then, teaches us at once a great moral and a great spiritual lesson. It defines our position not only as part of a great working community, but as part of the Divine Spirit that animates that organisation. So closely linked is every part and parcel of the mighty whole called Man, that no one of us can afford to neglect our small portion of the great work, the bringing of harmony out of chaos, of perfection out of imperfection. For the law of analogy holds good throughout the universe, and as the object of our individual existence is to return, a glorified and perfected consciousness, to that great Fount of Being whence we sprang, so Humanity as a whole must purge away the evil, dominate the physical, and become a God. To this end we must all work, and as each of us recognises more fully the identity of Man, each year as it closes will bring nearer the end of the Dark Age, and the time when the Divine Voice can say in the highest, "Let there be light." Then indeed that time shall come upon earth that the poet has described as the Golden Year, and then

"Shall all men's good
Be each man's rule, and universal Peace
Lie like a shaft of light across the land,
And like a lane of beams athwart the sea,
Thro' all the circle of the golden year."

The Path

THE PLAGUES OF OUR PUBLIC MEETINGS — K. W.

A friend of mine who claims to be an earnest Theosophist, but is, in fact, a rather criticising, fault-finding, and uncharitable fellow, is nevertheless very dear, and very near, to me. This chap writes a funny letter to me concerning our public meetings, a letter which I will read to you because the object of his disaffection is also our own adversary, and we thus have common cause with him this time.

"Dear brother," he writes, "what you say concerning your meetings is very familiar to me. We have ours in good running order and well attended now, but we had to go through the same experiences as you have to at present. Your meetings will never thrive until you have found the method to get rid of their never-tiring enemy who is the same everywhere.

As the Colorado-bug is the plague of the potato, tomato, and egg plants, and even kills the young settlings at once, and has not met yet his conqueror, so public meetings of whatever kind have a foe who is apt to kill the tender and young ones among them, so that sometimes they have to be set anew, — if that is possible at all. This monster is the Crank. I have given some study to this loathsome creature and discovered that it exists in three distinct species, which I am going to describe scientifically for the instruction and warning of the unwary meeting-culturer.

The three species have these common properties: 1, they belong as members to no society; 2, they are recklessly selfish; 3, they invade whatever meeting gives opportunity for questions and remarks from the audience. The reason why they do not belong to any communities of their own is their murderous loquacity that drives every one away from them, or that they are too conceited

to agree or work in sympathy with anybody, or that they are too stingy to make any sacrifice, or all three reasons together.

The least harmful of the three species of the meeting-killer is the one I called Mr. Shallow simple. The elemental that runs him only wants his tongue to have a good time a couple of hours every week, wherever there is an opportunity, irrespective of any other consideration whatever. Shallow is everywhere but at home at meeting-hours in the city.

In such hours Shallow goeth around as a roaring lion wagging his tongue and seeking whom he may devour. No meeting is safe. Some new society — for instance, the 'Presbyterian Old Men's Progressive Union,' advertise their inauguration meeting, and you are very glad of the opportunity, and do *not* go there; for you are sure Shallow will.

He knows by long experience that his water is too shallow to be swallowed by the audience to any length of time satisfactory to himself; he also feels that he has nothing refreshing and healthful to soul and mind to give them. Therefore he flavors his speech with the sulphuric acid of opposition and irritation, and thinks they will take it for lemonade.

'My dear friends' he says to the Reformers, in the tone of the most fatherly benevolence (1) why are you so dissatisfied with your conditions? your wages are not so bad. Why do you not, each of you, save, say, a quarter a day for the rainy day? Wouldn't you have eighty dollars in a year, and eight thousand dollars, each of you, in a hundred years,— would not each of you be a capitalist?' 'Shut up! sit down! who is that fool?' they shout, and poor Shallow has again to leave the floor.

Another time he tries his luck in the young Abheachabhrahayana Branch of the Theosophical Society, and, imagining that they are

Buddhists, thus addresses them with the already-mentioned fatherliness: 'My dear friends! Why will you go back into the darkness of the by-gone ages, and dig up the dead teachings and sayings of Paganism? This is no progress, friends, it is retrogression! If you want to improve the ethical conditions of mankind, why not study and expound the sublime doctrines of our Christian Gospel? Is not our whole grand civilization based just on this moral code of Christianity? What other age can boast of such glorious attainments as ours in all departments? Have under the ethical teachings of the Hindoos such things been seen as the steam-engines, locomotives, steamship, telegraph, telephone, phonograph, gunpowder, printing-press, dynamite, firearms, breachloaders, ironclads; and all those charitable institutions as hospitals, poorhouses, almshouses, workhouses, Sunday morning breakfast and Saturday evening soup associations, houses of refuge, penitentiaries, and lunatic asylums .." Here the chair ventures to state that the gentleman's mind is wandering, that he is off the subject and had better retire.

Now, on the whole, Mr. Shallow does not so much harm; you can get done with him in about ten minutes.

More dangerous is the second species whom I call *Mr. Hobbyrider*. This one is very often the Elijah or Jesus of the 'new dispensation,' one of the bashful kind, namely of those who try to keep their mission secret,— in vain, however, for it oozes out everywhere, especially in their countenances. But usually Hobbyrider is an ordinary mortal who only labors with a philosophy of his own, because he has no chair to teach it from. His system is based on some idea that any average thinker might conceive and entertain for a while, but then would either discard as wrong, or file somewhere in his memory as an old matter of inferior order. But Hobbyrider is in love with this idea and wants his bride to be recognized. If this world of ours were ruled half-way by such a

thing as reason, he would be a professor of metaphysics at one of our universities. Under the actual circumstances, however, he has to hunt for an audience where he can get it; and it is a hard job too, indeed ! For the old societies are too smart and too much on their guard against starved tongues. They know they might as easily stop a waterfall as his flow of speech once let loose. They therefore use all kinds of tricks and have got up special contrivances to keep him off their rostrums. That is why he has set his eyes on innocent and inexperienced young 'Branches', whom he captures and then taps at an awful rate, once he has them in his grip.

The third and most insidious form of the meeting-bug is the one I called the '*Man with the Puzzle*'. Suppose he is attending at the 'Metaphysical Society's' Weekly Meditating Meeting. He has taken note of the subject of the introductory paper that is to be read, and provided himself with a dozen of puzzling questions for all cases. He says, for instance: 'The gentlemen who read the paper used the word 'nature' several times. What do you understand by the term nature?' Some one answers as best he can. But, satisfactory or not, the Man with the Puzzle has a definition of his own, and politely begs leave to give it,—which cannot be properly denied. And now—he has got you!!!—He is the one who defines the things before he talks of them! and in order to define 'nature' he defines half a dozen of other terms. He takes his time. This being done, he also *talks* about nature and the six other things,—under three heads and two subheads each.

Now those of the attendants who are theosophists of old standing know at once what to do in such an emergency. Whilst apparently listening to the Man with the Puzzle, they seize with rapture the grand opportunity of subduing, by taking position in the higher ego, the flames of impatience, indignation, and anger that are arising from the depths of their Kama Manas; and they are very

successful in this exercise. But how about the rest of the audience who know nothing of this theosophical stratagem? They are ablaze with rage at the lamb-like meekness of the chair and the members of the society, and mentally swear by Mars and Saturn never to attend any more. But everything ends in this world of change. The chair looks at her watch and discovers that the hour has struck for adjournment, under useless attempts of Mr. Hobbyrider 'to make a few remarks.' The Man with the Puzzle is triumphant, but the former cannot go home of course in this explosive condition, and gives vent to it in a private controversy with some of the leading members; the result of which is an epistle received by the secretary on the next day in which the whole Society is taxed with ignorance, dogmatism, and Blavatsky-worship. And this end is speedy and fortunate enough; but sometimes these fellows have much perseverance, cunning, and moderation, and then—they kill you! In such contingencies you have to suspend the right of questioning entirely, until the last crank is starved out.

Now although aware of the danger which a crank is to a theosophical branch, I always felt attracted to some of them, understanding by the term simply a man who insists upon his own philosophy in spite of any other. Perhaps the hope of bringing them round was at the bottom of my intercourse with them. If it was, it was a mistake. Such a man will read himself through *Isis Unveiled*, the *Secret Doctrine*, and a dozen of other books to find whether they do not teach anything concerning his hobby. If they do not, as they in fact do not, he scornfully rejects them as chaff. Therefore, since I feel the value of time more keenly now than before, I make it a rule to 'head off' each bore as quickly as possible, and to warn new Branches of the dangers which beset them. Truly yours,

FOOTNOTE:

1. Talking through his nose. ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE IMPRUDENCE OF MODERN PHILOSOPHERS — *William Brehon*

In Herbert Spencer's new book *Justice*, he defines that principle thus: "Every man is free to do that which he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other man," and then goes on to say in his appendix that for more than thirty years he was the first to recognize this "equal freedom" as the summing up of justice in the abstract. But not till 1883 did this modern philosopher discover that Kant had made the same formula. He does not appear to know or recognize the French method of putting it in the Declaration of the Rights of Man, nor the attempt to insist upon it in the American Revolution, nor, indeed, in the thousands of declarations made long before the birth of Spencer.

We have nothing to say against Mr. Spencer's motives, but a great deal against the impudence, perhaps of an unconscious kind, of the schools of modern philosophers of which he forms one. Laboriously for years they write books and construct systems of thought called new by themselves, but as old as any Egyptian pyramid. These systems and formulas they make up in the most refreshing ignorance of what the ancients said about the same things, for "surely", they seem to be saying, "what could the ancients have known of such deep matters?" The theory that no energy is lost was not for the first time known in the world when our moderns gave it out, nor is Mr. Spencer's theory of evolution, nor even his statement of it, his invention or discovery. All these were known to the Ancients. They are found in the *Bhagavad-Gita* and in many another eastern philosophical book.

If these modern philosophers confined themselves to their studies and had no influence in the world and upon the minds of young

men who make the new nation, we would not have a word to say. But since they influence many minds and have enormous weight in the thinking of our day, it seems well to point out that it savors of impudence on their part to ignore the development of philosophy in the East, where nearly all the mooted philosophical questions of the day were ages ago discussed and disposed of. If Herbert Spencer could be so blind as he confesses himself to be as to suppose that he was the first to recognize the abstract formula of justice, only to discover that Kant had hit upon it before him, then of course we are justified in presuming that he is equally ignorant of what has been said and decided in the six great schools of India. If such minds as Spencer's would acquaint themselves with all human thought upon any doctrine they may be considering, then they might save valuable time and maybe avoid confusion in their own minds and the minds of the vast numbers of men who read their books.

Our position, clearly stated by H. P. B. long ago, is that the present day has no philosophy and can have none that will not be a copy or a distortion of some truth or long-discarded notion once held by our superiors the Ancients, and that modern philosophers are only engaged in reproducing out of the astral light and out of their own past-lives recollections that which was known, published, declared, and accepted or rejected by the men of old time, some of whom are now here in the garb of philosophers turning over and over again the squirrels' wheels they invented many lives ago. For "there is nothing new under the sun."

The Path

DOGMATISM IN THEOSOPHY

The Theosophical Society was founded to destroy dogmatism. This is one of the meanings of its first object — Universal Brotherhood. And Col. H. S. Olcott in his inaugural address in 1875, at Mott Memorial Hall, New York, said that such was the object in view, citing the bad effect that intolerance had had in the past. That address was read by Mme. H. P. Blavatsky before its delivery, or its contents were communicated to her, so that it had her assent, for she was present when it was delivered.

In *The Key to Theosophy*, in the "Conclusion," H. P. B. again refers to this subject and expresses the hope that the Society might not, after her death, become dogmatic or crystallize on some phase of thought or philosophy, but that it might remain free and open, with its members wise and unselfish. And in all her writings and remarks, privately or publicly, she constantly reiterated this idea. Of this the writer has direct evidence as to her statements in private.

If our effort is to succeed, we must avoid dogmatism in theosophy as much as in anything else, for the moment we dogmatise and insist on our construction of theosophy, that moment we lose sight of Universal Brotherhood and sow the seeds of future trouble.

There is a great likelihood that members of the Society will insist on a certain orthodoxy in our ranks. They are already doing it here and there, and this is a note of warning to draw their attention to the danger. There is no orthodoxy in our Society. Even though nine-tenths of the members believe in Reincarnation, Karma, the sevenfold constitution, and all the rest, and even though its prominent ones are engaged in promulgating

these doctrines as well as others, the ranks of the Society must always be kept open, and no one should be told that he is not orthodox or not a good Theosophist because he does not believe in these doctrines. All that anyone is asked to subscribe to is *Universal Brotherhood*, and its practice in the search for truth. For the efforts of those who are thus promulgating specific ideas are made under the sanction of the second object of the Society, which any one is free to follow or to refuse to follow as he sees fit. One may deny — undogmatically — reincarnation and other doctrines, or may assert belief in a personal or impersonal God, and still be a good member of the Society, provided Universal Brotherhood is subscribed to and put into practice.

If a member says he must formulate a God, or cannot believe in Reincarnation, none other should condemn or draw comparisons, or point to the writings of H. P. B. or any one else to show that such a member is untheosophical. The greatest minds on earth are puzzled by great ideas such as these, and yet, holding them, can still search for truth with others in a perfect spirit of toleration.

But at the same time it is obvious that to enter the Society and then, under our plea of tolerance, assert that theosophy shall not be studied, that the great body of thought and philosophy offered in our literature shall not be investigated, is untheosophical, unpractical, and absurd, for it were to nullify the very object of our organization; it is a dogmatism that flows from negation and indifference. We must study the philosophy and the doctrines offered to us before we are in a position to pass judgment and say that they are not true or that they shall be rejected. To judge or reject before examination is the province of little minds or prejudiced dogmatists.

And as the great body of philosophy, science, and ethics offered

by H. P. Blavatsky and her teachers has upon it the seal of research, of reasonableness, of antiquity, and of wisdom, it demands our first and best consideration in order that we may with fitness conclude upon its acceptance or rejection.

So, then, a member of the Society, no matter how high or how low his or her position in its ranks, has the right to promulgate all the philosophical and ethical ideas found in our literature to the best ability possessed, and no one else has the right to object, provided such promulgation is accompanied by a clear statement that it is not authorized or made orthodox by any declaration from the body corporate of the T. S. Our Society must be kept free and open, no matter if, because we refuse to formulate beliefs as a Society, we remain small in number, for we can always be strong in influence.

The Path

A PARABLE OF REINCARNATION — *M. M. Phelon*

Out of the garden of the earth grew a pair of leaves. As they rose slowly from the surface, other leaves were added with stem and twigs, and at last, when the summer drew to a close, a well-developed shrub showed itself. It grew strong also in the various woody parts, from the putting forth of many leaves. Otherwise no sign appeared of what its purpose was, whether blossom or fruit. So the summer passed and the autumn came. When the early frosts of winter touched it with their blighting fingers the leaves disappeared, but the resistance of concentrated fibre in that which remained became more and more apparent. The snows fell, covering entirely all that had accrued of acquisition and assimilation.

Time, the recorder of the interweaving cycles of the Universe, stands not still. In due season the voice of the spring made itself heard. From out the disappearing snows the shrub once more shows itself, the same in the outer as when it disappeared from view. But not the same in the inner, for there had been a change by which the wood itself had ripened both for resistance to attacking force or influence from the outer, and for the perfecting of the power of receiving that which might be offered for its acceptance. Under the genial, kindly touch of the sun's rays, and the moisture of the showers, stirred the impulses of sequence, to fashion out of the forces hitherto stored up the buds, those indices of the renewed flow of life. They grew until the confining sheaths gave way, and that which had been concealed was revealed. Once more in the former fashion the shrub rejoices in the glory of stalk, twigs, and leaves. As the season wore on, to the watcher appeared, from one of the strongest centers of growth, a new formation. To the nourishment and development of this, all the

energies of the rest of the plant seemed to be drawn. Still, this in the outer was but a stem and leaves, but upon the summit, as if crown-borne, rose a bud, quite different from the buds from which the leaves were unfolded. It was a bud of promise, of hope, of creative energy, of power, of possible unfoldment.

Looking at it from the outside, none could tell from either its size or the greenness of its covering what might be within it. Little by little it approached its maturity. The twisted points of the outer sheaths of the bud gradually loosened their hold one upon another, and as they fell apart a faint color flushed the edges. Still they loosened yet a little more, until at last, as if suddenly shaken out, the glorious beauty of the soft material of the flower revealed to the eye of the passer-by all the splendor of its coloring, and permeated the whole atmosphere with its fragrance. There is now no further question as to the contents of the bud.

Yet a little longer, and that which was so beautiful, appealing to the sense of touch, sight, and smell, finishes its mission. One by one the petals fall away, and in their place is developed a calyx or capsule. In this, securely sealed from light and from the curious eye of the meddling investigator, in darkness the wonderful transmutation takes place, by which the transmission of life in direct sequence from the plant to the seed occurs.

No human eye nor even human knowledge can say when, or where, or how there first falls upon the seed the impinging shadowing of the One, by which in years to come, under favoring circumstances, it shall produce after its kind. No one can tell the precise moment when the Omnipotent finger places within the tiny receptacle the condensation of the future shrub, enclosing it within its casket, locks the door and flings away the key. But man is familiar with the result. He knows that seed-time and harvest exist, that they always come, and will so continue to come, so long

as the present race shall continue to live upon the earth.

This, O man! is a symbol of all individualized life, more perfect, perhaps, than any other, the type of reincarnating lives among the earth-born.

In the coming and the going of the seasons, in the disappearing and reappearing of new foliage to the shrub, which constantly gathers strength during its passing struggles with wind and weather, we see the incarnating ego putting itself into a new outer covering. This is temporary, because limited by the years of the incarnation; but always sure to be discarded when the purposes for which it was needed are finished.

As the stems and twigs absorb through the leaves the force, energy, and magnetic qualities needed to maintain equilibrium in growth, so do the bodies of the incarnation furnish the ego with whatever is needed for its strengthening and growth. As the incarnations are thus typified, so also is foreshadowed the spiritual unfolding and expansion by the blossom.

No man knows nor can tell what shall be the outcome of a life, measured in soul growth. But borne aloft as the crowning work of a life, all that is absorbed is spiritualized, and formed and molded into the highest perfection of form, color, fragrance, and sound. The sounds of the blossom rarely reach the corporeal sense of hearing, but that does not in any sense prove their non-existence.

As the blossom finally bursts into full bloom in all its perfected loveliness, so at last, having gathered and assimilated to itself everything possible from its incarnation, the soul also suddenly blossoms: mortals call this action death. As the flower seemingly has no connection with the rest of the shrub and leaves, simply because it is on a different stalk or plane, so the soul at the moment of dissolution is transferred to the spiritual plane. Then,

as in the formation of the seed capsule, part of the outermost coverings are sloughed off, so that which is not necessary to the soul's unfoldment is left heaped up nearest to the earth plane. When separated into their ultimate elements, they can again be of use in the creation of new forms.

But as in the seed capsules new processes of assimilation and formation go forward, so in Devachan, within the soul, there must also take place assimilation, adaptation, and quickening of all the intensity of impulse, until, like the coiling up of a spring, the desire to still further pursue its journey through the immeasurable spaces of the Universe increases to such a point that reincarnation is once more inevitable.

Thus is typified by the growing shrub the whole cycle of the incarnating ego, and the soul life, as it passes from incarnation to incarnation, through all the revolving aeons of the endless ages. As below, so above.

The Path

OF "METAPHYSICAL HEALING" — *William Q. Judge*

The time for temporizing or for silence in respect to what are severally styled "Mind Cure", "Mental Science", "Christian Science", and the like has now come to an end, and the moment has arrived when something definite should be said on these as well as some other subjects. The first note was sounded at the theosophical convention for 1890, (1) when in the message sent by H. P. Blavatsky she wrote that some of these practices were of the nature of black magic as explained by her in that message. She says "In other words, whenever the healer interferes — consciously or unconsciously — with the free mental action of the person he treats, it is Black Magic". At that time many persons were hurt, some on their own account and others on account of the feeling they had that people of the class who believe in and practise these so-called sciences would be thus driven away from the Society. Several members accordingly studiously refrained from mentioning the matter, and in many quarters it fell into silence absolute.

In the first place, it cannot be said that no cures have ever been accomplished by means of the practices referred to. There have been cases of cure. For, indeed, one would have to be blind to the records of the medical profession to say that the mind has no part to play in the cure of diseases. That it does have, as any physician knows, for if the patient continues to be depressed in mind there may be a failure or even a death. But this is not "mind cure" nor "mental cure". It is an assistance to the regular treatment. And as very many of the troubles of people are imaginary, sometimes in the acute form because of imagination, it does happen in those cases that a cure may be effected by the schools we are speaking of. Some nervous derangements may be thus cured. And if that is

brought about by directing the mind of the patient to high thoughts, there can be no objection to it. But if the mind is filled with wrong philosophy, or if the affirmations and denials found in these "sciences" are used, or the "construction of the divine and spiritual form" be gone into, the whole thing is bad.

And here it is well to state our position about the cure of bodily ailments. It is that inasmuch as they are of and in the body, those that come from a wrong attitude of mind will disappear when we are contented and self-centred, while those that are chronic, being mechanical and physical, ought to be treated by such means and not by an attempt to drag the spiritual and divine down to this plane of being. In none of the ancient schools was it permitted to one to use for himself, or to sell, the divine or spiritual powers. Furthermore we see that the savages are the most healthy of men. Yet they know none of these things and do not care for such ideas. Yet although the Red Indian of the early days did much murder and lived not righteously, he was a fine specimen of physical health. This shows that health may be maintained by attention to the ordinary laws of nature on the material plane by attending to hygiene and exercise. Yet again, looking at the prize-fighter and the athlete, it is plain that they, by attending to the same rules and wholly disregarding the fine theories of the mental healers, become well and strong and able to bear the greatest fatigue and hardship. It was the same in the days of the athletes of Rome and Greece.

A number of fallacies have to be noticed in these systems. Using the word "thought", they say that our diseases are the product of our thought, but they ignore the fact that young children of the tenderest age often have very violent diseases when no one will say they have had time or power to think. Babies have been found to have Blight's disease and other troubles. This is a fact that looms up before the arguments of the mental healer and that

never will down.

But regarding it from the theosophical side, we know that the thoughts of the preceding life are the causes for the troubles and the joys of this, and therefore those troubles are now being exhausted here by the proper channel, the body, and are on the way *down and out*. Their exit ought not to be stopped. But by the attempt to cure in the way of the healer they are stopped often and are sent back to the place they came from, and thus once more are planted in the mind as unexpended causes sure at some other time to come out again, whether in this or in another life. This is one of the greatest of dangers. It will in many instances lead to insanity.

The next fallacy is in the system of affirmations and denials. To assert as they do that there is no matter, that all is spirit, and that there is no evil but that all is good, and that "this my body is pure and sweet and free from trouble", is philosophically and as a mere use of English false in every respect. "Spirit" and "Matter" are terms that must exist together, and if one is given up so must the other disappear. They are the two great opposites. As the Bhagavad-Gita says, there is no spirit without also matter. They are the two eternities, the two manifestations, one at one pole and one at the other, of the absolute, which is neither matter nor spirit but wholly indescribable except as said — it is at once spirit and matter. Likewise Good and Evil are two opposites mutually existing, the one necessary in order to know the other, for if there were no evil we should not know what to call the good. One might as well say that there is no darkness but that all is light. By these foolish affirmations all relativity is abolished, and we are asked to abandon all proper use of words in order to satisfy those who wish to show that optimism in all things and at all times is the right position. The "Christian Scientist" goes further and says God is all good, the argument being in fact nothing at all but a play on

the word god. It would not work in Spanish, for there good is *bueno* and god is *dios*. This assertion calmly refuses any admission of the patent fact that if God exists he must be evil as well as good, unless we revert to the old Catholic idea that the devil is as strong as God. And even if we say that God made the devil and will one day stop him, the evil is a part of God unless in some respects he is not responsible for the world and beings. But the last affirmation, that one's body is sweet and pure and free from disease, is degrading as well as false. It may be true that bodies are illusions, but they are not the illusions of single individuals but of the great mind of the race, and therefore they are relatively real — as they are now constructed — for the minor beings who make up the race. No one has the power to escape from this great illusion of the total mind until he has risen to an actual conscious realization of that mind in all its departments. The affirmation has its refutation in itself, for if one person can thus destroy this relativity so far as he is concerned by merely affirming against it, how is it that the illusion still remains for and has sway over the remaining millions? Still more we know that the body is a mass of things that are not good nor pure, and that in the abstract sense of these affirmations the most unnoticed physiological operations are actually disgusting.

The line of demarcation between black and white magic is very thin, but it is quite plain when one sees the art of healing by means of such high forces as are claimed by these schools practised for purely selfish ends or for money in addition. There is danger in it, and all theosophists ought to look well that they do not fall themselves or cause others to.

The great danger is from the disturbances that are brought about by the practise. It is a sort of yoga without any right knowledge of method; it is blind wandering among forces so subtle and so violent that they are liable to explode at any moment. By

continuing in the way taught a person actually from the first arouses latent currents of the body that act and re-act on the astral and physical and at last bring about injury. I have in mind several cases, and some of them those of actual insanity due wholly to these practises. Of these I will say more at another time, and may be able to present a record that will astonish those who, merely to cure some ailment that medicine is fully able to deal with, go aside instead and play with forces they have no knowledge of, and put them also into the hands of others still more ignorant, all the while deluding themselves with the idea that they are dealing with high philosophy. The philosophy has nothing to do with it except to act as a means to centre the thought so that inner currents may come into play. The same result might be brought about by any system of talk or thought, no matter how erroneous.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Rept, of Conv. 1890. ([return to text](#))

The Path

HIDDEN HINTS IN THE SECRET DOCTRINE — *William Q. Judge*

(From p. 212 to p. 252, Vol. I.)

From p. 212 to 221 the reader can for himself find all that the author of the *Secret Doctrine* desired to give out in those pages.

WHAT ARE ELEMENTALS? In describing the groups of the Hierarchies the 6th and 7th groups are touched on at *page 221*, where it is said that elementals are a part of the numberless side groups "shot out like boughs of a tree from the first group of the four." And they are all subject to Karma (19th line, p. 221), which they have to workout during every cycle. As it is said, lower on the page, "A Dhyān Chohan has to become" such, it must follow that even a Dhyān Chohan was once at work in the planes of being where elementals are, and from that rose up to the higher place; this must be under the laws of evolution, of Karma, of Reincarnation.

MAN'S GREAT DESTINY. Following the argument hinted at about elementals, on p. 221, it is said that the celestial Hierarchy of this Manvantara will be transferred in the next cycle of life to higher, superior worlds, in order to make room for a new hierarchy, of the same order, which will be composed of the elect ones of our own human race. Such is our destiny, and such the path up which we climb; and when that point is reached, we must work still on for the benefit of those below us. This is the basis of altruism, and without altruism the consummation cannot be reached.

THAT HIGH SPIRITS WORK ON EARTH in bodies of men, while those spirits are still in the highest spheres, see *V. I, p. 233-234 and notes*, also *note p. 235*. On p. 233 it is clearly explained that the author does not mean that which is called among the spiritualists "control" of mediums by a spirit, but the actual continuance of the

status and functions of the incarnated spirit in the supersensuous regions, while actually using as its own and working in a mortal envelope on earth. So that, according to her, there are certain persons on this earth, living and working as ordinary human beings and members of society, whose informing divine part is so immeasurably high in development that they as such high beings have a definite status and function in the "supersensuous regions." We should say — assuming the correctness of the author's statement — that she herself was such a case, and that "H. P. B.," whether hourly in the day or at night when all around was still, had a "status and function" in other spheres where she consciously carried on the work of that high station, whatever it was. There were many events in her daily life known to those who were intimate with her that this hint may unravel, or at least shed much light upon. And in one of her letters this sentence appears — in substance — "The difference between you and me is that you are not conscious except at day, while I am conscious day and night, and have much to do and to endure in both of these existences from which you, being thus half-conscious, are happily saved."

In the Hindu books and teachings there is a reference to this when they speak of high *gnanees* — that is, persons full of knowledge and spiritual power — being attracted to this earth by certain acts and at certain times in the history of nation, race, or city.

LOSS OF THE SOUL. The possibility of the abandonment of the body by the soul is outlined on *page 234, V. I.* thus: "The soul could free itself from and quit the tabernacle (of the body) for various reasons, such as insanity, spiritual and physical depravity, etc." And at the end of the note on p. 235 it is hinted broadly that such freeing of the soul from the body, leaving the latter to run out its course, is not confined to the case of those who are insane or

depraved, but may occur with those who make great advance in knowledge and such consequent alteration in the constitution of the soul, as it were, that they no longer can dwell on earth, using the old body. It does not appear, however, that this subject, is carried any further than this hint, found, as is so usual with H. P. B., in a note. In this the words are; "For this occurrence is found to take place in wicked materialists *as well as in persons 'who advance in holiness and never turn back.'* " From my knowledge of her methods I regard this note as a deliberate reverse of sentence, in which the object of it is found in the words which are used in the underlined part.

THE NECESSITY FOR INDIVIDUAL EFFORT. This is very emphatically put, and in precisely the style of H. P. B., in the 3rd paragraph on *page 244*, in the parallelisms, where *Atma* is spoken of. Here she shows that *Atma* is not subject to change or improvement, but is the "ray of light eternal which shines upon and through the darkness of matter — *when the latter is willing*" [Italics are mine.] If matter, in the human being, the personal self, the body, and the astral body, with passions and desires, is not willing to be fully informed by the Spirit, then *Atma* will not shine through it because it cannot, inasmuch as matter then does not submit itself to the Divine behests. The willingness can only be shown by individual effort toward goodness and purification. It would seem that this ought to do away with that negation and supineness indulged in by even theosophists who talk of "not interfering with Karma".

ONLY THREE DIMENSIONS OF MATTER. The "fourth dimension" is combatted *on pages 251-232 et seq.*: "So long as there are foot-rules within the resources of Kosmos, to apply to matter, so long will they be able to measure it in three ways and no more." [p. 254.]

LESSONS ON THE STANZA OF THE SECRET DOCTRINES

These lessons are examples of work which has been done by the Branch in Sioux City, Iowa, and they have been sent to THE PATH by Miss Bandusia Wakefield who is their author. They are printed in the hope that other Branches may find them as useful as they proved at Sioux City, and also with the view of giving out lessons of the same kind from the General Secretary's office if the plan seems good. As Miss Wakefield says, the Branch prepared itself by some previous study. Lesson 3 was also sent, but lack of space forbids its appearance in this issue. Branches are asked to communicate with the General Secretary about this matter and to report results if any. There is no doubt that the T. S. at Sioux City will be glad to aid any Branch in the study in advance of anything that the Gen. Sec. may do.

The plan pursued was that the questions were given out in advance of the answers, and the members of the Branch asked to learn the Slokas and try to find answers to the questions. After they had done what they could the Answers were given them, not as conclusive, but as aids. [Ed.]

ABBREVIATIONS.

S. D.=The Secret Doctrine.

I. U.=Isis Unveiled.

T. B. L.=Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge.

L.=Lucifer.

V. S.=The Voice of the Silence.

W. G.=The Working Glossary.

LESSON I.

1. Of what do the Stanzas of the first volume of the *Secret Doctrine*

treat? [S. D., I., pp 13 and 151. T. B. L., 2. p. 6.] Define Pralaya
Maha-Pralaya, Manvantara, and Maha-Manvantara. [W. G.]

2. How may these Stanzas be interpreted? [T. B. L., 2, p. 6.]

3. What is the first of the three fundamental propositions which
the Secret Doctrine teaches? [S. D. I., p. 14.]

4. Under what aspects is the Causeless Cause, or the Absolute,
symbolized? [S D. I., pp. 14 and 43.]

5. Absolute abstract motion is symbolized by what term? [S. D. I.,
p. 14.]

6. Does this ever cease? [S. D. I., p. 55.]

7. What is the second fundamental proposition of the Secret
Doctrine? [S.D. I. p. 17.]

8. What is the third fundamental proposition of the Secret
Doctrine? [S. D. I., p. 17].

9. Why is the pilgrimage of every soul through the cycle of
Incarnation said to be *obligatory*? [S. D. I. p., 17.]

10. Of what does the first stanza treat? [S. D. I., p. 21.]

Define Sloka. [I. U. I., p. 585. Five years of Theosophy, pp. 567.
Theos., Rel., and Occult Science, p. 374.]

11. What is the first Sloka of the first Stanza?

*Ans. — The Eternal Parent, wrapped in her ever invisible robes, had
slumbered once again for seven eternities.*

12. What one word is used to symbolize the Eternal Parent? [S. D.
I. p.35.]

13. In what sense is this word used? [S. D., I. pp. u and 14.]

14. What other terms refer to the same thing or different aspects of it? [S. D. I., pp. 17, 48, 256,332, 458, 460, 534.]

15. What are the "invisible robes"? [S. D. I, p., 35.]

16. Why is the feminine used in referring to the Eternal Parent? [T. B. L. I., p. 4-]

17. When is space, or the Eternal Parent, called "Mother," and when "Father-Mother"? [S. D. I, p.18.]

18. What is meant by the "Seven Eternities"? [S. D. I., p. 53.]

LESSON II.

19. What is Sloka 2 of Stanza 1?

Ans, — Time was not, for it lay asleep in the infinite bosom of duration.

20. What is time? [S. D. I., pp. 37, 43, 44. L. IX. p. 146.]

21. What is the difference between time and duration? [T. B. L. I., p.10, 11.]

22. Why was time not? [S. D, I. p. 37.]

23. What is Sloka 3 of Stanza 1?

Ans. — Universal Mind was not, for there were no Ah-hi to contain it.

24. What is meant by "mind"? [S. D. I., p. 38.]

25. What is meant by saying "Universal Mind was not"?

26. In what sense *is it* during Pralaya? [S. D. I., p. 38.]

27. Why is it not manifest?

28. What is the vehicle of manifestation called in the Sloka?

29. What are the Ah-hi? [S. D. I, p. 38.]

Review Lesson I.

ANSWERS TO LESSON I.

1. The Stanzas of the first Volume of "The Secret Doctrine" treat mostly of the evolution of our own Solar System after a Solar Pralava.

"The first Stanzas treat of the awakening from Maha-Pralaya, and are not concerned with the Solar System alone." [Tr. B, L. 2. p. 6.]
"Sloka4 of Stanza VI. ends that portion of the Stanzas which relates to the Universal Cosmogony after the last Maha- Pralaya." [S. D. I, p 151.]

Pralaya is a state of rest or dissolution, where all is in a condition of latency or potentiality. *Maha* means great, and a *Maha Pralaya* is a great period of this character.

A *Manvantara* is a period of evolution or "reconstructive activity on the objective planes of the universe intervening between two pralayas."

A *Maha Manvantara* is a great period of this character, including a number of smaller manvantaras and pralayas.

2. These Stanzas "may be interpreted on seven different planes, the last reflecting, by the universal law of correspondences and analogy, in its most differentiated, gross, and physical aspect, the process which takes place on the first or purely spiritual plane." [Tr. B. L., 2, p. 26.]

3. The Secret Doctrine teaches as the first of three fundamental propositions that the Causeless Cause of all is "an Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, Immutable Principle" which "transcends the power of human conception." [S. D. I., p. 14.]

4. It is symbolized under the aspect of "Absolute Abstract Space representing bare subjectivity," and "Absolute Abstract Motion representing unconditioned consciousness." [S. D. I., p. 14.]

Duration is also an aspect of the Absolute. [S. D. I., p. 43].

5. Absolute Abstract Motion is symbolized by the term: "The Great Breath." [S. D. I., p. 14.]

6. "The Great Breath" never ceases, not even during Prayala. [S. D. I. p. 55]

7. The second fundamental proposition of the Secret Doctrine "is the absolute universality of the law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, ebb and flow." [S. D. I., p. 17.] We have illustrations of this law in the succession of day and night, winter and summer, sleeping and waking, etc.

8. As the third fundamental proposition, "the Secret Doctrine teaches the fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul — a spark of the former — through the Cycle of Incarnation in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term." [S. D.I., p. 17.]

9. This pilgrimage is said to be obligatory, because in order to attain independent conscious existence it is necessary that "the spark which issued from the pure Essence of the Universal Principle, or the Over-Soul," should pass "through every elemental form of the phenomenal world of that Manvantara," and acquire "individuality, first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts." [S. D. I., p. 17.]

10. The first Stanza describes in symbols "the state of the *One All* during Pralaya, before the first flutter of re-awakening manifestation." [S. D. I., p. 21.]

11. A Sloka is a distich, or a couple of poetic lines making complete sense, not in the translation but in the original stanzas. [I. U. I., p. 585.]

[Stanza 1, Sloka 1.] *The Eternal Parent, wrapped in her ever invisible robes, had slumbered once again for seven eternities.*

12. The Eternal Parent is symbolized by "Space."

13. The word is not here used in its ordinary meaning, but in the sense of "Absolute Abstract Space representing bare subjectivity."

14. The following terms are also used as synonymous with "The Eternal Parent" or with each other: Akasa, Mulaprakriti, Universal Soul, Over-Soul, Sixth Principle of the Universe, Aditi, Pradhana, Ether [of the ancient Greek philosophers], Alaya, Waters, Great Deep, Celestial Virgin Mother, and Primordial Ocean of Space. [See S. D. 1., pp. 17, 48, 256, 332, 458, 460, & 534.]

15. "The 'Robes' stand for the noumenon of undifferentiated Cosmic-Matter. It is not matter as we know it, but the spiritual essence of matter, and is co-eternal and even one with Space in its abstract sense." [S. D. I., p. 35] Hence the "invisible robes" are but an aspect of the Eternal Parent. This "mystic root of all matter" the Hindus call Mulaprakriti. "It is the Soul, so to say, of the *One* infinite Spirit." It is the source from which Akasa radiates." [S. D. I., p. 35.]

16. "Though it is impossible to define the Causeless Cause, yet once that we speak of the first something that can be conceived, it has to be treated as a feminine principle. In all Cosmogonies, the first differentiation was considered feminine." [T. B. I., p. 4.] It is sexless, but has in it the latent potentiality of both sexes.

17. "Space is called 'Mother' before Cosmic activity, and 'Father-Mother' at the first stage of re-awakening." [S. D. I., p. 18.]

18. By "Seven eternities" is meant seven periods of rest equalling the seven periods of activity. " 'Seven Eternities' is made to apply both to the *Maha-Kalpa* or the (great) Age of Brahma and to the Solar Pralaya and subsequent resurrection of our Planetary System on a higher plane." [S. D. I, p. 53]

The Path

IRELAND — *Brian Kinnavan*

Erin's Isle has always been somewhat of a mystery. Its people are so different from the English just across the channel that one who spends some time in London and then crosses over to Dublin will at once see the vast gulf that in the matter of temperament separates the two peoples.

And any one who studies the Irish, especially on the West Coast, and lives among them, will soon discover a deeply-seated belief in what is commonly called the supernatural that can only come from some distant past. Even the educated Irish are not free from this.

There is a willingness in the peasant to express belief in fairies, ghosts, and the like, which in the better classes is covered up from sight but still there. In the country districts the people will stone the lights out of the windows of a newly-vacated house, and in the city the educated man may frequently be found who will say, when his attention is called to such an occurrence, "And why shouldn't they? Do you want the devil to stay in the house?" The theory of course is that the elementals of the departed tenants can only escape through the broken window panes unless they have been used — as is not always the case — to open doors.

Belief in fairies is the old Hindu belief in the "devas" or lesser gods. I know many educated people who have declared they often heard fairy talking and singing. In fact, unless we take in the northern Irishman — who is not truly of that blood — we will never find a native of that land who is not born with a slight or greater touch upon the borders of the unseen or with a belief in it.

It is called the Isle of Destiny, and its hill-men will tell you that it has always been a "saintly island". It teems with tales exactly duplicating those of Hindu yogis; the very grass seems to whisper as with the footfalls of unseen beings. One tradition is that in very ancient times, before the island of Albion rose from under the water, there was an ancient college — or *Ashram* as the Hindus would call it — on the island, where great adepts lived and taught disciples who from there went out to all lands. They stayed there until a certain great cataclysm, and then migrated to * * * *. In connection with this the following quotation from some remarks by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer* will be of interest, in reading which one can also profitably remember the Greek tradition that near Britain there was an island called Ierna to which men went in order to learn more about the secret mysteries. She says: (1) "It is a tradition among Occultists in general, and taught as an historical fact in Occult philosophy, that what is now Ireland was once upon a time the abode of the Atlanteans, emigrants from the submerged island mentioned by Plato. Of all the British Isles, Ireland is the most ancient by several thousands of years. Inferences and 'working hypotheses' are left to the Ethnologists, Anthropologist, and Geologists. The Masters and Keepers of the old science claim to have preserved genuine records, and we Theosophists — i. e. most of us — believe it implicitly. Official Science may deny, but what does it matter? Has not Science begun by denying almost everything it accepts now?"

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Lucifer*, June 15 1889, p. 347. ([return to text](#))

The Path

HIDDEN HINTS IN THE SECRET DOCTRINE — *William Q. Judge*

(From p. 252 to p. 260, Vol. I.)

ORDER OF THE ELEMENTS ESOTERICALLY is, *Fire, air, water, earth*. (2nd para). Counting up from the earth, the order for the elementals, or the nature spirits in the elements, is: earth elementals, water elementals, air elementals, fire elementals. And it has always been said that those of the fire are the wisest and most distant so far as cognition of or by us is concerned, that the airy ones are also wise, and those of the water dangerous. Those of the earth have been described by seers in the form of gnomes sometimes seen by clairvoyant miners in the depths under us, and of this class also are those that have given rise to the superstition among the Irish respecting the fairies.

FIRE IN THE PRECEDING ROUNDS. She says (p. 253), "For all we know, fire may have been pure akasa, the first matter of the builders". The phrase "For all we know" is sometimes to be translated "Thus it was".

THE FIFTH ELEMENT IN THE FIFTH ROUND. This, as said before in these notes, will be "The gross body of akasa" (257), and "by becoming a familiar fact in nature to all men as air is familiar to us now, will cease to be hypothetical".

WHAT IS THE SIXTH SENSE TO BE? In the first paragraph of page 258 she says that at first there will be a partial familiarity with a characteristic of matter to be known then as permeability, which will be perceived when certain new senses have been developed, and after that this singular characteristic will be fully known, as it will be developed concurrently with the sixth sense. We may therefore argue that she means to describe the sixth sense as one

which will (among other things) give to us the power to permeate matter with ourselves. Let some one else now carry this idea further, as it is no doubt correct. It would seem that both the matter-characteristic and the power in man are being here and there exhibited, or else some of the phenomena seen at spiritualistic seances could never have happened; but alas! we need not look for aid there so long as the beloved "spirits from the summerland" continue to hold sway over their votaries.

THE EARTH IN ITS EARLY PERIODS. Some students have thought that this globe in its early times when, following the statements in *Esoteric Buddhism*, the human life-wave and so on had not come, there was no life on it, supposing in a vague way that there was, say in the fire-mist time, a mass of something devoid of life. This is contradicted and explained on page 258 in the second para, for: "Thus Occultism disposes of the Azoic age of science, for it shows that there never was a time when the earth was without life upon it". This is asserted for no matter what form or sort of matter thus, "Wherever there is an atom of matter, a particle or a molecule even in its most gaseous state, there is life in it, however latent or unconscious".

OF SPIRIT AND MATTER. In the commentary on p. 258 the author plainly writes, "Spirit is the first differentiation of and in space; and matter is the first differentiation of Spirit". This is a clear statement of what she desired to teach respecting spirit and matter, and as in other places it is said that spirit and matter are the opposite poles of the One — the Absolute — an agreement has to be made between the two. There is no real disagreement, since it is evident that differentiation must proceed in a definite order, from which it results that there must be always one state, plane, place, power, and idea in nature that is above and different from and beyond all others. And when we go beyond spirit, the highest we may speak of is the Absolute, which is the container of the

next two — spirit and matter, the latter following the first in order of differentiation. These are said to be coeternal, and, indeed, are so, as far as our minds are concerned, for the reason that we cannot grasp either the first or the second differentiation of the absolute. But because this doctrine of the coeternalness of spirit and matter has been taught, there never being the one without the other also present, some students have fallen into a materialistic view, probably because matter is that which being near to us is most apparent, and others, remaining somewhat vague, do not define the doctrine at all. Spirit and matter are coeternal because they exist together in the absolute, and when the first differentiation spoken of above takes place, so does the second immediately. Hence, except when we are dealing with metaphysic, they must be regarded as the two poles of the one absolute. And the *Bhagavad Gita* does not support the contrary, for it only says there is no spirit without also matter, as it is dealing through the words of Krishna with things as they are *after* the differentiation has taken place.

There is another class of theosophists who speak of the "superpersonal god", asserting at the same time that they do not mean "a personal God", and they are opposed by still another class who point to the well-known denial by H. P. B. of the existence of a personal god. It is in the sentence quoted that both of these may come to an agreement, for the believers in the superpersonal deity can without doubt find support in the lines on p. 258. For if spirit is the first, then matter is a grade below it, however fine and imperceptible that distinction maybe.

If further we say, as many of us do, that the great inherent ideas of man were given to him by the first great teachers whose descendants and pupils the Adepts are, then we here also see how it is that there is such a wide and universal belief in a God. It must also be the origin of that universal optimism which may be found

also in the ranks of the theosophists, who, while for present days are pessimistic, must be called the greatest optimists on the face of the earth. There are many other matters in this sentence. Many a student has puzzled his head very often in trying to discover from where come the impulse and the plan as well as the idea of perfection, for it must as a first thing reside somewhere, whether abstractly or concretely. Perhaps it is here; those students can look here at any rate.

A MYSTERIOUS PRINCIPLE MENTIONED. After going for a little space into the formation of this globe by the first builders, she speaks (page 259) of a certain *akasic* principle to which no name is given but left in hiatus. But in the note on that page we see, and I am violating nothing in referring to it, that very clearly it is pointed out that the primordial substance of which she then writes "is the very body of those spirits themselves and their very essence". Now in many places in her writings, and also in those of other knowing ones through all time, this primordial substance is said to be one that, once controlled, gives him who has power over it the most transcendent abilities, — sway alike over mind and matter.

She and all of us are quite safe in speaking of it, since there are but few indeed who will see anything in it at all. Yet the few can have the hint if they never got it before. This, however, should always remain as a hint, and there ought to be no attempt to make it clear to science, for nothing will be gained except ridicule and maybe worse.

THE SYNTHESIS OF OCCULT SCIENCE: II — *William Q. Judge*

(Continued from November No.)

"In reality, as Occult philosophy teaches us, everything which changes is organic; it has the life principle in it, and it has all the potentiality of the higher lives. If, as we say, all in nature is an aspect of the one element, and life is universal, how can there be such a thing as an inorganic atom!" (1) Man is a perfected animal, but before he could have reached perfection even on the animal plane, there must have dawned upon him the light of a higher plane. Only the perfected animal can cross the threshold of the next higher or the human plane, and as he does so there shines upon him the ray from the supra-human plane. Therefore, as the dawn of humanity illumines the animal plane, and as a guiding star lures the Monad to higher consciousness, so the dawn of divinity illumines the human plane, luring the monad to the supra-human plane of consciousness. This is neither more nor less than the philosophical and metaphysical aspect of the law of evolution. Man has not one principle more than the tiniest insect; he is, however, "the vehicle of a fully developed *Monad*, self-conscious and deliberately following its own line of progress, whereas in the insect, and even the higher animal, the higher triad of principles is absolutely dormant." The original *Monad* has, therefore, locked within it the potentiality of divinity. It is plainly, therefore, a misnomer to call that process of thought a "Synthetic Philosophy" that deals only with phenomena and ends with matter on the physical plane. These two generalizations of Occult philosophy, endowing every atom with the potentiality of life, and regarding every insect or animal as already possessing the potentialities of the higher planes though these powers are yet dormant, add to the ordinary Spencerian theory of evolution

precisely that element that it lacks, *viz.* the metaphysical and philosophical; and, thus endowed, the theory becomes synthetical.

The *Monad*, then, is essentially and potentially the same in the lowest vegetable organism, up through all forms and gradations of animal life to man, *and beyond*. There is a gradual unfolding of its potentialities from "Monera" to man, and there are two whole planes of consciousness, the sixth and the seventh "senses," not yet unfolded to the average humanity. Every monad that is enclosed in a form, and hence limited by matter, becomes conscious on its own plane and in its own degree. Consciousness therefore, no less than sensitiveness, belongs to plants as well as to animals. Self-consciousness belongs to man, because, while embodied in a *form*, the higher triad of principles, Atma-Buddhi-Manas, is no longer dormant, but active. This activity is, however, far from being fully developed. When this activity has become fully developed, man will already have become conscious on a still higher plane, endowed with the sixth and the opening of the *seventh* sense, and will have become a "god" in the sense given to that term by Plato and his followers.

In thus giving this larger and completer meaning to the law of evolution, the Occult philosophy entirely eliminates the "missing links" of modern science, and, by giving to man a glimpse of his nature and destiny, not only points out of the line of the higher evolution, but puts him in possession of the means of achieving it.

The "atoms" and "monads" of the Secret Doctrine are very different from the atoms and molecules of modern science. To the latter these are mere particles of matter endowed with blind force: to the former, they are the "dark nucleoles", and potentially "Gods", conscious and intelligent from their primeval embodiment at the beginning of differentiation in the dawn of the

Manvantara. There are no longer any hard and fast lines between the "organic" and the "inorganic"; between the "living" and "dead" matter. Every atom is endowed with and moved by intelligence, and is conscious in its own degree, on its own plane of development. This is a glimpse of the *One life* that —

"Runs through all time, extends through all extent,
Lives undivided, operates unspent."

It may be conceived that the "Ego" in man is a monad that has gathered to itself innumerable experiences through aeons of time, slowly unfolding its latent potencies through plane after plane of matter. It is hence called the *"eternal pilgrim."*

The *Manasic*, or mind principle, is cosmic and universal. It is the creator of all forms, and the basis of all law in nature. Not so with consciousness. Consciousness is a condition of the monad as the result of embodiment in matter and the dwelling in a physical form. Self-consciousness, which from the animal plane looking upward is the beginning of perfection, from the divine plane looking downward is the perfection of selfishness and the curse of separateness. It is the "world of illusion" that man has created for himself. "Maya is the perceptive faculty of every Ego which considers itself a Unit, separate from and independent of the One Infinite and Eternal Sat or 'be-ness.'" The "eternal pilgrim" must therefore mount higher, and flee from the plane of self-consciousness it has struggled so hard to reach.

The complex structure that we call "Man" is made up of a congeries of almost innumerable "Lives". Not only every microscopic cell of which the tissues are composed, but the molecules and atoms of which these cells are composed, are permeated with the essence of the "One Life." Every so-called organic cell is known to have its nucleus, a center of finer or more sensitive matter. The nutritive, all the formative and functional

processes consist of flux and re-flux, of inspiration and expiration, to and from the nucleus. The nucleus is therefore in its own degree and after its kind a "monad" imprisoned in a "form". Every microscopic cell, therefore, has a consciousness and an intelligence of its own, and man thus consists of innumerable "lives." This is but physiological synthesis, logically deduced no less from the known facts in physiology and histology than the logical sequence of the philosophy of occultism. Health of the body as a whole depends on the integrity of all its parts, and more especially upon their harmonious association and co-operation. A diseased tissue is one in which a group of individual cells refuse to co-operate, and wherein is set up discordant action, using less or claiming more than their due share of food or energy. Disease of the very tissue of man's body is neither more nor less than the "sin of separateness". Moreover, the grouping of cells is upon the principle of hierarchies. Smaller groups are subordinate to larger congeries, and these again are subordinate to larger, or to the whole. Every microscopic cell therefore typifies and epitomizes man, as man is an epitome of the Universe. As already remarked, the "Eternal Pilgrim", the Alter-Ego in man, is a monad progressing through the ages. By right and by endowment the ego is king in the domain of man's bodily life. It descended into matter in the cosmic process till it reached the mineral plane, and then journeyed upward through the "three kingdoms" till it reached the human plane. The elements of its being, like the cells and molecules of man's body, are groupings of structures accessory or subordinate to it. The human monad or Ego is therefore akin to all below it and heir to all above it, linked by indissoluble bonds to spirit and matter, "God" and "Nature." The attributes that it gathers, and the faculties that it unfolds, are but the latent and dormant potentialities awaking to conscious life. The tissue cells constitute man's bodily structure, but the order in which they are arranged, the principle upon which they are

grouped, constituting the human *form*, is not simply an evolved shape from the lower animal plane, but an *involved* principle from a higher plane, an older world, viz. the "Lunar Pitris". "Hamman the Monkey" antedates Darwin's "missing link" by thousands of millenniums. So also the *Manasic*, or mind element, with its cosmic and infinite potentialities, is not merely the developed "instinct" of the animal. *Mind* is the latent or active potentiality of *Cosmic Ideation*, the essence of every form, the basis of every law, the potency of every principle in the universe. Human thought is the reflection or reproduction in the realm of man's consciousness of these forms, laws, and principles. Hence man senses and apprehends nature just as nature unfolds in him. When, therefore, the Monad has passed through the form of the animal ego, involved and unfolded the human form, the higher triad of principles awakens from the sleep of ages and overshadowed by the "Manasaputra" and *built into* its essence and substance. How could man epitomize Cosmos if he did not touch it at every point and involve it in every principle? If man's being is woven in the web of destiny, his potencies and possibilities take hold of divinity as the woof and pattern of his boundless life. Why, then, should he grow weary or disheartened? Alas! Why should he be degraded, this heir of all things!

"The peculiarity also of this theology, and in which its transcendency consists, is this, that it does not consider the highest God to be the principle of beings, but the *principle of principles*, i. e., of deiform processions from itself, all which are eternally rooted in the unfathomable depths of the immensely great source of their existence, and of which they may be called supersensuous ramifications and super-luminous blossoms."

— *Introduction to Mystical Hymns of Orpheus.*

FOOTNOTE:

1. Quotations are from the *Secret Doctrine* and other writings of H. P. B. ([return to text](#))

The Path

REINCARNATION A PHYSICAL NECESSITY — *J. D. Buck*

Some further considerations have occurred to me as not only supporting the doctrine of reincarnation, but from a scientific stand-point rendering it a necessity. These points are often referred to in the *Secret Doctrine*, but it may be well to group them together as a single concept. Spirit and Matter represent the two poles of *one eternal Nature*, the subject and object, the energy and the form, of all things. "Matter" refined and purified through plane after plane till it reaches the sixth plane, the plane of the absolute, becomes "pure spirit", and disappears "behind the veil" of the absolute; is absorbed in it. "Spirit" precipitated, differentiated, condensed through plane after plane, becomes on the lowest plane that which we call matter. That which we call "solid", "real", "substantial" is thus the most illusionary of all conceivable things. Its very existence depends on ceaseless change. Thus we may complete the paradox, and say that it is because it is not. The One rootless-root, the potency that lies back even of what we *call* Spirit, and that never manifests itself *as such*, the Nameless, the Unknown and forever Unknowable, the *Logos*, reflects its image, or manifests always through a vehicle (*upadhi*). The divinity in man is a *ray* from this *Logos*. It is not "a part" of this ever-concealed Divinity, because there can be no partition or division in that which is forever *One*; but a "ray" or "beam" or "spark" may emanate from an Eternal Light, and the Light remain unchanged and its real source be still unrevealed, Now the principle is everywhere stated in the *Secret Doctrine* that this *Logos* always manifests through a vehicle, and that of the six planes into which Spirit descends and manifests in relation to man, and on each of which the *Ego may become* conscious, the physical is not only the lowest reached, but the lowest, the very

dregs of the possible descent of spirit into objectivity. This is the earthly plane of our present humanity, incarnated in fleshly bodies.

It can hardly be conceived that what we call man is concerned with anything outside of that solar system of which the earth is one of the lesser orbs, and for our present purpose we need not take into account any other members of our planetary chain than our Earth.

We have then the following propositions.

1st. Spirit manifests only through a vehicle of matter. "Pure spirit" is a latent potentiality, and as such never manifests.

2nd. The "Laya-center", or "Divine Ego", in man is a ray from the *One* which *is*; and is beyond both Spirit and Matter.

3rd. This Divine Ego, called also the "Eternal Pilgrim", being connected with the Earth and its planetary chain or solar system, can have no conscious or experimental (through participation in experience) connections with other solar systems during the life cycle of our planetary chain, or during our present *manvantara*.

4th. The present physical embodiment of man in sense and matter is the lowest in the planes of consciousness of the descent of spirit into matter, for the experience of the Immortal Ego, Below this lowest human plane the Ego does not attain self-consciousness, and is therefore not yet human. These elements of humanity and divinity are descents from spirit, and not ascents from matter and physical form.

5th. Consciousness on any plane for man means

adjustment of man's complex attributes to experiences on that plane: a consensus of his faculties with rhythmic vibrations consonant to and with the vibrations incident to that plane. "The chord of the mass" in man, and on the plane of matter, are synchronous; and consciousness involves the quality, pitch, intensity, and amplitude of all vibrations, according to the eternal law of harmony.

6th. The next plane of consciousness above the present physical or "fleshly" is the astral. In certain individuals of the present race there is already manifest the dawn of the supra-physical or astral consciousness. These persons are known as "psychics" or "mediums". This consciousness is in no sense "spiritual", except that it is one remove from the material toward the spiritual pole of the life-current. One who had entirely mastered the lowest physical plane, exhausted its experiences, and withdrawn its consciousness to the supra-physical, would have no need of embodiment in flesh, because all its-vibrations would have become synchronous with the next higher plane. The *vehicle* of the Ego would necessarily be drawn from the higher and not the lower plane, and such an ego could not logically be conceived as having a body of flesh belonging to the lowest plane.

The conclusion is obvious. The Ego that has not exhausted or risen by actual experience above the physical plane of flesh, sense, and animal passion *must manifest still on that plane or not manifest at all*. The fact that the Ego is still on the lowest plane is proved by its now inhabiting and by its attachment to the body of flesh. The most advanced individuals known to the present time are those who have most nearly exhausted and withdrawn from the sense plane, and who, at the same time, show through their altruism and diviner unfolding the dawning consciousness of the

higher planes. Even these would still be, on the next higher plane, weak, enervated, and in no sense fully *conscious* or "alive" on that plane, because the threads of former life would still be entangled in and not yet withdrawn from the lower plane. They would be like the "still-born" in physical bodies, and fall back into the negative or unconscious state. Therefore is it both a scientific and philosophical necessity that the great majority of persons of the present race of humanity will be again and again reincarnated.

By great and persistent personal effort, by self-denial, and by wise instruction and training, man may work out his own salvation, and even in the present life rise to higher planes of consciousness and so escape reincarnation.

The Path

THE SYNTHESIS OF OCCULT SCIENCE: III — William Q. Judge

(Continued from February No.)

It has often been thought a strange thing that there are no dogmas and no creed in Theosophy or Occultism. Is theosophy a religion? is often asked. No, it is *religion*. Is it a *philosophy*? No, it is philosophy. Is it a science? No, it is *science*. If a consensus of religion, philosophy, and science is possible, and if it has ever been reached in human thought, that thought must long since have passed the boundaries of all creeds and ceased to dogmatize. Hence comes the difficulty in answering questions. No proposition stands apart or can be taken separately without limiting and often distorting its meaning. Every proposition has to be considered and held as subservient to the synthetic whole. Really intelligent people, capable of correct reasoning, often lack sufficient interest to endeavor to apprehend the universality of these principles. They expect, where they have any interest at all in the subject, to be told "all about it" in an hour's conversation, or to learn it from a column in some newspaper; all about man, all about Nature, all about Deity; and then either to reject it or to make it a part of their previous creed. These are really no wiser than the penny-a-liner who catches some point and turns it into ridicule, or makes it a butt for coarse jest or silly sarcasm, and then complacently imagines that he has demolished the whole structure! If such persons were for one moment placed face to face with their own folly, they would be amazed. The most profound thinker and the most correct reasoner might well afford to devote a life-time to the apprehension of the philosophy of occultism, and other life-times to mastering the scientific details, while at the same time his ethics and his religious life are made consistent with the principle of altruism and the Brotherhood of

man. If this be regarded as too hard a task, it is, nevertheless, the line of the higher evolution of man, and, soon or late, every soul must follow it, retrograde, or cease to be.

Man is but a link in an endless chain of being; a sequence of a past eternity of causes and processes; a potentiality born into time, but spanning two eternities, his past and his future, and in his consciousness these are all one, *Duration*, the *ever-present*. In a former article man was shown to be a series of almost innumerable "Lives", and these lives, these living entities called "cells", were shown to be associated together on the principle of hierarchies, grouped according to rank and order, service and development, and this was shown to be the "physical synthesis" of man, and the organic synthesis as well. Disease was also shown to be the organic nutritive, or physiological "sin of separateness". Every department of man's being, every organ and cell of his body, was also shown to possess a consciousness and an intelligence of its own, held, however, subordinate to the whole. In health every action is synchronous and rhythmical, however varied and expanded, however intense and comprehensive. Enough is already known in modern physics to justify all these statements, at least by analogy. The principle of electrical induction and vibration, the quantitative and qualitative transmission of vibration and its exact registration, and their application to telegraphy, the telephone, and the phonograph, have upset all previous theories of physics and physiology. "A metallic plate, for instance, can that talk like a human being? Yea or nay? Mr. Bouillard — and he was no common man — said No; to accept such a fact were to upset all our notions of physiology. So said Mr. Bouillard, right in the face of Edison's phonograph in full Academy, and he throttled the luckless interpreter of the famous American inventor, accusing it of ventriloquism." (1)

Occultism teaches that the Ego both precedes and survives the

physical body. The phenomena of man's life and the process of his thought can be apprehended and explained on no other theory. Modern physiology teaches in detail certain facts regarding the life of man. It, moreover, groups these facts and deduces certain so-called principles and laws, but such a thing as a synthesis of the *whole man* is seldom even attempted. "Psychology" is mere empiricism, represented by disjointed facts, and these, of course, but little understood, and more often misinterpreted.

Ask the modern physiologist if man can *think* when unconscious, and he will answer No; and if asked if man can be conscious and not think, he will as readily answer No. Both answers will be based on what is known, or supposed to be known, of memory. The idea that the real man, the Ego, is always conscious on some plane, and that it "thinks", as we ordinarily use the term, only on the lower plane through the physical brain, in terms of extension and duration, or space and time, is seldom in the least apprehended by the modern physiologist. If, however, one grasps the idea of the ego as the real man dwelling in the physical body and using it as its instrument through which it is related to space and time, perception, sensation, thought, and feeling, the gaps in physiology and psychology begin to disappear. Here again it should be particularly borne in mind that this doctrine of the ego must be considered in the light of the complete synthesis of occultism, and just to the extent that this is intelligently done will the significance of the ego appear.

The brief and concise outline of the philosophy of occultism given in the Introduction to the *Secret Doctrine* is therefore very significant, and the student who desires to apprehend that which follows in these two large volumes ought to study this outline very carefully. No subsequent proposition, no principle in the life of man, can be correctly understood apart from it. The subject-matter following is necessarily fragmentary, but the outline is

both inclusive and philosophical, and if one reasons logically and follows the plainest analogies he can never go far astray. The relation of mind to brain, of thought to consciousness, of life to matter, and of man to Nature and to Deity, is there clearly defined; not, indeed, in all its details, but in a philosophical modulus, to be worked out in reason and in life. The all-pervading Life, the cyclic or periodical movements, the periods of action and of repose, and the intimate relations and inter-dependences of all things apply to Cosmos, and equally to every atom in its vast embrace.

Students sometimes complain that they cannot understand, that the subject is so vast, and so deep and intricate, and not made clear. It is because they do not realize what they have undertaken. Occultism can neither be taught nor learned in "a few easy lessons". The "object lessons" sometimes given by H. P. B., almost always misunderstood and misapplied, though often explained at the time, served as often to excite vulgar curiosity and personal abuse as to arrest attention and study. If, before the advent of the T. S. in the face of the creeds of Christendom, the materialism of science, the indifferences and supercilious scorn of Agnosticism, and the babel of spiritualism, it had been proposed to begin at the foundations and reconstruct our entire knowledge of Nature and of man; to show the unity and the foundations of the world's religions; to eliminate from science all its "missing links"; to make Agnosticism gnostic; and to place the science of psychology and the nature and laws of mind and soul over against "Mediumship"; it would have been held as an herculean task, and declared impossible of accomplishment. Now that the thing has virtually been accomplished and this body of knowledge presented to the world, people think it strange that they cannot compass it all, as the poet Burns is said to have written some of his shorter poems, "while standing on one leg"!

Again, people complain at the unfamiliar terms and the strange words imported from foreign languages. Yet if one were to undertake the study of physics, chemistry, music, or medicine, quite as great obstacles have to be overcome. Is it a strange thing, then, that the science that includes all these, and undertakes to give a synthesis of the whole realm of Nature and of life, should have its own nomenclature?

Beyond all these necessary and natural obstacles, there is another, *viz.*, that contentious spirit that disputes and opposes every point before it is fairly stated or understood. Suppose one ignorant of mathematics were to proceed in the same manner and say, "I don't *like* that proposition", "I don't see *why* they turn a six upside down to make a nine", "Why don't two and two make five?", and so on, how long would it take such a one to learn mathematics? In the study of the Secret Doctrine it is not a matter of likes or dislikes, of belief or unbelief, but solely a matter of intelligence and understanding. He who acknowledges his ignorance and yet is unwilling to lay aside his likes and dislikes, and even his creeds and dogmas, for the time, in order to see what is presented in its own light and purely on its merits, has neither need nor use for the Secret Doctrine. Even where a greater number of propositions are accepted or "believed" and a few are rejected, the synthetic whole is entirely lost sight of. But, says some one, this is a plea for blind credulity, and an attempt to bind the mind and the conscience of man to a blind acceptance of these doctrines. No one but the ignorant or the dishonest can make such an assertion in the face of the facts. Listen to the following from p. XIX. Introduction to the *Secret Doctrine*. "It is above everything important to keep in mind that no theosophical book acquires the least additional value from pretended authority." If that be advocating blind credulity, let the enemies of the T. S. make the most of it. If any authority pertains to the *Secret*

Doctrine, it must be sought inside, not outside. It must rest on its comprehensiveness, its completeness, its continuity and reasonableness; in other words, on its *philosophical synthesis*, a thing missed alike by the superficial and the contentious, by the indolent, the superstitious, and the dogmatic.

"O wise man: you have asked rightly. Now listen carefully. The illusive fancies arising from error are not conclusive."

"The great and peaceful ones live regenerating the world like the coming of spring, and after having themselves crossed the ocean of embodied existence, help those who try to do the same thing, without personal motives."

— Crest Jewel of Wisdom.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Dr. J. Oehorowicz, "Mental Suggestion" p. 291. ([return to text](#))

The Path

SOME HINDU LEGENDS — J. S.

A ROMANCE OF SITA.

Perhaps in the whole range of moral allegories which honeycomb the ethical and religious literature of Hindustan there is nothing more elevating, more inspiring to the mind of the Hindu than the narrative of the recovery of Sita from the hands of the giant Ravanna, by Rama, as an incarnation of Vishnu the Deity Absolute.

It is said that in one of her past lives Sita was the only daughter of the great Rishi (Sage) Bhrgu, and then went by the name of Bhargavi. She passed the prime of her life in stern asceticism with a view to obtaining complete union with the Deity in her next incarnation. One day while she was walking alone in the forests, Ravanna the giant king of Lanka, (Ceylon), of the ancient race of giants mentioned in the *Secret Doctrine*, came upon her, and was so much ravished by her enchanting beauty that he wanted to make her his bride.

At this proposal Sita was so incensed that she, there and then, prepared a pyre into which she threw herself, uttering an indelible curse upon the giant that during his whole lifetime, which covered 150,000 years, he would not be able to touch a single woman, a curse which was literally fulfilled.

Bhargavi's curse worked itself out in a most wonderful manner.

Centuries upon centuries rolled away, and the giant Ravanna, the most long-lived of God's creatures, still ruled Lanka with an iron hand.

Lapped by the limpid waters of a lake in Southern India, there

stood in its very midst a Lotus-flower whose sun-kissed bosom bore the noble form of a gentle being of angelic innocence. It was the daughter of Bhrigu come to life again in this strange watery cradle. A couple of fishermen who had been one morning angling on the margin of the lake brought the Lotus out. Admiring the glorious image of the sleeper inside, they took it to their King Ravanna, the monster who had cost Sita her life in her last incarnation. Astonished at the infant so peacefully reclining on the Lotus, the King called his soothsayers and asked them, as is customary with the Hindus, to consult the stars about the future of that mysterious being. On being informed that the girl was destined to bring ruin and desolation on him and his kingdom, Ravanna ordered that she be shut up in an air-tight box and drowned in the deep sea.

The future Sita remained for years a sojourner of the sea, till one day the furious waves washed the box ashore. The sands covered it and kept it long unseen by human eyes. Janaka, the king of Videhnagar, one morning, intent upon performing a sacrifice to the gods (*yagna*), came to the sea-shore with his retinue of priests and courtiers. In *yagna* it is very necessary that the ground should be consecrated before the ceremony. When the beach was being made ready, the share of a plough that was uplifting the ground struck against a hard substance, which being dug out turned out to be the well-secured box holding the woman who was to bring about the downfall of the house of Ravanna. Delighted with this acquisition, considered to be a god-send for his life, Janaka took the child home and brought her up as his own daughter. From her foster-father Janaka she received the patronymic Janaki. She was called Sita because she was first brought to light by a plough whose Sanskrit equivalent is *Sita*.

Valmiki relates that she was afterwards married to Rama, an incarnation of the Deity, was carried off to Lanka by Ravanna,

and there kept by him in captivity. Rama then pursued the enemy to the Southern shore of India, and was helped by the monkey god, Hanuman, who made war with him against the giant, calling to his aid the elemental forces of Nature. Here Hanuman represents not only the ancient ape-like men of the early races, but also the elementals of all degrees of power. The armies arrived at Lanka, besieged the place, and finally overthrew the giant, recovering Sita. In other words, the new cycle and the new race overcame the old and took their place.

VALMIKI, THE WRITER OF RAMAYANA.

In one of the wilds of India, a Brahmin youth of obscure parentage in a vagabond company used to waylay travelers, and lead a life remarkable for its lawlessness and avarice. For years the boy trafficked in unrighteousness, till one fine summer morning Narada, the messenger of the gods, the Mercury of the Aryans, with his tuneful lute (*Vina*) hymning forth praises to Vishnu to kill the tedium of his march, came upon the brigand so early up for his daily human hunt. On being threatened with his life Narada remonstrated with the brigand to spare it, as his death would not give him any money, and asked the chief motive which led him to commit such crimes. On being told that he had a large family to maintain, which, as he could not do by fair means, he had to fall upon foul ones to keep them well fed and clothed, Narada begged him hard, before being put to the sword, to run to his own house and ask his wife and children, for whose sake he was heaping sins on his own head, if any one amongst them was willing to exchange with him the penalty of hanging which was inevitably destined for him at no distant date. Utterly dejected and downcast did the Brahmin return to Narada and complained most bitterly to him of the ingratitude of his own kith and kin for whom he had dipped his hands so deep in blood, since they cared not for him to desist though he should die. He fell upon his knees

and requested the divine messenger to save his soul. Taking pity on his abandoned plight, Narada told him to sit under a banyan tree hard by and mutter incessantly the word MARA.

In the Canarese language this word means "a tree", and the illiterate youth, who had never heard the name of God until now, very soon, by repeated anagrams, began to pronounce *Rama*, *Rama*, the name of the Deity amongst the Hindus. For a thousand years, the legend runs, the Brahmin in his yoga trance kept the word Rama ceaselessly on his lips, at the end of which Narada once more happened to pass that very way, and found in his would-be murderer a regenerated ascetic whose body was altogether enveloped with white ants, Nearing him he recalled him from his trance and gave him the name of Valmiki, or he whose body was covered with *Valmik* or white ants. Inspired by him this Valmiki, the former highwayman, wrote that glorious monument of human genius held so sacred by the Hindus, the Ramayana, in which he recounts the love of God towards man, and how He tries to alleviate the sufferings and woes of Humanity.

Among other things the story is intended to show how the soul even of the most abandoned may be swayed, and how an impulse in the direction of a better life will lead to good Karma. The sage, whether appearing as Narada or not, knows how to touch the chord that shall vibrate so strongly as to change a life, as in this case he appealed to the bandit on a point that would show him how ungrateful were those for whom he did evil. And so, too, only by previous good Karma could this youth have met a benefactor in that life; thus all along the road we meet those who help us and those whom we must help. As we do not recognize them, the only way is to help everybody.

THE MUNGALGIRI TEMPLE.

About six miles from the town of Bezwada, the ancient Vijayawada so famous for the religious austerities of Nijaya or Arjuna, there is a high mountain called Mungalgiri. On the top there is a very celebrated temple whose chief wonder is that near its "Holy of the Holies" there is a small opening known as Narsihma Vakira, or the mouth of the God Narsimah, the Fourth Avatar of Vishnu. The votaries who come to the shrine are in the habit of bringing a potful of *jaggery* mixed with water, as a libation to the god. The contents are emptied by means of a conch shell into the small orifice just mentioned. Only just half of what is offered is taken in; the other half, even if poured, is not received, but thrown out as often as the conch throws it in. This is considered as a token of love and regard of the Deity towards helpless Humanity.

There is a perpendicular crevice in the same mount which is supposed to communicate with the Patala — known as the nether world by some and in *Secret Doctrine* identified with America.

In the *Kreta* Yuga this mountain was called Muktradari, or the Mount of Salvation; in the *Treta* Yuga, Jotadari, or the Mount of Protection; in *Dwapara*, Niladari, or the Blue Mount; and in *Kali*, the present age, it is known as Mungalgiri, or the Auspicious Mount.

The spire over the temple is some 1,320 feet high, and was built by a Raja named Venkatradari at a cost of 400,000 rupees in order to expiate the crime of murdering some robbers whom he had invited to his house really for that purpose but on the ostensible plea of hospitality.

India is a land of mysteries truly, but although many of these folk tales arise out of natural phenomena, they show the deeply-seated religious feeling of the race. Religion there enters indeed into everything. But these tales are not despicable, for many great

writers of authority know that under the folk tales of all nations are concealed truths hidden from the materialist's gaze. Oil on the sea to still it was long held a superstition, but now nearly every well appointed ocean vessel is equipped with oil-bags to accomplish this end in accord with ancient "superstition".

The Path

AFFIRMATIONS AND DENIALS — *William Q. Judge*

In the *PATH* of January a discussion on the subjects of "Mind Cure" and the like was begun. Since then we have had some letters from and conversations with those who think that the article is not right, or that it takes a wrong view, or that it does not state all the views of all the schools, and when we referred the enquirers to publications of "professors" of these schools we were told that they do not represent the thing properly, and so on. In this article it is purposed to refer to some of these published utterances of the said professors, so that they may be examined.

In a journal called "Christian Science" for the month of January, published in Boston apparently under the auspices of a college of the cult, is the following from an article entitled "My Healing Message," by Minna Peckham;

"I now declare all pain, sickness, or death to be nothing — nothing. There is no sickness. I deny that there ever was any sickness. I do not believe in poverty; I know there is no poverty; there never was any poverty; there never will be any poverty. We have great stores of wealth; every man, woman, and child is rich. They want for nothing. I do not believe in storms. I know there are no storms. There never were any storms; there never will be any. I deny the reality of storms henceforth and forevermore. I do not believe in accidents, I know there never were any accidents and there never never shall be any."

And all this raving is uttered in serious earnest, winding through many more paragraphs, and ending as follows: "I am a messenger of God's love and a bearer of good tidings of what is true."

But we are told by some that this sort of thing "is not the Simon

pure straight; it is not representative". The difficulty is that the different "metaphysicians" say the same of each other, and when they are cornered by something like this they say "O that is not the proper thing". But a still greater difficulty is that the folly just quoted is the exact outcome of the other systems, for they all have a system of affirming and denying that must, if carried to its logical conclusion, lead to just what Miss Peckham says. She is evidently not afraid to boldly go to the end and reduce herself and all other things and beings on this plane to nothing. Indeed, it is quite proper to *go* still further than her "message" in order to carry out the line of argument laid down, in this way: "There is nothing: I do not think, I never did, I never will, and the thoughts I have just uttered have no existence, and therefore all that I have said is nothing, and hence all that I have denied is just the opposite". This is quite logical and proper, and reduces the whole matter to its right position. The whole set of affirmations and denials reminds one of the passages in the writings of the great Seer Swedenborg, where he describes those souls who affirm and deny anything at all and reduce any statement to the very opposite of what may have been said. We are not joking, but are in sober earnest and call on all forms of argument and all schools of real literature to support our position. Of course some will not agree, but we are willing to rest the case with those who have been educated to understand the true course of an argument. There are rules of logic which must be followed unless we are come upon an age when all these things have passed away. And the "Healing Message" has been taken up now because the publication appeals to theosophists and advertises theosophical books.

RELATIVITY

As soon as the Absolute began to manifest itself, or, if you like, immediately that Almighty God created things and beings,

relativity begins, and all minds are caught in its net and are obliged to look at things relatively. And so it comes about that we have to say "good" and "evil", as well as all the other words that connote these relative things and ideas. If there were no matter there would be no spirit, and also if there no evil there would be no good. It is therefore wrong in logic and common sense to say there is no evil. It is only the desire of the optimist, who will not look at things as they are, that causes people to affirm that all is good or that there is no evil. It is all relative, and there is both evil and good, just as light and darkness exist. For if there were not the one we would never know anything about the other, since these ideas arise from contrasts.

In the so-called metaphysical arts or "sciences" the relativity of things and ideas is constantly ignored from the desire to have everything right and *just as we want it*. But how can these optimists know they are right when they sweep away relativity? and how shall any of us say that sorrow and poverty do not exist? Poverty is a fact- — the fact of being without means or the things that can be bought with means, and this is so whether the general wants of the nation you live in are small or large. It is in no sense a sentiment or due to imagination. Hence poverty here will be riches for the man in India, and so on, but all the time there is poverty in any land, no matter how the relativity in respect to that sort of poverty alters in another.

So it is against the experience of all to say there is no poverty, and it is also contrary to logic. But it is not wrong to say that the *effect on your mind* may alter as you look at the matter; and so you may be poor yet at the same time be contented. This, though spiritual or moral richness, is none the less actual poverty. But proper contentment does not come from violations of logic and fact, but from a right view of this universe of relativity. And such right view will never be attained by denials that can not be sustained.

Many of the objections made to the views in the January article were wide of the mark, for they took the ground that the writer held, as they said other members of the Society do, the opinion that we should go on thinking we are sick when we are not, and that we are miserable when it is only a result of morbidity of mind. Such is not the position at all. Much of our misery is due to discontent and to selfishness, and will disappear as we grow contented and whole-souled. Many of our bodily complaints fade away when we have restored the mind to normal action. But this normal action is not secured by bad logic and worse statistics. It is done by recognizing the fact that "the mind is its own place, and can make a hell of heaven, a heaven of hell." As we see that one set of circumstances make one man happy and another the very opposite, we know that much depends on the way in which we look at our surroundings; but this is an old idea, one always held by the most ancient of the ancients. What right have the "metaphysicians" to arrogate it to themselves? All good physicians have said that much depends on the mind of the patient, but that does not do away with the necessity for good physicians; it only calls for more sense on the part of the patients.

Let us suppose a nation imbued from birth to death with the absurd denials and affirmations we have quoted, and try to imagine what would be the effect on the next incarnation of such a people. Probably Miss Peckham does not believe in reincarnation, but, if she did, might say the effect would be good. But would all the poverty and the storms and earthquakes have come to an end? Hardly, since in the case of the natural throes of mother Earth what thoughts may cause them are beyond our purview and unaffected by our denials. Would the contrasts that really constitute poverty, no matter what the sphere of being, cease to have existence? We think not, unless everything by the remarkable process outlined in the paper quoted from had been

reduced to one dead level. But we know at least this, that evolution is the law of nature in all departments and that no dead level is possible, and under the law of evolution there must be these contrasts, no matter how high we go or how long continue in the great stream. Hence if these affirmations and denials should have the effect of removing us from this sphere to another, there the deniers and affirmers would have to begin the weary process over again of plunging themselves into a sea of illusionary thought devoid of logic and merely optimistic. If this picture be correct, is it wise to continue the system or in any way to give it moral support?

The Path

THE FUTURE AND THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY — *William Brehon*

In 1888 H. P. Blavatsky wrote: (1)

"Night before last I was shown a bird's eye view of the theosophical societies. I saw a few earnest reliable theosophists in a death struggle with the world in general and with other — nominal and ambitious — theosophists. The former are greater in number than you may think, and *they prevailed* — as you in America *will prevail*, if you only remain staunch to the Master's programme *and true to yourselves*. And last night I saw. . . The defending forces have to be judiciously — so scanty are they — distributed over the globe wherever theosophy is struggling with the powers of darkness."

And in the *Key to Theosophy*:

"If the present attempt in the form of our Society succeeds better than its predecessors have done, then it will be in existence as an organized living and healthy body when the time comes for the effort of the twentieth century. Not only so, but besides a large and accessible literature ready to men's hands, the next impulse will find a numerous and united body of people ready to welcome the new torch-bearer of truth. He will find the minds of men prepared for his message, a language ready for him in which to clothe the new truths he brings, an organization awaiting his arrival which will remove the merely mechanical material obstacles and difficulties from his path. Think how much one to whom such an opportunity is given could accomplish. Measure it by comparison with what the Theosophical Society actually has achieved in the last fourteen years without any of these advantages and surrounded by hosts of hindrances which would

not hamper the new leader."

Every member of the Society should be, and many are, deeply interested in the above words. The outlook, the difficulties, the dangers, the necessities are the same now as then, and as they were in the beginning of this attempt in 1875. For, as she has often said, this is not the first nor will it be the last effort to spread the truths and to undertake the same mission as that taken up by Ammonius Saccas some centuries ago — to lead men to look for the one truth that underlies all religions and which alone can guide science in the direction of ideal progress. In every century such attempts are made, and many of them have been actually named "theosophical". Each time they have to be adapted to the era in which they appear. And this is the era — marked by the appearance and the success of the great American republic — of freedom for thought and for investigation.

In the first quotation there is a prophecy that those few reliable theosophists who are engaged in a struggle with the opposition of the world and that coming from weak or ambitious members will prevail, but it has annexed to it a condition that is of importance. There must be an adherence to the program of the Masters. That can only be ascertained by consulting her and the letters given out by her as from those to whom she refers. There is not much doubt about that program. It excludes the idea that the Society was founded or is intended as "a School for Occultism", for that has been said in so many words long ago in some letters published by Mr. Sinnett and in those not published.

Referring to a letter received (1884) from the same source we find: "Let the Society flourish on its moral worth, and not by phenomena made so often degrading." The need of the west for such doctrines as Karma and Reincarnation and the actual Unity of the whole human family is dwelt upon at length in another.

And referring to some of the effects of certain phenomena, it is said (2) "They have to prove. . . constructive of new institutions of a genuine practical brotherhood of Humanity, where all will become co-workers with Nature." Speaking of present materialistic tendencies, the same authority says:

"Exact experimental science has nothing to do with morality, virtue, philanthropy — therefore can make no claim upon our help until it blends itself with metaphysics. . . . The same causes that are materializing the Hindu mind are equally affecting all western thought. Education enthrones scepticism, but imprisons spirituality. You can do immense good by helping to give the western nations a secure basis on which to reconstruct their crumbling faith. And what they need is the evidence that Asiatic psychology alone supplies. Give this and you will confer happiness of mind on thousands. . . . This is the moment to guide the recurrent impulse which must soon come and which will push the age towards extreme atheism or drag it back to extreme sacerdotalism, if it is not led to the primitive soul-satisfying philosophy of the Aryans."

This is the great tone running through all the words from these sources. It is a call to work for the race and not for self, a request to bring to the west and the east the doctrines that have most effect on human conduct, on the relations of man to man, and hence the greatest possibility of forming at last a true universal brotherhood. We must follow this program and supply the world with a system of philosophy which gives a sure and logical basis for ethics, and that can only be gotten from those to which I have adverted; there is no basis for morals in phenomena, because a man might learn to do the most wonderful things by the aid of occult forces and yet at the same time be the very worst of men.

A subsidiary condition, but quite as important as the other, is laid

down by H. P. B. in her words that we must "remain true to ourselves". This means true to our better selves and the dictates of conscience. We cannot promulgate the doctrines and the rules of life found in theosophy and at the same time ourselves not live up to them as far as possible. "We must practise what we preach, and make as far as we can a small brotherhood within the Theosophical Society. Not only should we do this because the world is looking on, but also from a knowledge of the fact that by our unity the smallest effort made by us will have tenfold the power of any obstacle before us or any opposition offered by the world.

The history of our sixteen years of life shows that our efforts put forth in every quarter of the globe have modified the thought of the day, and that once more the word "Theosophy", and many of the old ideas that science and agnosticism supposed were buried forever under the great wide dollar of present civilization, have come again to the front. We do not claim to be the sole force that began the uprooting of dogmatism and priestcraft, but only that we have supplied a link, given words, stirred up thoughts of the very highest importance just at a time when the age was swinging back to anything but what the reformers had fought for. The old faiths were crumbling, and no one stood ready to supply that which by joining religion and science together would make the one scientific and the other religious. We have done exactly what the letter quoted asked for, led the times a step "to the primitive soul-satisfying philosophy of the Aryans".

But we can never hope to see the churches and the ministers coming over in a body to our ranks. It would be asking too much of human nature. Churches are so much property that has to be preserved, and ministers are so many men who get salaries they have to earn, with families to support and reputations to sustain. Many "houses of worship" are intimately connected with the

material progress of the town, and the personal element would prevent their sinking the old and glorious identity in an organization like to ours. Congregations hire their priests at so much a year to give out a definite sort of theology, and do not like to be told the truth about themselves nor to have too high a standard of altruism held up to them in a way from which, under the theosophical doctrines, there would be no escape. They may all gradually change, heresy trials will continue and heretical ministers be acquitted, but the old buildings will remain and the speakers go on in new grooves to make other reputations, but we may not hope to see any universal rush to join us.

Our destiny is to continue the wide work of the past in affecting literature and thought throughout the world, while our ranks see many changing quantities but always holding those who remain true to the program and refuse to become dogmatic or to give up common-sense in theosophy. Thus will we wait for the new messenger, striving to keep the organization alive that he may use it and have the great opportunity H. P. B. outlines when she says, "Think how much one to whom such an opportunity is given could accomplish."

FOOTNOTES:

1. See Lucifer for June, 1891, p. 291. ([return to text](#))
2. Occult World, p. 101. ([return to text](#))

ABOUT KILLING ANIMALS

A correspondent asks: "Will you kindly explain why, if you think it wrong to kill a water bug, that you should consider it right to slay larger animals for food?"

I do not remember having said it was *wrong* to kill a water bug; hence there is no conclusion to be made from that to the question of feeding on animals, so far as I am concerned.

The questions of right and wrong are somewhat mixed on this subject. If one says it is morally wrong to kill a water bug, then it follows that it is wrong to live at all, inasmuch as in the air we breathe and the water imbibed there are many millions of animals in structure more complicated than bugs. Though these are called *infusoria* and *animalculae*, yet they are living, moving beings as much as are bugs. We draw them in and at once they are destroyed, slain to the last one. Shall we therefore stop living? The whole of life is a battle, a destruction and a compromise as long as we are on this material plane. As human beings we have to keep on living, while in our destructive path millions of beings are hourly put to death. Even by living and earning a living each one of us is preventing some one else from doing the same, who, if we were dead, might step into our shoes. But if we abandoned the fight — were we, indeed, able to so do — then the ends of evolution could not be attained. Hence we have to stay and endure what Karma falls from the necessary deaths we occasion.

So the true position seems to me to be this, that in certain environments, at certain stages of evolution, we have to do an amount of injury to others that we cannot avoid. So while we thus live we must eat, some of flesh and others of the vegetable. Neither class is wholly right or wrong. It becomes a wrong when

we deliberately without actual need destroy the lives of animals or insects. So the man who was born in a family and generation of meat-eaters and eats the meat of slaughtered animals does less wrong than the woman who, though a vegetarian, wears the feathers of slaughtered birds in her hats, since it was not necessary to her life that such decoration should be indulged in. So the epicure who tickles his palate with many dishes of meats not necessary for sustentation is in the same case as the woman who wears bird's feathers. Again as to shoes, saddles, bridles, pocketbooks, and what not, of leather. These are all procured from the skins of slain animals. Shall they be abolished? Are the users of them in the wrong? Any one can answer. Or did we live near the north pole we would be compelled to live on bears' and wolves' meat and fat. Man, like all material beings, lives at the expense of some others. Even our death is brought about by the defeat of one party of microbes who are devoured by the others, who then themselves turn round and devour each other.

But the real man is a spirit-mind, not destructible nor destroying; and the kingdom of heaven is not of meat nor of drink: it cometh not from eating nor refraining — it cometh of itself. — Ed.

The Path

SEVEN STEPS FORWARD

With this issue *PATH* starts on the seventh year of life, and the seven past years have been full of action, of work, and of results. We began without an office or capital: it might be said that the business was carried on in a hat at first. Then it moved into a cell or den on Park Row, where no man could enter by the door if the occupant within did not rise to make room for the portal to swing. Subsequently a larger room — cramped in fact — was hired and exultingly then called "commodious" by the *factotum*. Later back again to Park Row and even more commodious, as the quarters of a bee might seem so, by comparison, to an ant. Then again to larger quarters on Nassau street, until now it expects to move into the Society's permanent house.

So to signalize the event it puts on a new cover, and were subscribers more numerous it might enlarge the number of its pages. But the penalty of independence in business conduct is frequently lack of support from a world that acts on convention and delights in pandering and being pandered to. But it may as well be known that the *PATH* will pander to nothing.

Once more, too, the editor declares he sees no excuse for the existence of this or any other magazine. He wearies of the eternal printing that goes on, for there is nothing new under the sun and we are like squirrels repeating the words spoken by bodies long since dead which were inhabited by ourselves whom now we fail to recognize. But since this is the age of black on white impressed by machinery, we are compelled to publish so that the opportunity of saying the same thing once more to a rebellious and stiff-necked generation shall not be neglected.

The Path

METAPHYSICAL HEALING ONCE MORE — *Ellice Kortright*

BY ONE WHO HAS TRIED IT

The opening sentence of Mrs. Gestefeld's article in February PATH entitled "Another View of Metaphysical Healing" leads those in the Theosophical ranks who *have* "examined the subject sufficiently to arrive at an understanding of the principles involved" to come forward with such knowledge as a disclaimer of the assumption that only those who are ignorant of the matter will share the opinion of the PATH's Editor.

An early inquirer into the theory that now enjoys the diversified nomenclature of "Divine Science", "Mind Cure", "Mental Science", "Metaphysical Healing", and "Christian Science", may claim to know something of its rise, its progress, and its present proportions, having been from the first intimately associated with one of the leading exponents of the art, and having examined thoroughly the *modus operandi* of the said art's acquisition and practice under the guidance of one who is conceded by even her opponents to be a past master of the Healing Gospel. With friends, in addition, who are ardent believers in the system of metaphysical healing, some of whom are regular practitioners of the cult, and with the cheerful admission that in some instances great temporary alleviation of suffering has been effected by the use of this agency, — and in one solitary case what might even have proved a permanent cure had not death intervened from another disease, it will presumably be granted that the writer knows whereof he speaks, and that the following is in no antagonistic spirit, but is the result of a full knowledge of the "principles involved", from a long and dispassionate observation of the facts, together with some personal experiences in the

methods employed. All which tend to the unbiased conclusion that the opinion of the PATH's Editor is in no wise unfair to either the body of teaching known as Metaphysical Healing, or to its defenders and practitioners. The remarkable unanimity — seen, alas! on this point alone — with which all adherents of every shade of the "Divine" and the other allied sciences condemn any and all examples chosen by an outsider for remark, renders it extremely difficult to handle the subject at all; yet it will probably be conceded that certain basic statements are used alike by all branches of the several denominations, and even by every free-lance of a "healer" who is considered infallible by her own following.

These are, in substance, that "All is One", that "One is Reality", that the "Reality is Good or God", that "God is Spirit", etc: while in a text-book open at the First Lesson there is a list of the qualities of this God or Spirit, which is defined as both Principle and Person, and also as a "Unit and Person, *i.e.*, that which cannot be separated". A great deal is further said in the book in question about Love and Life and Light, and of Reality, which is explained to be "a thing that exists in the Mind of God", and we are gravely told that "all expressions of Reality are real, but that there are expressions of Reality which are false because they exist in man's mind independently of God's Mind", these unrealities among others being sickness, sorrow, sin, and death.

To escape the discomforts of this quadruple-headed hydra we are to bask in thought on Love and Light, which is God or Good, whereby we will be made sound, joyful, holy, and deathless.

Now of all this, the conscientious student of Theosophy as opposed to the mere believer in Theosophy, according to Mrs. Gestefeld's distinction, recognizes naught as familiar save the first proposition that All is One, and *that* One is the Real.

So far from Theosophy, as affirmed, being alike in essence with the "Divine Science" as expounded from the metaphysical healer's viewpoint, nothing could well be more dissimilar; nor can Theosophy be restricted in its definition to that presentment of truth alone which "appeals to and engages the intellect in contradistinction to "Divine Science" which "appeals to and engages the soul or self-consciousness", for according to the revelations of the partial and one-sided presentment of this Science known as Metaphysical Healing, it might properly be termed that which "appeals to and engages" the physical consciousness exclusively, judging from the disproportionate part the material body and its sensations are made to play in the scheme of regeneration, — for it is nothing less than this which is the aim of the cult. That Theosophy with its many sidedness of appeal, now to the higher mentality, then to the soul principle, and finally to the Higher Self and pure Spirit, is here limited in its sphere of action to the narrow bounds of the intellectual faculty, shows a want of appreciation of the fundamental teachings of our philosophy which inclines one to the view Mrs. Gestefeld takes of us, *i.e.*, that special attention has been diverted from a right understanding of the Wisdom Religion in favor of what is covered by the term "Divine Science".

All who have become familiarized with the operation of the great law of adjustment known as Karma, realize that whatever of suffering is our lot, here and now, has had its origin in some previous life, ourselves having been the creators by thought-action of the causes whereof the effects are made presently visible. Now Mrs. Gestefeld's contention is that, if Theosophists admit thus much, it follows logically that the further admission must be made that, since past wrong thinking has produced a bodily disease, present right thinking should be the only means employed for its eradication, instead of allowing it, in Mr. Judge's

words, "to work its way down and out by the proper channel, the body", her argument losing sight of the fact that, though the attitude of right thought will doubtless favorably affect the bodily conditions of a subsequent incarnation, it would be inconsistent with our views to look for such results in the present life so long as old reckonings are not fully wrought out to the last decimal.

It is again urged against us that if Karma should not be interfered with by thought processes, no more should it be checked by physical applications, such as medicaments and other palliatives; to which we may reply that such measures are not employed as cure, but as a perfectly legitimate means of alleviation, inasmuch as they pertain to the same plane as the physical trouble, *i.e.*, the material, and that appliances and correctives appropriate to the sphere of matter to which the distemper belongs are in no sense an infringement upon the field wherein the invisible law operates. When mental force is brought to play upon bodily disease it is, according to Mr. Judge's position, thrust back again by the mind current to the sphere in which it had its source in a past embodiment, thence again to work its way down and out, — for such end it is infallibly doomed to effect sooner or later. Hence it is maintained as the wiser course, to allow it to work itself out in its chosen field of action now, — since we know what tenfold and irrepressible force is acquired by any pent-up power that is denied a natural vent, — we the while devoting our thought-action to higher issues than the rectification of what are not infrequently exceedingly trivial abnormal states of the physical system.

By this it is not meant that the object to be attained in amelioration of health will not be greatly advanced by a well equilibrated mind and a cheerful, hopeful temper, which every physician and every sick-nurse knows to be an invaluable aid to quick recovery. But this well-established fact has not waited ages

for recognition till the advent of the mental healers, as they would have us believe.

That the objection urged against the mental practice of metaphysical healers does not hold equally good against the advocates of mesmeric and magnetic methods of alleviating physical infirmity, lies in the fact that animal magnetism by its very name proclaims itself on the same plane of matter to which the present expression of bodily disease is akin, thus making its application no more injurious to the mind than are such drugs as quinine in malarial fever, nor, in fact, than bread is to the hungry in health. The standing contention, however, of those who deprecate all mind-cure practice of every variety in disease is, that such lamentably false standards of thought and of the relativity of things are thus engendered, making so universal a topsy-turvydom that we are bewildered at the spectacle, and are ready wildly to call on all upholders of sound philosophy and framers of stable canons of speech to aid in re-establishing the reign of rational language, and the law and order of common sense once more.

Of more serious import than even the strange medley of religion and philosophy with which the literature of "Mental Science" is adorned, is the claim of a boasted ability to affect the conditions, either external or internal, of other persons through the channel of their minds. Only a dense ignorance of, or a wilful blindness to, the extraordinary achievements of the last two decades due to the painstaking researches of eminent psychologists abroad, such as Bichet and Janet of France, and of the scientific medical fraternity, such as Siefert of Nancy and Forel of Zurich, can fail to recognize in much of the mental-science practice in this country a kindred art to the hypnotic methods now being exhaustively investigated by the aforesaid authorities at various centres.

It is true, indeed, that with the mental-healers no trance is induced in their practice, but none the less does the mind of the operator assume a dominant attitude towards that of the patient, and we know from a study of the means advocated by the Nancy School in particular that "suggestive therapeutics" — a term long anterior to mental healing — are not always dependent for success upon the hypnotic state when once the stronger will has established its right of supremacy over the weaker one. (1) The mere fact that the patient is ailing in body renders his will-fibre of poor resistance; indeed his very act in soliciting aid for his sufferings at the hand of the operator denotes the ease with which his open, receptive attitude of mind may be influenced to any extent by even the unconscious thought of the other. Those familiar with the detailed accounts of experiments of the kind made at different schools in Europe will need no confirmation of this statement. The literature of the subject is ample and easily accessible to all interested sufficiently to pursue a thorough examination of its somewhat intricate records. Therein it will be seen how impossible it is to guarantee an immunity of influence save on the one subject adopted for suggestion, the extreme susceptibility of the weaker sphere to even the unconscious thought of the stronger one being a factor that has to be reckoned with, making it idle for the practitioner to allege that he will "*never* interfere with another's free mental action", or that he "*never* holds a mind in bondage, but only directs it" — a distinction, be it observed, worthy of a Jesuit Father-Confessor.

The subtle persistency of these little-known forces, thus tentatively and ignorantly evoked, renders them beyond measure harmful in their after effects, months and years being oftentimes required to shake off the last traces of their baneful influence.

Case after case might be cited from an intimate acquaintance

with the dealings of Metaphysical Healers of the disastrous effects in certain instances of disease; one, notably, where a woman of fine mind, of finished attainments, and of originally strong will and pronounced individuality much reduced by long years of invalidism, was persuaded to put herself under the care of a noted "healer", one of those to whom even Mrs. Gestefeld would accord the meed of a right comprehension of the "Divine Science", but a woman of less intellectuality and possessed of fewer advantages of education than her patient, though extremely intelligent and quick of apprehension, which was supplemented by a will of indomitable power.

The patient had had for years an organic heart trouble, had been unable to walk at all, and had led a life of extreme carefulness. Under the new *regime* in less than a week the "healer", in defiance of the patient's own better sense, and directly counter to the warnings of a friendly medical attendant who had watched her case assiduously, had her walking about the streets, and unaccompanied, a thing the poor woman had not ventured upon in years, as the prospect of dropping down dead at any moment was inevitably before her. During a period of some five or six weeks an utter revolution took place in the woman's habits, and apparently also in her physical strength and general well-being, at the end of which time, the "healer" being called off in another direction, the patient was suddenly left without what had now become a daily and necessary stimulus, with the consequence that she almost immediately broke down with utter prostration of mental and physical power, and died a few years after without having ever regained the comparative ease of her condition previous to her recourse to this system of cure.

All the while she was undergoing this treatment she confessed herself to be conscious of the performance of foolish acts that her better sense told her at intervals were rife with future penalties,

but something outside of herself, as she expressed it, seemed to urge her on to the result recounted.

If this be not Black Magic in the deed, however white the intent may have been, we confess an utter inability to cope with any suitable characterization, in accordance with the usual signification of terms.

Many another instance of the like kind might be adduced, but this one will suffice for the present purpose. A minor consideration in the treatment of the whole question under review is that of the droll inconsistencies of theory and action that the professors of Metaphysical Healing Science are not above indulging in when need sorely assaults them in their own proper persons. For instance, we were on a time gravely assured by a practitioner of the art that mental force was equal to the cure of every disease, whether internal, organic, or incurable, and the statement was followed by the stout and not-to-be-shaken assertion that renal calculi were solvable under a well-directed and continuous thought current; but it was noticeable that when some time thereafter a hard mass of wax formed in the external meatus of the same person's ear, recourse was instantly had to syringes, soap, and hot water, and these proving inefficacious a speedy pilgrimage to the surgeon was undertaken for relief from his more perfect apparatus. When questioned why the powerful thought current could not have been as readily and as successfully applied to the ear's secretion as to that of the other organ in the body on an even harder substance, it was explained, in delightful defiance of all fact, that this was a "mechanical obstruction whereas the other was not", and all argument proved wholly powerless to establish the similarity of the two cases.

Such contradictions only compel our amused indulgence, and we experience the same lenient satisfaction as we are conscious of

towards the innocent cross-statements of a diverting child comrade. But the more serious aspect of the matter is not unfortunately thereby lessened, as it has been our endeavor to prove above.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Bernheim maintains in his treatise, *De la, Suggest ion, ect*, that the "*hynoptic state need not be one of actual unconsciousness,*" that by the methods of the Nancy School "*real therapeutic effects are obtained when the patient does not fall into sleep or trance and when the patient recalls perfectly what has occurred after the seance is over.*" The same authority defines hypnotism as "*the provocation of a peculiar mental state which augments suggestibility. All the phases of the state have the common character, not of sleep or trance, but of suggestibility.*" ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES — *Alexander Fullerton*

PERHAPS some additional light may be thrown upon this subject supposed to be so complex if we reason backward instead of forward, inquiring what the constitution of man would seem of necessity to be, and not merely investigating what it in fact is. And this may be done by thought upon the "final cause" of his evolution.

A final cause is the end or object of an action, that for the sake of which anything is done, this purposeful aim having therefore the force of causality. The final cause of a man's evolution is the production of a being perfect in knowledge and experience. Hence, very evidently, the knowledge and experience must be in every quarter, on every plane, through every function. Now there are three ways whereby knowledge is acquired, — sensation, perception, and intuition. Sensation is the way through use of the bodily organs, as when information of the nature of a table or chair is gained by touch and sight. Perception is the way through use of the mental and reasoning faculty, as when information of facts in geometry is gained by reflection on the necessary properties of figures. Diagrams may aid to comprehension, but the fact that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles exists independently of any drawing which may be used to illustrate it. Intuition is the way through use of the higher, supersensuous faculties, by which supersensuous truth is directly, without the medium of ratiocination or inference, seized at once.

If we can imagine a purely spiritual, unembodied being, such a being as is suggested by the word "angel", it is clear that his only avenue to truth would be through intuition. Without physical organs, and raised above the plane whereon argument and

induction range, intuition would be his one resource. Of life and movement in his own sphere, of methods of communication in thought and sympathy, he would have copious knowledge. But there it would stop. Of the gradual processes of reflection and reason used in lower fields, much more of such experimental tuition as comes through bodily life with bodily organs, not the remotest conception would be possible. Not only would matter, with all its sensations and restrictions, be foreign to him, but he would be a stranger to such emotions as result from the relations and casualties of social existence on earth, — sorrow, pity, sympathy, self-forgetfulness, self-sacrifice. That is to say, he would be ignorant of a vast range of instructive experiences, and incapable of a large group of refining emotions.

If such a being is to supplement his apprehension of the cosmos by an understanding of that part of it which has consolidated into gross matter, he must incarnate, must dwell in and learn of the section he does not know. He has within him a spark from the Divine Essence, and that is enshrined in a spiritual nature removed the one step from pure Divinity which makes possible an individuality distinct from it. To these he is to add a physical body.

But put a spiritual being into such a body, and no junction results. There is no connecting tie, nothing to bridge over the chasm between two entirely unlike natures. There must be something to enable the spiritual to act upon the physical, and the physical to send messages to the spiritual. Mind does this. On its higher side it reaches up to and affiliates with spirit; on its lower it grasps and influences subtle matter. Though these opposite functions constitute really two entities, they are so interlaced that they blend into each other and permit the passage of thought and will. Thus we have five principles.

Still there is a gap. Intangible mind cannot directly act on gross matter, being still too ethereal for immediate influence. A transmissive medium between mind and flesh is as needful as one between spirit and matter. There is required a body so constituted as to touch at the same time both mind and flesh, supplying a connection for vibrating influences. The astral body does this. The real seat of the organs manifested in those of our five physical senses, it can catch from the physique the sensations they receive and then transmit them to the intelligence above. For it is this astral body which is as to this plane the real seer, hearer, taster, toucher, smeller, and which mediates between gross flesh and subtle mind. And thus we have six principles.

But what would an organism of flesh and bones be without the vitalizing force to conserve and move it? Simply an inanimate mass. So to energize it for action there must be a pervading life, a life of respiration and digestion and circulation and reproduction. The everywhere-distributed vivifying element in Nature supplies this. Vibrating in each atom it thrills through the system and makes it a part of the great whole, transforming a mere apparatus into a living, functioning, active animal. And thus we have seven principles.

If, then, a pure spirit is to incarnate for experiential knowledge, the necessities of the case appear to exact precisely that sevenfold nature which Theosophy asserts of man. *A priori* considerations conduct to the conclusion otherwise demonstrable as fact.

On the supposition that there are these various elements in man, what would naturally be their behavior when the life-principle is withdrawn from the physical body at what we call "death"? This leaves as the enclosure of the five remaining principles an inanimate form, insusceptible of influence to or from, and already beginning to disintegrate. This not only dispenses from

their longer union for experiential purposes, but directly prompts to a severance. For the spirit enshrined in a spiritual nature no longer needs the link connecting it with a body now worthless, and presumably would retire till ready for another incarnation. But its close union with the Higher Mind has suffused the latter with something of its own pure nature, imparting to it an immortal life. On the other hand, the close union of the Lower Mind with the physical body through the astral has tainted it with the corruption which bespeaks mortality. So the interfacings naturally drop apart, the mortal separates from the immortal. The three higher principles pass on.

Why should the Lower Mind and the astral form cohere? The latter is no longer a vehicle for transmission of sensation upwards or volition downwards. It, too, with the body, has lost its vitality by the withdrawal of the Life-principle, and must drop away from the Lower Mind for the same reason that the Lower has dropped from the Higher Mind and both from the body itself. The second principle having departed, the first, third, and fourth fall separately into gradual dissolution, while the fifth, sixth, and seventh, of undying nature, can have no further touch with what are soon to end.

And here again, what would antecedently seem probable is declared a fact by the teachings of Theosophy. Those who know affirm the conclusions of those who think. The opposite processes of reason and revelation coincide in the result of vindicating the Seven-fold Principle in Man, both as to the necessity of his construction and the method of his dissolution.

THE LIGHT OF EGYPT

In several quarters there has been of late a persistent attempt to push the sale of this book, particularly among Theosophists, and this attempt, combined with the enquiries reaching the *PATH* respecting its character, make important a recalling to F. T. S. of the facts given in *PATH* of July and August, 1889. In the former the book was reviewed and its inadequacy — outside of plagiarisms — shown, as also its denial of Karma and Reincarnation as applicable to this earth! At that time the author was understood to be Mrs. E. H. Britten, but proof as to the real authorship was immediately sent the *PATH*, and in the following number correction was made, the right name given, and the history of the publication disclosed. The author was Mr. T. H. Burgoyne.

Briefly, these are the facts. A spurious Occult Society, known as the "H. B. of L.", was started about 1884, and pretended to give to its members occult teaching *free*. In August, 1887, Mr. Burgoyne, styling himself "Private Secretary", issued to the members a secret circular, the essence of which was that he had studied Chaldean Astrology for eighteen years, but could not communicate the "lessons" in it and Occultism without a payment to him of \$60; that his teachings had the full approval of the Masters; and that the \$60 subscription was a necessity to Initiation. A synopsis of the course accompanied the circular. When *The Light of Egypt* was published, a subscriber placed in the hands of the Editor of the *PATH* the instructions, "lithographs of the original produced by the Autocopyist", and examination showed that the book was mostly a reprint at \$3.00 of "secret teachings" for which \$60 had been exacted!

The present edition of the book states it to be by an "Initiate".

Even without H. P. B.'s assertions as to the "H. B. of L." and her statement (in *Lucifer*) as to the author, no instructed Theosophist should need assurance that Initiates do not proclaim themselves such; that they do not deny doctrines which are pivotal to the whole Theosophic scheme; that they do not *sell* Esoteric teachings — much less in books at a fraction of the rate charged privately till the latter demand ceased; and that no man can enjoy instruction from or approval of Masters whose life and character would exclude him from Their presence and far more from Their endorsement. Hence they should perceive that *The Light of Egypt* is an impudent fraud.

The Path

PERTINENT REFLECTIONS — *Auriga P. Starr*

OPPOSITION OR EXPLANATION, WHICH?

It has been my good or evil fortune to hear some members of the Society say on this wise: "If the Masters who are said to have founded the Society and now watch over it also engage in other works and movements among men, why do Theosophists oppose other developments of thought, such, for instance, as Metaphysical Healing, Christianity, and so on?" The question at the end is a misconception as I read what Theosophists have said. H. P. Blavatsky has been accused of great violence against Christianity, but a careful reader of her books knows that her opposition was directed to dogmatism and not to the true teachings of the founder of that now extinct religion. She tried to explain, to revive the truth, since, as she declared, it was her opinion that but one truth lies under all religions. Indeed, the series of papers that gained for her the Subba Row medal in India was entitled "The Esotericism of the Gospels." And so also with the writers in *PATH* whom I have read on Metaphysical Healing. They deal with explanations in the course of which some unwarranted assumptions are demolished. This is not opposition. But we know that sometimes, if you cannot agree with the Metaphysical Healer or dogmatic Christian on points of logic and history, you are said to oppose.

In the sense that one is not on exactly the same side, he might be said to be in opposition, just as the moon is often in opposition to the sun. But some devotees of the various Mind Cures, holding up before themselves the optimism that first declares all things are good, making a weak play on the English word "God", and then decides that a continually flourishing health is the most

important of the good, dislike logical explanations or the pointing out of disagreeable facts, and call it opposition.

Theosophy opposes nothing but dogmatism, cant, evil action. It is a foe, open or declared, to the dogmatism which has chased Christianity away, but it explains to the sincere where the truth is hidden. So it points out in Old and New Testaments the same truths taught by other religions that borrowed naught from us. Thus while it may in that process dispose of the claim for exclusive revelation asserted for the Christian books, it shows all nations as not deserted by a jealous God, but all alike possessing several forms of the one thing. And that is neither Jewish, nor Presbyterian, nor Hindu, nor Mohammedan, but simply the one system of scientific religion called Theosophy.

Theosophy, then, draws all philosophical and religious ideas to a focus by its synthesis of all. Embracing all, it throws the concentrated light obtained by thus bringing all together, upon the many cherished forms and rituals which obscure reality beneath.

THE T. S. SHOULD NEVER HAVE A CREED.

It is only within the pale of a creedless body that investigation of religions will reveal the truth. If it were a Buddhist or Hindu Society, then every effort of its members would run on those lines. If the one, then only revivals of Buddhism would be sought; if the other, then the spreading of present-day Hinduism. If even it had adopted Reincarnation as its creed, so as to cause us all to be called "Reincarnationists", no right progress could ensue. As Reincarnationists we could not all fully agree with Karma, and, indeed, many varieties of reincarnation would be insisted on. But our body being without a creed, any man who is not a fierce dogmatist may join to help the work which cooperation always enlarges and accentuates.

So our history and present composition declare against a creed. We had Brahmins from the first, with several Parsees. Mr. Judge told me that among the first diplomas he sent to foreign lands in the early days were several to Parsees in Bombay and to Hindus elsewhere; with a few to some Greeks in Europe. And today the rolls in the different sections disclose the names of Hindus, Buddhists, Mohammedans, Christians, and agnostics.

SIZE NO MEASURE OF POWER.

The desire for a large membership is entertained by some. A few years ago a member, in changing the rules so as to have no dues, thought thereby to call in everybody, but soon found that small fees bring no one in and large dues keep few out. We are a leavening movement, and, like leaven, we act silently but surely upon the whole mass. Human nature will not permit us to hope that men will abandon the fame of a congregation and an expensive church to become members of a Society whose ideals necessarily destroy separate distinction and increase general good by rooting out selfishness. The small speck of leaven disturbs the whole mass of dough, and the tiny fungus can lift the heavy stone. In the same way the small band of devoted Theosophists, though never growing much in numbers, has power to keep the thought of the day turned in such a direction that the prospect of causing a union in the search for truth increases. For the mind of this and next century is evolving more and more, demanding answers to the questions which present theology fails to solve, and in Theosophy only is the final solution. If, then, the small band of true devotees ever persists, and each hour increases the ability of each to explain the really simple theosophic system, our Society can be content to remain a force which is mighty for effect though small in appearance.

IS THERE IDOLATRY OF H. P. B.?

This question has been raised. There may be on the part of some an intense respect for the words of our deceased friend which comes within the charge. But such people are generally those who do not think for themselves. They live on the thoughts of others. But as a whole it is otherwise. More members can be found who do not make an idol of H. P. B. than the other kind. Her words, of course, especially about occult subjects, command respect, but in the same way a student of astronomy would give room in his thoughts for the views of a great astronomer when the vague opinions of a unlettered person ought to be rejected. But this is not idolatry. H. P. B. herself spoke against such worship; yet that does not mean we are to give no attention to her writings or to listen to her detractors. I have heard much eulogy of her wonderful work, of her learning, her research, and also of her occult insight, but very little has cropped up of idolatry. The charge seems to arise from the known love, respect, and admiration entertained for our departed leader by several well-known Theosophists. But over and over again I have myself heard these same persons assert the right of others to reject H. P. B. if they please on questions of theosophic interest. Is one to give up his respect and admiration and love for her merely because other people fear that idolatry among weak brethren will result? I think not. But as the fear has been expressed, all we have to do is to continue to use H. P. B. as guide and friend, seeing to it meanwhile that idolatry does not creep in. It can be kept out by the use of what is known as common-sense.

PROBATION: I — *Lily A. Long*

In a certain country there once lived a youth whose name was Ernest. The mountains closed about the little village which was his home, and the beauty and mystery that dwell on the mountains had folded him in from his childhood. When the sun rose he knew it first by the pale gleam that grew into light on the highest peaks, and when it set at the day's end it wrapped those peaks again in purple and violet mists through which the level rays pierced like spears of gold. Far below lay the valley, where the herdsmen took their droves in winter-time, and beyond that again lay the great world of cities and ships and palaces. Sometimes travelers, crossing the mountain, would bring some word of how life went in that other world. Now it was a war, and now it was a famine, and now it was a great rejoicing or a wonderful triumph. Ernest listened and wondered, till wild longings came into his heart to be himself a sharer in that keener life, and then the rock-bound steeps of his home seemed like prison walls to him. But chiefly he loved to hear the tales that came with others of how some man had arisen to right the wrongs of the people or to sacrifice himself for the salvation of his country.

"Who was the man? His name?"

The answer was always the same.

"He was one of the Brothers of the Silence. We did not know his name."

"But who are the Brothers of the Silence? Tell me more of them."

And the answer was always:

"Who they are no one knows unless he is one of them. They keep their secret bond. It is said that men about the king, in the very heart of the court, belong to the Brotherhood, but no one knows who they may be. And it is certain that humble artizans are of the brotherhood also, and scholars and travelers and artists and men who toil with their hands. They work together for a common end, but they work in secret and each in his own way. Only this marks them all, that they work not for themselves. They have vast wealth, but it is used for the furtherance of their common aim; and great learning, but no display is made of it; and power greater than a monarch's, yet it is never shown save when there is need."

"But why are they unknown, and why do they work in secret?"

"Because they work against the king," was the guarded answer.

"The king does not rule righteously. Evil is done and suffered, and wrong is uppermost. Those who serve the king seek to break their power. Therefore they have banded themselves together in secret and do their work so no man knows it. But a time will come, and then the king will learn his weakness and the people will learn their friends. They can wait as well as work."

And Ernest would wander off into the solitary places of the mountains and look out over the level land that stretched away before him, with his heart so full of passionate ardor to share the work of those unknown men that he could not put it into words, — hardly into thoughts.

But the travelers with their tales came more and more seldom, for the mountain pass was dangerous and men mostly chose to take the long way that led past the foot-hills. In the gorge above the village ran a swift stream that had never been bridged, and more than one adventurer, essaying the passage in the rude skiffs of the mountaineers, had been caught in the fierce current and

carried down helplessly over the precipice below. Often the villagers talked together of throwing a bridge across the torrent, but they were men of many little cares, and each season was too full of its own work to leave room for a larger task. But one spring, when the melting fields of snow upon the mountains had made the gorge impassable for weeks, they agreed that the work should be no longer delayed. Each man must bring his share of timber, and Ernest, who was skilful and strong, would construct the bridge. Soon tall trees were hewn to solid beams and lay ready piled on either bank. Pins for fastening, and planks and framework, were made ready. One day, as Ernest worked, a stranger stood beside him. It was long since he had seen a man from the outer world, and he questioned him eagerly.

"What of the king? Does evil still have power in his kingdom?"

"It still has power, alas."

"But the Brotherhood? The men who live for the good of their fellows! Do they still work?"

"Yes, and ever will while there is need."

"I dreamed once of joining them," Ernest said wistfully.

The stranger gave him a kindly glance.

"Well, why not?"

"Could I?"

"Why not?"

"But no one knows where to find them."

The stranger smiled oddly.

"They are never far. One of them was even today at the foot of this mountain of yours."

He waved his hand in farewell, but long after he had passed out of sight the youth sat pondering over his words. One of the Brothers had been at the foot of the mountain that day! Then he could not yet be far away. Ernest flung his axe to the ground and took the path towards the valley from which the stranger had come.

He wandered far and long. Wherever he went there were rumors of the men he sought, but nothing more. One who might have been of the brotherhood was here a fortnight since. It was said another was even now in the next village. Nay, they had all gone to the war on the borders. Or, their secret places of meeting had been discovered by the king, and they had all been scattered or buried in dungeons. Well, it was not so certain that they had ever existed. There had been much talk, but who could make proof? So the rumors flew, and Ernest's zeal blew hot and cold as he listened. It would have been well worth living, truly, if one might have lived and worked as one of such a brotherhood, but if the Brotherhood were chimerical, — why, it was worth living still in a world which held such wonders as the palaces and pageants and festivals he saw. The months came and went, and ever as he traveled some new wonder put the last out of mind. The first object of his search had almost been forgotten when one day a stranger accosted him in the streets of a city.

"You have traveled far."

"I do not recollect you," Ernest said.

"A year ago you were building a bridge over a dangerous gorge in the mountains. You asked about the Silent Brothers then."

"True. And I left the mountains to seek them."

"Have you found them?"

"No. Tales fly about, but many are idle and some are false and all are fugitive. It is impossible to find the Brothers."

"It is not impossible," said the stranger, with a searching glance, "but vague desires bear no fruit unless they grow into will and blossom into action." He lingered a moment as though he would have added more, then turned and was lost in the crowd.

But his words had vividly recalled to Ernest the hopes and purposes with which he had left his home, and in a rush of passionate self-reproach he blamed himself for losing sight of that aim in the allurements of novelty. Faithless and vacillating, how could he hope to be trusted with the work of those who first of all were faithful and steadfast?

Someone touched him on the shoulder.

"Well, will you join us?"

"Who are you?" Ernest asked, drawing back in astonishment.

"Do you not know. We know you. We are men who work to overthrow the power of the king. Will you join us?"

"Are you then the Brothers of Silence?" Ernest demanded eagerly.

"Who knows anything of them? Have you found them?"

"No."

"Yet you have been seeking a whole year! You are a fool if you trust such shadows. There must be a revolution. It will be a thousand years before the Brothers bring it about with their cautious measures. We know a shorter way. We shall bring it to pass ourselves, and then we shall govern instead. Come, are you with us?"

"Yes," cried Ernest. "Why should I wait?"

He plunged at once into a labyrinth of plots and conspiracies which grew day by day more inextricable. There were secret meetings and goings to and fro and mysterious ambassadors on mysterious errands, all of which at first seemed the signs of a most ardent activity in the cause he had at heart. But gradually, as he became more familiar with the details, an uncomfortable doubt came into his mind and lodged there. It was a revolution they contemplated, — true; and the government was evil. But was the object of the conspirators to establish a better rule? Little by little he came to see with fatal clearness that they only sought to overthrow the established order to place themselves in power. Not for the sake of their country, not for the sake of better laws or for the good of the oppressed people were they banded together, but only that they might drain their country of wealth for themselves and make laws that would protect them in their rapine and oppress the people still more bitterly. It grew upon him like a horror, and as he came to feel himself bound with them, entangled in their plots and smirched with their baseness, he loathed himself and hated all who had had part in leading him into these underground ways. A year had gone by when one day the stranger whom he had met twice before sought him out.

(Concluded in June)

The Path

THE SYNTHESIS OF OCCULT SCIENCE: IV — *William Q. Judge*

(*Concluded*)

In the foregoing articles, necessarily brief and fragmentary, a few points have been given to show the general bearing of the *Secret Doctrine* on all problems in Nature and in Life.

Synthesis is the very essence of philosophy, — "the combination of separate elements of thought into a whole", — the opposite of analysis, and analysis is the very essence of science.

In the "Outline of the Secret Doctrine" by "C. J.", now running through the pages of *Lucifer*, this philosophy or synthesis of the whole is made very clear.

There have been many *philosophizers* in modern times, but there can be but one philosophy, one synthesis of the *whole* of Eternal Nature. With the single exception of the writings of Plato, no one in modern times had given to the Western world any approximation to a complete philosophy, previous to the appearance of H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*. The writings of Plato are carefully veiled in the symbolical language of initiation. The *Secret Doctrine*, coming more than two millenniums later, and in an age of so-called Science, is addressed to the Scientific thought of the age, and hence considers the whole subject largely from the stand-point of Science. The present age is as deficient in philosophy as was the age of Plato in knowledge of science. It follows, therefore, that while the Secret Doctrine itself apprehends equally both philosophy and science, in addressing itself to the thought of an age it must recognize here, as it does everywhere, the *law of cycles* that rules in the intellectual development of a race no less than in the revolutions of suns and

worlds, and so address the times from that plane of thought that is in the ascendant. It is just because analytical thought is in the ascendant, because it is the *thought-form* of the age, that the great majority of readers are likely to overlook the broad synthesis and so miss the philosophy of the Secret Doctrine. The only object of these brief and fragmentary papers has been to call attention to this point.

We are now in a transition period, and in the approaching twentieth century there will be a revival of genuine philosophy, and the Secret Doctrine will be the basis of the "New Philosophy". Science today, in the persons of such advanced students as Keely, Crookes, Lodge, Richardson, and many others, already treads so close to the borders of occult philosophy that it will not be possible to prevent the new age from entering the occult realm. H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* is a store-house of scientific facts, but this is not its chief value. These facts are placed, approximately at least, in such relation to the synthesis or philosophy of occultism as to render comparatively easy the task of the student who is in search of real knowledge, and to further his progress beyond all preconception, provided he is teachable, in earnest, and intelligent. Nowhere else in English literature is the Law of Evolution given such sweep and swing. It reminds one of the ceaseless under-tone of the deep sea, and seems to view our Earth in all its changes "from the birth of time to the crack of doom". It follows man in his triple evolution, physical, mental, and spiritual, throughout the perfect circle of his boundless life. Darwinism had reached its limits and a rebound. Man is indeed evolved from lower forms. But *which* man? the physical? the psychical? the intellectual? or the spiritual? The Secret Doctrine points where the lines of evolution and involution meet; where matter and spirit clasp hands; and where the rising animal stands face to face with the fallen god; for *all natures* meet and mingle in

man.

Judge no proposition of the Secret Doctrine as though it stood alone, for not one stands alone. Not "independence" here more than with the units that constitute Humanity. It is *interdependence* everywhere; in nature, as in life.

Even members of the T. S. have often wondered why H. P. B. and others well known in the Society lay so much stress on doctrines like Karma and Reincarnation. It is not alone because these doctrines are easily apprehended and beneficent to individuals, not only because they furnish, as they necessarily do, a solid foundation for ethics, or all human conduct, but because they are the very key-notes of the higher evolution of man. Without Karma and Reincarnation, evolution is but a fragment; a process whose beginnings are unknown, and whose outcome cannot be discerned; a glimpse of what might be; a hope of what should be. But in the light of Karma and Reincarnation evolution becomes the logic of what *must* be. The links in the chain of being are all filled in, and the circles of reason and of life are complete. Karma gives the eternal law of action, and Reincarnation furnishes the boundless field for its display. Thousands of persons can understand these two principles, apply them as a basis of conduct, and weave them into the fabric of their lives, who may not be able to grasp the complete synthesis of that endless evolution of which these doctrines form so important a part. In thus affording even the superficial thinker and the weak or illogical reasoner a perfect basis for ethics and an unerring guide in life, Theosophy is building toward the future realization of the Universal Brotherhood and the higher evolution of man. But few in this generation realize the work that is thus undertaken, or how much has already been accomplished. The obscurity of the present age in regard to genuine philosophical thought is nowhere more apparent than in the manner in which opposition

has been waged toward these doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation. In the seventeen years since the Theosophical movement has been before the world there has not appeared, from any source, a serious and logical attempt to discredit these doctrines from a philosophical basis. There have been denial, ridicule, and denunciation *ad nauseum*. There could be no discussion from such a basis, for from the very beginning these doctrines have been put forth and advocated from the logical and dispassionate plane of philosophy. Ridicule is both unanswerable and unworthy of answer. It is not the argument, but the atmosphere of weak minds, born of prejudice and ignorance.

The synthesis of occultism is therefore the philosophy of Nature and of Life; the full — or free — truth that apprehends every scientific fact in the light of the unerring processes of Eternal Nature.

The time must presently come when the really advanced thinkers of the age will be compelled to lay by their indifference, and their scorn and conceit, and follow the lines of philosophical investigation laid down in the *Secret Doctrine*. Very few seem yet to have realized how ample are these resources, because it involves a process of thought almost unknown to the present age of empiricism and induction. It is a revelation from archaic ages, indestructible and eternal, yet capable of being obscured and lost; capable of being, again and again reborn, or like man himself — reincarnated.

"He who lives in one color of the rainbow is blind to the rest. Live in the Light diffused through the entire arc, and you will know it all." — *The Path*.

"He who knows not the common things of life is a beast among men. He who knows only the common things of life is a man among beasts. He who knows all that can be learned by diligent

inquiry is a god among men." — *Plato*.

The Path

MESMERISM AND THE HIGHER SELF — *William Brehon*

Recently a book on the subject of the "Rationale of Mesmerism" having been published in London, written by Mr. A. P. Sinnett, I read in it some astounding statements about the relation of the higher self to Mesmerism. He says that it is the higher self that acts in the ease of those mesmerized subjects who show clairvoyance, clairaudience, and the like, of a high order. That is to say, the views expressed amount to the doctrine that pure spirit, which the Higher Self is, can be acted on and affected by the gross physical power of mesmerism. This idea seems to be quite contrary to all that we have read in Theosophical literature on the philosophy of man and his complex nature. For if there is anything clearly stated in that, it is that the higher self cannot be affected in this manner. It is a part of the supreme spirit, and as such cannot be made to go and come at the beck of a mesmerizer.

It is a well known fact that the more gross and physical the operator, the stronger is his influence, and the easier he finds it to plunge his subject into the trance state. Seldom do we find the very delicate, the nervous, or the highly spiritualized able to overcome the senses of another by these means. For when we have thus spiritualized our bodies, the means by which we can affect others and make them do what we wish are such as pertain to a finer plane of matter than the one with which mesmerism deals, and the particular instruments used are of an order that must not be described in these pages, since they are secret in their nature and must not be given out too soon. They can be discovered by those who look the proper way, and have been given out by way of hint many a time in the past decade, but discretion is to be observed. And even these means, fine and subtle as they are, do not act on the higher self, but upon exactly

the same parts of our inner nature as those reached by ordinary mesmerism. Not only does the whole of our philosophy sustain the contention that the higher self is not acted on, but we have also the eminent writer H. P. Blavatsky saying that the human spirit — and that is the higher self — cannot be influenced by any man.

Mesmeric force is purely material, although of a finer sort of materiality than gas. It is secreted by the physical body in conjunction with the astral man within, and has not a particle of spirituality about it further than that spirit is immanent in the whole universe. And when it is brought to bear on the willing or unwilling subject, the portion of the nature of the latter which is waked up, or rather separated from the rest, is the astral man.

Probably the reason why Mr. Sinnett and others make the mistake of confounding this with the higher self is that the utterances of the one entranced seem so far to transcend the limits of ordinary waking consciousness. But this only makes the possible horizon of consciousness wider; it does not prove we are hearing direct from the spirit. The vast powers of memory are well known, and when we add to the worldly estimate of its powers the knowledge of the ancient esoteric schools, we can see that the uncovering of the subconscious memories will give us much that a spiritualist might attribute to a denizen of the summerland. Thus in the famous case of the ignorant servant of the pastor who was in the habit of walking up and down in her hearing and repeating aloud verses from the Latin and the Greek, we know that when she fell sick with fever her constant repetition of those Latin and Greek verses was an act of the under memory which had caught and retained all, though she was, in her usual health, too ignorant to say one word in either of those languages. These illustrations can be multiplied a thousand fold from the records of clairvoyants of all sorts and conditions. When

the barrier to the action of the subconscious memory is removed, whether by sickness, by training, by processes, or by natural change of the body, all the theretofore unperceived impressions come to the surface.

Clairvoyance and similar phenomena are explicable by the knowledge of the inner man, and, that being so, it is straining a point and degrading a great idea to say the higher self is involved. For the inner astral man has the real organs which partially function through the one we know. The real eye and ear are there. So what happens in mesmeric trance is that the outer eye and ear are paralyzed for the time, and the brain is made to report what is seen and heard by the inner senses.

These, it is well known, are not limited by time or space, and so give to the operator very wonderful things when viewed from the ordinary level of observation.

And at the same time it is well known to those who have experimented strictly on the lines laid down by the masters of occultism that the sight and hearing and ideation of the mesmerized subject are all deflected and altered by the opinions and thoughts of the operator. And this is especially the case with very sensitive subjects who have gone into the so-called *lucid* state. They are in a realm of which they know but little, and will give back to him who has put them into that state answers on such subjects as the inner constitution of man and nature which will be enlarged copies of what the operator himself has been thinking on the same subject, if he has thought definitely on them. From the tenor of parts of the book I mentioned, it seems clear that the ideas as to the higher self there expressed emanated from sensitives who have in fact merely enlarged and confirmed the views expressed by the author of that work some years ago in "Transactions of the London Lodge" on the subject of the higher

self, as maybe seen from reading the latter. A simple subject of the mesmeric influence, no matter how far in advance of other sensitives, is not by any means a *trained seer*, but in the opinion of the esoteric schools is untrained, for training in this means a complete knowledge on the part of the seer of all the forces at work and of all the planes to which his or her consciousness gains entry. Hence one who merely goes into that condition by the force of the mesmeric fluid is a wanderer wholly unfit to guide any one. It is different in the case of the previously trained seer who uses the mesmeric fluid of another simply as an aid toward passing into that state. And the assertion can be made with confidence that there are no seers so trained in the western world yet. Hence no operator can have the advantage of the services of such, but all investigators are compelled to trust to the reports from the state of trance made by men or women — chiefly women — who never went through the long preliminary training and discipline, not only physically but also mentally, that are absolute prerequisites to seeing correctly with the inner eyes. Of course I except from this the power to see facts and things that take place near and far. But that is only the use of inner sight and hearing; it is not the use of the inner understanding. But on this subject I should like to say a little more at some future time.

The Path

YOGA: THE SCIENCE OF THE SOUL: I — G. R. S. Mead

*Samatvam yoga ucha ate. (Equal-mindedness is called Yoga.)
— Bhagavad-Gita.*

Tadviddhi pranipatena pariprashnena sivaya
upadekshyanti te jnanam janinastattvad arshinah.

(Seek to know it (yoga) by humility, by question, and by service. The truth-seeing wise will (then) communicate this knowledge to thee.) — *Ibid. iv. 38.*

So shalt thou be in full accord with all that lives and
breathes; bear love to men as though they were thy brother
pupils, disciples of one Teacher, and sons of one sweet
Mother. — *The Voice of the Silence.*

I wish to tell you as simply as may be of the most important science in the world — the science of the soul — called Yoga in Sanskrit. Perhaps some of you may not know that the present restricted meaning of the word "science" has only been in fashion for a very brief season in the time-periods of the ages, and that "science" with the ancient forefathers of our Aryan race meant something more than only a careful and intelligent use of our five senses, aided by mechanical instruments.

In the West today the assertion that knowledge is obtainable otherwise than by the five senses is regarded as ignorant impertinence by the popular high priests of science and their trustful votaries; but ready as we all perforce must be to give due honor to the admirable patience and painstaking scrutiny which has rescued the West from the clutches of an ecclesiastical nightmare, we have yet to learn that the newly-established papacy of modern science is the guardian of our souls and dictator of our spiritual existence. In opposition to the ever-

growing negation that is obscuring the ideals and paralyzing the intuitions of the men, women, and children of today, the present Theosophical movement, by its very title, asserts in no uncertain tones that real knowledge is to be obtained; that on the one hand man is something more than a five-sense animal, and on the other that he is under no necessity of waiting until death closes the doors for the assurance of spiritual things.

The immemorial science of the soul asserts that man is an immortal, divine, and spiritual being, whose fleshly tabernacle is but a temporary inn or prison-house; that his physical senses, so far from being his only means of knowledge, are almost invariably the self-imposed bonds that chain him in his narrow dungeon, where, indeed, he would most miserably perish did not sleep, death's younger brother, mercifully release him by night and bear him for a space back to his home of freedom. But he who has begun to long for release from this thralldom, at the same time begins to see the illusive nature of the prison and chains of the body; how they deprive us of our sanity and make us think the prison a palace and the bonds wreaths of sweet-scented flowers. Lunatics in the asylum of the senses that we are, few of us ever contemplate the fact that the magic wand of sleep turns a third of our lives into an impenetrable blank, and that death, the great conductor of souls, may at any instant touch our shoulder.

In most cases, if a man thinks at all, he regards sleep with wonder and death with awe. Sleep and death guard two portals. Through one, man daily passes and repasses in a swoon; through the other, he passes to return no more. So at any rate it *seems* to us. True, it *seems* to be so; but the soul-science does not deal with seemings, it leaves appearances to the dominion of the five senses and the brain mind, and consecrates its study to realities and direct knowledge. The Yoga denies that sleep is a blank and death the end of existence; it asserts the possibility of knowledge of the

mysteries of sleep in waking and of the mysteries of death in life; and tells us that the doors of sleep and death may be passed and repassed in full consciousness. This Yoga, or the science of the soul, is as precise and exact in its procedure as the most rigid of our scientific methods; but whereas physical science deals with physical phenomena, psychic science deals with the soul of things. Masters of Yoga assert most definitely and unhesitatingly that the existence, nature, life, and history of the soul have been and can be as rigidly and exactly demonstrated and proved in its own dominion as the best known scientific fact, so-called, in the natural universe. The negation of those ignorant of the subject, and the howling of the thoughtless for objective physical proof of that which is in its very nature immaterial and subjective, can have no real weight with the student. Intellectual vulgarity and cheap wit can no more weaken the eternal fact of man's immortal spiritual nature than spitting at the sun affect the god of day.

And now, what is the meaning of Yoga? Many definitions have been given, and of course this same science has been called by other names, at various times, by various nations, in divers tongues. The subject is one replete with technicalities, for there is a very large literature treating of it distinctly and in a most technical manner, and, in a wider sense, all the Scriptures of the world are text-books of this science.

In the present paper, however, all technicalities will be avoided, and I therefore hazard the definition of Yoga as the science of the union of man with the source of his being, with his true Self. You will at once see that the claim of our science is one of direct knowledge. That does not mean to say that the student is at once to become omniscient, or that he will by a sudden leap obtain full knowledge of things in themselves. By no means. The way of pure knowledge is a long and thorny path of stern self-discipline and of ungrudging and unflagging effort. But the path leads up a

mountain, and the view so extends that each successive point of vantage gained is of the nature of direct knowledge as compared with the lower stages. We are at present like men who persistently keep their eyes fixed on the ground at their feet, who as yet have not looked at even the visible universe as it really is. There are manifold stages of soul-knowledge, immeasurable degrees of union with the Self, for ultimately this Self is the One SELF of all that was, is, and will be.

It would be presumptuous in me to imagine that anyone else will entirely agree with my definitions, and naturally all are free to find better and more appropriate words to clothe the ideas according to their ability. There is, however, a longing that comes upon all men in their repeated wanderings on earth, "a longing of the soul to go out to the infinite", as it has been phrased, and the freezing cold of negation cannot quench the fire of that divine desire, nor can the perfunctory performance of any lip-religion satisfy its ardor.

In endeavouring to give some idea of what the practical science of Yoga is, I am at a loss to convey my meaning because of the poverty of our ordinary language in fitting terms. We all readily talk of the soul, and mind, and consciousness, but few of us have any conception of the infinity of ideas that each of these terms connotes. In this paper, the soul must be understood to stand for the whole of man's nature apart from his physical body, the mind for the thinking principle, and consciousness for man's whole containment, his whole being. The mind is the thinker, the self-conscious principle in man, the means of his knowledge. It is this principle, therefore, which is both the scientist and his instrument in Yoga.

This mind is usually distinguished into two aspects for clearer comprehension. Perhaps these may be most easily understood as

the "I am" and the "I am I" in man, ideas which it is usual with Theosophical writers to distinguish as the individuality and personality. The personality is the sum of all those impressions, as they are called in the East, which make up our consciousness of being such-and-such a particular person, of being the actor and sufferer in all the affairs of life. Everything we do, or say, or think leaves an impression on our character, whether we are conscious of it or not; and an impression once induced into our plastic-nature tends to repeat itself mechanically and to form habits which, as we know, become second nature. If the impressions are bad, a vicious habit is formed. The sum of all these impressions is called the personality, or, to use another simile, the vibrations set up by our acts, words, and thoughts inhere in our plastic nature, in an ascending scale of subtlety and rapidity, according to their plane of action, up to that of the rarest substance we are at present capable of conceiving, and which perhaps may be spoken of as thought-stuff, for this lower aspect of the mind is substantial, though not material.

The higher aspect of the mind, on the contrary, the individuality, that which I have called the "I am", is of a divine and spiritual nature. It is not substantial, but a pure spiritual essence, divine, immortal, immemorial; it dies not, nor comes into being, but is throughout the ages.

Now the lower mind is ever fitful and changeable, going out to things of sense; it is a Mazeppa bound hand and foot on the horse of passion and desire. In the East, it is called the internal organ to distinguish it from the external organs, and we have first to learn to free it from its bonds before we can put our foot on the first rung of the ladder of true knowledge.

The ceaseless changes which take place in this lower mind are called the modifications of the internal organ; and these have to

be held in the firm grip of the awakened spiritual will and rendered motionless, if any success is to be attained in the science of Yoga.

Imagine to yourself a sheet of paper with writing upon it, crumpled up into a ball, and whirling tumultuously down a mill-race. Such is the lower mind in each one of us. And if we want to read the writing which tells of the mystery of life, we must first rescue the ball of paper from the mill-race of the passions, and then carefully smooth out the paper so as to erase the impressions which prevent our reading the writing, that so at last we may learn the whence and whither of our pilgrimage.

A simile often used in the Eastern books, with regard to the upper and lower mind, is that of the moon reflected in the waves of a lake. So long as the surface is disturbed, the moonlight will be seen only as a broken and unsteady reflection, and not until every ripple is gone will a true image of the divine man be reflected into our souls.

Again, the lower mind is as a metal mirror covered with dust and rust; and until this is removed no image will be seen; or, again, the mind must be as steady as the flame of a lamp in a place sheltered from all wind.

(To be continued)

The Path

WHAT IS ELECTRICITY — *J. H. Connelly*

ORIENTAL IDEAS ON THE SUBJECT.

The fact may seem rather queer that something exists which we know how to produce and how to utilize in such an infinity of effective ways that it is today one of the greatest factors in the world's progress, and yet we do not know what it is. But it is a fact, nevertheless. Not one of our scientists can tell us what electricity is. The latest and perhaps the best definition of it is: "Electricity, the name given to the unknown thing, matter, or force, or both, which is the cause of electric phenomena". Not much satisfying knowledge is offered in that pairing and compounding of alternatives. And the International Dictionary is scarcely more conclusive in pronouncing it "a power in nature, a manifestation of energy", with a long succedent statement of its qualities and conditions of manifestation which are properly evidences of its presence but by no means expositions of what it is. And Stormonth says it is "a highly subtile power. . . one of the forms of energy exhibited in lightning, etc." Really, we do not seem, for all our familiarity with its manifestations in late years, to have got at much more positive knowledge of its being than was possessed by an author who as long ago as 1799 defined it thus: "Electricity, a natural agent or power, generally called the electric fluid, which, by friction or other means, is excited and brought into action". Bain says: "The most recent theory of electricity is that it is a mode of ether. In order to establish this theory, it is necessary to transfer the question of the existence of ether from speculative philosophy to that of absolute reality". And he concludes that "electricity is a condition, an effect of matter, and it is not peculiar to any material. This condition in a state of equilibrium pervades all matter and all space, ready to produce

an effect when its equilibrium is disturbed."

The theory of its etheric origin, which Bain is disposed to reject as undemonstrable, and his conclusions lie closer together in the Oriental concept of the subject than he has yet, perhaps, recognized, and are by no means antagonistic. The philosophers of the East have taught, for thousands of years it is averred, that there are in nature six primary forces or *Saktis*, which may be looked upon as rates of vibration, having their origination in the super-sensuous ether, and manifesting, according to their respective attributes, in matter. Of the six, only three have been partly investigated by our western science — neither one in its totality, but only in certain of its special manifestations — and one of these is the *Kundalini-sakti*, thus defined by the eminent Hindu *pundit*, T. Subba Row:

"Literally, the power or force which moves in a serpentine or curved path. It is the universal life-principle which everywhere manifests itself in nature. This force includes in itself the two great forces of attraction and repulsion. *Electricity and magnetism are but manifestations of it.* This is the power or force which brings about that continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations which is the essence of life according to Herbert Spencer, and that continuous adjustment of external relations to internal relations which is the basis of transmigration of souls of *punarjanam* (re-birth) according to the doctrine of the ancient Hindu philosophers."

The two other *saktis* in part known to our scientists are *Para-sakti* — literally, the great or supreme force or power. It means and includes the powers of light and heat. *Gnana-sakti* — literally, the power of intellect or the power of real wisdom or knowledge.

It will be observed that the powers of light and heat are thus

attributed to one *sakti*, and electricity to another, which at first blush would seem to differ from the conclusions of our western scientists generally, who, observing the interconvertability of heat, light, energy, magnetism, electricity, and chemical effect, esteem them all modes of manifestation of one and the same energy. But a better understanding of their coordinate and conjoint manifestations under the control of the great synthesizing *sakti*, the seventh — about which the wise men of the East are chary of affording exoteric teaching — will perhaps demonstrate and explain harmony where difference now appears to exist. It is more than probable that the *saktis* blend their action, each partaking of all the others in infinitely various degrees when in manifestation, just as the "states of consciousness" overlap and mingle, in the same teachings.

Suggestions of importance toward demonstration of the reality of the ether, and perhaps eventually of their inter-etheric *akasa*, are afforded by Tesla's recent experiments. From these it appears that electric energy, properly applied and of sufficiently high potential, will render rarified air self-luminous. Whether the energy manifests itself as heat or light depends upon the velocity of the etheric vibrations induced, those of the latter being much the higher.

Modern science now generally recognizes what the Eastern sages have taught for hundreds of thousands of years, that the various colors and tones are objective evidences of measurable rates of vibration. A step or two further and our wise men will learn that all the forces of nature, the entire universe, not simply the material within our consciousness but the supersensuous planes beyond, are manifested rates of vibration — "differentiated aspects of the Universal Motion". From that "Universal Motion" as the seventh *sakti* — centred, according to the Kabalists, in the "central sun" — all originate and to it all must return. All the

minor *saktis*, springing from a common origin, have definite and ascertainable characteristics in common, or correspondences, and none manifests alone on our material plane, without admixture of some qualities or attributes of others. But it will be as hopeless for man to attempt comprehension of the mysteries of those awful forces and the laws in conformity to which they act upon the plane of matter, studying them from the wholly material standpoint, where only their lowest and weakest manifestations can be cognized, as it would be for a bug perched upon the periphery of a fly-wheel to understand, from his observations there, the laws and properties of steam originating in an engine the motion communicated to his wheel.

It will be found of curious and suggestive interest, in connection with this subject, to learn with what broad comprehensiveness, viewed in the light of our most modern science, the Hindu philosophers have taught for ages past the field of the power styled the *Gnana-sakti*. The pundit already cited (T. Subba Row) says:

"(i) The following are some of its manifestations when placed under the influence or control of material conditions. (a) The power of the mind in interpreting our sensations. (b) Its power in recalling past ideas (memory) and raising future expectation. (c) Its power as exhibited in what are called by modern psychologists the 'laws of association', which enables it to form persisting connections between various groups of sensations and possibilities of sensations, and thus generate the notion or idea of an external object. (d) Its power in connecting our ideas together by the mysterious link of memory, and thus generating the notion of self or individuality.

(ii) The following are some of its manifestations when

liberated from the bonds of matter: (a) Clairvoyance, (b)
Psychometry."

The Path

PROBATION: II — *Lily A. Long*

(Concluded.)

"You have allowed yourself to be deluded", the stranger said with grave directness. "You must free yourself once and forever from these entanglements if you hope to ever share in the work pursued by the Brothers of the Silence."

"The Brothers of the Silence!" Ernest exclaimed bitterly. "It is because I sought them that I am where I am now."

"No, it is because you sought them in the wrong way."

"Tell me, then, do they exist?"

"Yes. I am one of them."

"Then why did you not set me right?"

"Because each member must earn his own entrance."

"I may be misled again."

"Why? The test is a very simple one. The Brothers do not work for self-interest, but for the good of humanity. That is the beginning and the end of their mission. Yet each one has a task of his own to perform, and each must find it by searching his own heart. Use your clearest judgment, your highest ideals, and the best of your faculties, for the work deserves all. In a year I will seek you again."

The year went by. Ernest had cut himself free from his old associations and joined the army that was fighting on the frontier. He had fought bravely, for the words of his unknown guide remained with him, and the thought that in serving his country he was surely doing the work of the Brothers gave him courage.

He had a hope too that his probation might at last be done, for had he not won distinction as a soldier and more than once saved the field from disaster? All the land was ringing with his praise. He waited impatiently for the day when his friend had promised to return. It came.

"Have I won entrance yet?" Ernest demanded confidently. He could hardly credit the gravely spoken answer.

"No."

"How then? Is not the work I have done good work?"

"It is good work and deserves a reward. You will have it. But you have not won entrance to the Brotherhood. That does not come to those who seek it for themselves, even though they seek it by the path of service. There may be selfish ambition even in self-sacrifice, and the Brothers, remember always, are not concerned with the advancement of themselves, but with the good of the whole. Yet, — courage for another trial!"

The reward came, for the king was graciously pleased to recognize Ernest's heroism on the battlefield by making him governor over a small province. He entered upon his duties with high hopes. Here at last was a fitting opportunity! He would govern his people so well that poverty and ignorance and wrongdoing should be banished from his province, and the Brothers should know that in one corner of the country at least there was no need for their oversight. But he found that the task was harder than he had thought. There had been bad governors before him, and the abuses could not all be corrected at once. The people were ignorant and cunning, and thwarted his efforts for their own welfare. He was inexperienced, and measures which he designed for good sometimes proved so ill-advised that their effect was worse than the old. When the end of the year came and

he looked back at the great things he had planned and the small things he had accomplished, it seemed to him that his work had been all a failure. He stood with downcast eyes when the stranger who had grown his watchful friend found him again.

"What of the year past?" the Brother asked, and his voice was kinder than before.

"You know," said Ernest moodily. "At least you know what I have done. You cannot know what I meant to do."

"Why have you failed?"

Ernest paused.

"Because of my own ignorance, largely," he said at last. "I did not know how to deal with the conditions I had to meet. I see it now."

"Then do you see, too, why you have not yet gained entrance to the Brotherhood?" he asked gently. "In their work a mistake may be fatal. Well-intentioned effort is not enough. It must be wisely directed."

"Yes, I see," Ernest said patiently. "Well, I will study and wait."

His friend smiled as though well-content.

Ernest gave up the governorship of his province to plunge into study. With a mind disciplined and strengthened by the work of the last ardent years, he applied himself to assimilating the knowledge that is stored in the wise books of the world. He studied with humility, for his errors had revealed to him his own lack of wisdom, and he worked with ardor, for he felt that a greater undertaking awaited him when he should be fit. In the outside world the old throbbing life beat on, and ever and anon calls came to him to join in it as before. Some upbraided him with indifference in thus shutting himself apart, but he knew the scope

of the task before him and followed it without pause or faltering. Then one morning, when the first rays of the sun put out the light of his lamp, he lifted his eyes from his books and remembered that the year of study he had set for himself had gone by. What had he gained? New ideas of life in many ways; new ideals and firmer judgment and deeper reverence for the men who in the past had thought their way into the deep places of nature. Strange that so few should come to share it! Strange that the world should go on and men live and die as though this legacy of wisdom from the greatest of earth's sons had been forgotten of all!

"Knowledge stored away and unused is like grain sealed in a granary," said his friend, who, unseen, had come to stand beside him. "The millions on the plain outside may starve for lack of it, and the grain itself will mildew — if it be not unsealed."

"I understand," said Ernest with a smile. "That, then, shall be my further task."

He shut up his books, left his room and returned to the world, this time as a teacher. Here a disappointment awaited him at the outset, for the people, busy with their own interests and quite content with their own ideas, were not as eager to listen as he to teach. Some laughed and some doubted, and of all that heard few heeded, but the burden of speech was laid upon him and he dared not keep silence. Sometimes the children listened, and in their earnest eyes he read a reassurance that the coming years might see the fruit from the seed he planted. And sometimes a youth who reminded him of what he had been in earlier years came and listened and went away with a new purpose. And sometimes old eyes, ready to close wearily upon a world that had yielded many cares and little content, brightened with a gleam of comprehension as he spoke. "Ah, that then was the meaning of the riddle!" Yet when the year had gone by the results seemed

meager.

"I had hoped to bring to all men the truths I had found," he said to the friend who came as before," but they do not heed them."

"They will in time, and your efforts will bring the time nearer," was the serene answer. "One who works for humanity must never lose faith in the ultimate triumph of good. Yet he may not cease to work as though the salvation of all rested with him alone."

"Am I fitted yet to do the work of the Brothers?" Ernest asked after a pause.

The other gave him a kindly look.

"One task remains. I leave you to find it."

Six years had gone by since, an eager boy, he left his home in the mountains, and a yearning came into his man's heart to rest again in the high, pure solitudes where he had dreamed as a child. All places are alike to him who holds himself ready for service, so he turned toward the mountains. Steadfast and tranquil as of old, the white peaks lifted themselves above the purple mists as he had always seen them in memory. The dawn softened but could not melt them; the sunset illumined but could not stain them. Down the gorge as of old the mountain torrent tumbled in foamy wrath, and the little village beside it was no older than on the day he had turned his back upon it to seek the world. He went to the pass above where the bridge was to have been. The hewn timbers lay heaped on either bank as he had left them, only that a creeping vine with gay blossoms had twined about the beams which were gray with the weather and green with moss. His unfinished work reproached him, and with a blush for the impatient boy he had been he set himself to complete it. The villagers were busy as of old, therefore he worked alone. Through

fair weather and foul he kept to the task, planting the foundations deep and making each part strong and true. The summer went by while the work was yet unfinished. The winter fettered the wild stream and on the ice he crossed from shore to shore, still carrying the work forward. The spring came and it was done, and when the freshets came down from the ice-fields above, the bridge stood firm and unshaken above the whirlpool. In the absorption of his work he had forgotten what day it was till all at once he saw the stranger of that old spring morning, the guide and friend of all the years between, standing on the bank.

"You found the task."

"This?"

"It was yours. No other could do it."

They stood in silence a moment gazing at it, and then the Brother spoke again.

"Do you see now how the way has led through all the years? First steadfastness, for without that no effort can avail. Then clearness of vision, to prove all things and hold to the good. Then the conquering of passion, and the devotion of all faculties to the service of man and the training of self to the end that others may be enlightened. Lastly, to crown all, the simple duty that lay at your hand at the beginning."

"Is it done?" asked Ernest doubtingly. "Am I worthy to become one of you?"

The smile of the other was an illumination.

"You *are* one of us".

HOW SHE MUST LAUGH

Since the demise of H. P. Blavatsky's body, a little over a year ago, mediums in various parts of the world have reported her "spirit" as giving communications like what follows:

- In Paris in May, 1891, that she objected to the cremation of her body and had changed her views. Yes indeed, how her views must have changed! *Nota bene*: this was from a Catholic medium.

In America in September, 1891 that she had absolutely changed all her views and was now sincerely sorry she had promulgated Theosophy at all. Again later, in the United States, that she desired to have materializing and picture-daubing mediums represent her theories and her teachers to the world, and to carry on her work.

About October, 1891, that her old ideas regarding "spooks" had altered, and that now she wished it to be known as her teaching that the cast-off astral remnants of a human being are in fact spirits, and may be taught in the after life! And further, she is at present — presumably in Kamaloka — desirous of seeing all her books burnt so that her old teachings, now pernicious in her sight, may be forgotten as speedily as possible.

Those who communicate these extraordinary reports from H. P. B. are not accused by us of malice or any improper motive. The first "message" came privately from one who had known her in life but whose views were always quite in line with the message. The others represent the different private opinions of the medium or clairvoyant reporting them. Such is nearly always the case with these "spirit messages". They do, indeed, come from psychic planes, and are not strictly the product of the medium's

normal brain. But they are the result of obscure thoughts of the medium which color the astral atmosphere, and thus do no more than copy the living. In one case, and that was the hugest joke of all, the medium made a claim to at once step into H. P. B's shoes and be acknowledged the leader of the Society!

How she must laugh! Unless mere death may change a sage into an idiot, she is enjoying these jokes, for she had a keen sense of humor, and as it is perfectly certain that Theosophists are not at all disturbed by these "communications", her enjoyment of the fun is not embittered by the idea that staunch old-time Theosophists are being troubled. But what a fantastical world it is with its Materialists, Spiritualists, Christians, Jews, and other barbarians, as well as the obscure Theosophists!

The Path

YOGA: THE SCIENCE OF THE SOUL: II — *G. R. S. Mead*

(Continued from June.)

You must not, however, suppose that the science of Yoga has always retained its purity; like everything else it has become corrupt. Methods of a mechanical and physical nature have grown up around it, and as the mind of man is more prone to error and materialism than to truth and spirituality, these bastard methods are more eagerly studied than the more difficult processes of the true science. Especially is this the case in our own times, when a growing number of enquirers are once more beginning to turn their attention to the subject.

According to the Esoteric Philosophy, the lower part of man's nature, which he shares in common with the animal, has four aspects, viz.: (1) A physical body; (2) a subtile body, invisible to our physical senses; (3) a body, vehicle, or center, or system of centers, of sensation and desire; and (4) the life-principle.

The physical body need not here be further referred to, for although our modern science knows comparatively little of the functions of a number of the most important organs, yet its minute and exact classification of the physical structure of man's 'coat of skin' — as it is allegorically called in the *Bible* and elsewhere — is beyond all praise. The constitution of the subtile or astral body and of the passional and sensational system, however, is of a nature and extent immeasurably transcending that of the physical frame.

The Hindu books on Yoga, known as the *Yoga-Shastras*, contain elaborate treatises on the anatomy and physiology of these "principles". We may get some hazy notion of their nature by a

study of the nervous system and functions of the physical body, but we must remember that in reality they are a complete system of force-centers and force-tracts, so to speak, and that they bear the same relation to the physical body as the electrical current does to its physical conductors. The latest so-called discoveries of electrical science assert that an electrical current can be transmitted from one point of space to another without the conduction of wires, and the Yoga has from time immemorial asserted that man can act independently of his physical body.

We all of us know the tremendous power of electricity, and many of us know the astounding forces which can be brought into play by the agency of mesmerism. Yoga teaches us that every power in the universe has its corresponding power in man, and that not only the life-principle or vital electricity, and the mesmeric and magnetic forces, correspond to identical forces in the universe, but that man can so increase these powers in himself that he can raise them to the same rate of motion as that of the forces of nature. Moreover, as he brings these forces into play, his consciousness gradually and proportionally transcends that of normal mankind and progressively opens up new vistas of life and existence previously undreamed of.

All this may seem very wonderful and incredible to many of us, but the *real* science of Yoga is so transcendent that I have only entered into these explanations in order to tell you that these powers and practices, wonderful and extraordinary though they may be, are no part of true Yoga, and are deprecated as material, inferior, and most dangerous by spiritually-minded teachers of the true Divine Science.

Even when this lower Yoga is recommended by those who have practical knowledge of such things, the learner is told that in no case should any experiment be made except under the direct

superintendence of an experienced teacher. In the East this advice is understood and acted on by all but the most foolhardy and ignorant, for the Orientals know the terrible results that come from ignorantly meddling with forces they cannot control.

In the West, however, the spirit of independent research, which is so admirable in many respects, has produced among the unreflecting a false bravado and a fretful and childish impatience that lead to recklessness rather than sober enquiry, especially in matters of an occult nature.

I know that the vast majority of people in the West will look on the position I am laying down as a silly crying of "wolf" where there is no wolf, or as an impudent series of falsehoods resting on nothing but assertions; and that among this majority there are men and women of intelligence and reputation that I can never hope to emulate. But the most ignorant bearer of Stanley's expedition knows more of the center of the Dark Continent than the wisest who have never read the account of that expedition, or even than the average number of intelligent readers.

When the majority have studied the theory of Yoga, their opinion will be entitled to respect; when they have essayed its practice, their views will claim the right of consideration, but not one instant before.

Let me try to explain to you why the dangers I have spoken of are real and terrible dangers. Morality is not a sentiment; ethics are not mere poetical rhapsodies. Ethical axioms are definite scientific formulae which describe certain facts and laws in nature. Vicious desires, vicious thoughts, vicious tendencies disease and atrophy the subtle body and organs of man by the alchemy of nature; they turn his vital fluids, so to speak, and his inner forces into poisonous and corrosive solvents, although the reaction in the physical body may not be detected by our

scientists who persistently shut their eyes to the major part of man's nature.

A corroded and cracked boiler may be patched up to hold cold water, but once turn the water into steam and the result is an explosion that not only destroys the vessel itself but also brings destruction both to things of its own nature and also to higher organisms. I have told you that the lower form of Yoga consists in increasing the rapidity of certain vital currents which attract to themselves corresponding currents of a like rapidity in nature. Woe to the man or woman who tries to confine such forces in a damaged vessel! Disease, madness, death will quickly follow such foolhardy experiments! I have just told you that we may be diseased within and yet our physical body may be apparently in perfect physical health; it is equally true that we may be physically diseased and yet be pure and healthy within.

Please remember that I am writing about a consciously used science, a definite and determined method of experiment which, even in its lower aspects, is a matter of great effort and difficulty. I am not talking of unconscious and irresponsible mediumship which pertains to a different method, or, rather, want of method, although some of the lower phenomena produced or experienced by either process are identical. And this is the reason why the lower form of Yoga is so largely sought after; the results, though difficult to obtain compared with mediumship, are still immeasurably more easy of acquirement than the results of pure Spiritual Yoga.

Physical phenomena and astral visions, both of a very remarkable nature, can be obtained, especially when a teacher gives the practical links which are invariably omitted in written or printed books. But, unless the lower nature has been purified, no real and permanent good or attainment can ever be achieved.

On the other hand, when the lower nature is purified the lower forms of Yoga will not even be attempted, for then the spiritual nature of man seeks union with its transcendent and divine Self, and has no desire for material attainments, even though they may utterly surpass our wildest imaginations, and have to do with matter by innumerable degrees more subtle and extended than the matter we are acquainted with through our five senses.

Further, it is impossible for us to understand the true science of Yoga unless we admit the truth of reincarnation as one of the fundamental facts in nature. This doctrine teaches that what I have referred to as the individuality, the "I am", persists throughout the whole cycle of rebirths, whereas the personality, the "I am I", the John Smith or Mary Jones of one short life, is immortal only in such thoughts and aspirations as are of the nature of the divine individuality. Now this lower mind, together with the animal part of man's nature, is the only factor at work in the lower Yoga I have been describing. Therefore, whatever attainment may be reached by such practices — astral clairvoyance or clairaudience, the projection of the double as it is called, and a thousand and one other psychic powers that, as yet, the profane world has not even heard of — all such acquirements pertain to the personality. They are no permanent property of the reincarnating entity, and can never be so as long as that divine Ego is debarred from sharing in them by the selfish ambitions and desires of the personal man. On the other hand, pure spiritual Yoga seeks to quell the stormy waves of the lower mind; to purify the dull red, smoky flames of passion; to make the lower mind the submissive and purified vehicle of the higher spiritual mind and Self. The results thus achieved by this moral training and stern mental exercise remain permanently with the individuality, and are an assured possession in succeeding rebirths which nothing but a lapse into materiality and a willing

servitude to the passions can take away.

The above is the reason why the mere possession of physical or astral clairvoyance and the rest is sternly refused the title of "spiritual" by students of Theosophy. Clairvoyance is not a "spiritual gift" in itself; although it is true that there is a spiritual clairvoyance which sees and yet sees not, and which renders its possessor a power in the world for good beyond all cavil. But they who have this divine vision are, by the very fact, unable to assert its possession, for any such claim would mean its instant loss, unless, indeed, the claim were an impersonal one.

(To be concluded.)

The Path

DELUSIONS OF CLAIRVOYANCE — *M. More*

Some years ago it was proposed that psychometry should be used in detecting crime and for the exposing of motive in all transactions between man and man. This, the alleged discoverer said, would alter the state of society by compelling people to be honest and by reducing crime. Now for those who do not know, it may be well to say that when you psychometrize you take any object that has been in the immediate vicinity of any person or place of any action, or the writing of another, and by holding it to your forehead or in the hand a picture of the event, the writer, the surroundings, and the history of the object, comes before your mental eye with more or less accuracy. Time and distance are said to make no difference, for the wrapping from a mummy has been psychometrized by one who knew nothing about it, and the mummy with its supposed history accurately described. Letters also have been similarly treated without reading them, and not only their contents given but also the unexpressed thoughts and the surroundings of the writers. Clairvoyants have also on innumerable occasions given correct descriptions of events and persons they could never have seen or known. But other innumerable times they have failed.

Without doubt if the city government, or any body of people owning property that can be stolen, had in their employment a man or women who could declare beyond possibility of ever failing where any stolen article was, and who stole it, and could in advance indicate a purpose on the part of another to steal, to trick, to lie, or otherwise do evil, one of two things would happen. Either criminals or intending offenders would abide elsewhere, or some means of getting rid of the clear-seer would be put into effect. Looking at the alluring possibilities of clairvoyance so far

as it is understood, many persons have sighed for its power for several different reasons. Some would use it for the purposes described, but many another has thought of it merely as a new means for furthering personal ends.

Its delusions are so manifold that, although mystical and psychical subjects have obtained in the public mind a new standing, clairvoyance will not be other than a curiosity for some time, and when its phenomena and laws are well understood no reliance greater than now will be placed upon it. And even when individual clairvoyants of wonderful power are known, they will not be accessible for such uses, because, having reached their power by special training, the laws of their school will prohibit the exercise of the faculty at the bidding of selfish interest, whether on the one side or the other.

If it were not always a matter of doubt and difficulty, natural clear-seers would have long ago demonstrated the unerring range of their vision by discovering criminals still uncaught, by pointing out where stolen property could be recovered, by putting a linger on a moral plague-spot which is known to exist but cannot be located. Yet this they have not done, and careful Theosophists are confirmed in the old teaching that the field of clairvoyance is full of delusions. Coming evil could in the same way be averted, since present error is the prelude and cause of future painful results.

The prime cause for delusion is that the thought of any thing makes around the thinker an image of the thing thought about. And all images in this thought-field are alike, since we remember an object by our thought-image of it, and not by carrying the object in our heads. Hence the picture in our aura of what we have seen in the hands of another is of the same sort — for untrained seers — as our ideas on the subject of events in which we have not participated. So a clairvoyant may, and in fact does,

mistake these thought-pictures one for the other, thus reducing the chances of certainty. If an anxious mother imagines her child in danger and with vivid thought pictures the details of a railway accident, the picture the seer may see will be of something that never happened and is only the product of emotion or imagination.

Mistakes in identity come next. These are more easily made in the astral plane, which is the means for clairvoyance, than even upon the visible one, and will arise from numerous causes. So numerous and complex is this that to fully explain it would not only be hopeless but tedious. For instance, the person, say at a distance, to whom the clairvoyant eye is directed may look entirely different from reality, whether as to clothing or physiognomy. He may, in the depths of winter, appear clad in spring clothing, and your clairvoyant report that, adding probably that it symbolises something next spring. But, in fact, the spring clothing was due to his thoughts about a well-worn comfortable suit of this sort throwing a glamour of the clothing before the vision of the seer. Some cases exactly like this I have known and verified. Or the lover, dwelling on the form and features of his beloved, or the criminal upon the one he has wronged, will work a protean change and destroy identification.

Another source of error will be found in the unwitting transfer to the clairvoyant of your own thoughts, much altered either for better or worse. Or even the thoughts of some one else whom you have just met or heard from. For if you consult the seer on some line of thought, having just read the ideas on the same subject of another who thinks very strongly and very clearly, and whose character is overmastering, the clairvoyant will ten to one feel the influence of the other and give you his ideas.

Reversion of image is the last I will refer to. It has been taught

always in the unpopular school of Theosophy that the astral light reverses the images, just as science knows the image on the retina is not upright. Not only have the Cabalists said this, but also the Eastern schools, and those who now have studied these doctrines along Theosophical lines have discovered it to be a fact. So the untrained clairvoyant may see a number or amount backwards, or an object upside down in whole or in part. The reliance we can place on the observations of untrained people in ordinary life the scientific schools and courts of law have long ago discovered; but seekers after the marvellous carelessly accept the observations of those who must be equally untrained in the field of clairvoyance. Of course there are many genuine cases of good clear-seeing, but the mass are not to be relied on. The cultivation of psychic senses is more difficult than any physical gymnastics, and the number of really trained clairvoyants in the Western world may be described by a nought written to the left.

The Path

HINDU DIETIES AND THEIR WORSHIP — *K. P. Mukherji*

FROM A HINDU VIEW-POINT

The letters of the Sanskrit alphabet are named Aksharas; the word *Akshara* means undecaying. The letters are said to be undecaying because they are the symbols of the Devas, who are undecaying in their Essence. Thus we find in the *Bhagavad-Gita* the letter which stands first in the alphabet, viz. A, symbolizes Sree Krishna, or the Logos, or Vishnu. Now Vishnu is derived from the root *Vis*, to enter or energize; Vishnu therefore means the spiritual power which energizes, or the spiritual aspect of Life. Vishnu is the Active Manifested Will or *Iccha Sakti* — "Iccha Kriya and Gnanam are Gour (yellow), Brahini (red), and Vaishnavi (indigo)", says a Sanskrit Sloka. It seems the Logos first divided itself in manifestation into three, corresponding to the three planes of waking, dreaming, and sushupti states of consciousness. They are the evolving or creating energy (colored red), the sustaining or preserving energy (colored indigo), and the involuting energy (colored yellow). The body of Vishnu is also said to be golden or shining like gold. He is always "clothed in yellow", and has four hands which symbolize the four Vargas, viz.: Dharma (the Law), Artha (physical necessity), Kama (desire), and Moksha (final emancipation). In their manifested aspect every Deva, or god, of whatever grade is considered as finite, but in their Atmic Essence they are eternal and one!

The worship of these deities is enjoined in our *Shastras*, but one must fit himself to be a true *Upasaka* or worshipper. The first step is Karma, the second Upasana, the third Gnanam. Karma here means self-purification and serving humanity; self-sacrifice must be the guiding principle of this step. The second step is Upasana

or Bhakti, the guiding principle of which is Love. All Upasakas, worthy to be so called, must be of this stage of progress. The third is Gnanam, or true Knowledge; it is at this stage that the individual begins to lose his own identity and is finally merged in Atma. The connection established at the beginning of the second stage becomes stronger and broader till the barrier of *Maya*, or illusion, dividing the two, disappears and the two become one. Then knowing me according to (my) tattwa, (he) *enters* at last", says the *Gita*.

So long, then, as one cannot realize the essential unity of the subject and the object, one must proceed by the old old path of the Rishis, the path of Misery, (*Durga*), the path of difficulty, pain, and trouble, the path of Karma and Upasana. He must be sustained by Love or he is bound to fail; for no man can proceed in that most difficult of all things without love to cheer him up and sustain his drooping spirits.

This Upasana or worship, or rather the occult practical part which leads direct to soul development, has been kept a profound secret; some of our *Shastras* profess to reveal it, but they are mere blinds, or at best but fragmentary hints which appear absurd and indecent on their very face. The theoretical part is, however, systematically and most beautifully treated in many books, and is called *Bhakti-Yoga*, or the Yoga of Love.

Nothing can, however, as I have said, be done without self-purification, self-sacrifice, and serving humanity. *Bhakti*, tainted with selfishness and animal propensities, cannot develop itself, cannot lead one to spiritual advancement, as there can be no true brotherhood of selfish or immoral men. With such defects one cannot grasp the very idea of it.

The practical part of Upasana enjoins *Dhyanam* or concentration of mind on the Deva to be worshipped; the whole Puja (1)

ceremony has a deep occult signification, dealing as it does with colors and rhythmic sounds and burning of incenses. Our forefathers were far more cognizant of the unseen psychic influences acting in man than their modern critics (2), and arranged matters so as to counteract them. Even the placing of a particular flower on the top of the worshipper's head is not without meaning, *Brahmarandhra* (3) (the hole-like path of Brahma the Spirit) being the locality beneath which the spiritual senses act.

The present Hindu worshippers, however, having lost their *Guru-Parampara* (4) no longer understand what they are about and do everything mechanically, which produces no effect. The whole ceremony of worship is so complicated and demands such concentration of mind, among other things, that it would be better for ordinary persons to leave it alone — but what would then become of the mercenary priests and Gurus?

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Puja* means worship, the act of worship. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))
2. Or their descendants also. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))
3. A subtile psychic current supposed to have its exit at the top of the head. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))
4. *Guru-Paraampara*, the true chain or succession of Gurus. The "succession" from St. Peter in the Christian church is the same idea. — [Ed.] ([return to text](#))

PLAIN THEOSOPHICAL TRACES — *William Brehon*

In the *Key to Theosophy* the author says that at the last quarter of each century there is always a distinct movement partaking of the nature of the present Theosophical one, and this opinion is held by many Theosophists. Can these efforts be traced? Did any people call themselves by the name "Theosophist" one hundred years ago? Is it necessary that all such movements should have been called in the past "Theosophical"? And if the claim that such movements are started by the Adepts be true, is the present Society the only body with which those beings work? Taking up the last question first, we may turn to H. P. B. for authority. She often said that while the T. S. movement of today was distinctly under the care of the Adepts, it was not the only one through which effect was sought to be made on the race-thought and ethics, but that in many different ways efforts were constantly put forward. But still, she insisted, the T. S. wears the badge, so to say, of the Eastern and Ancient Schools, and therefore has on it the distinctive mark — or what the Sanskrit calls *lakshana* — of the old and united Lodge of Adepts. Inquiring further of reason and tradition, we find that it would be against both to suppose that one single organization should be the sole channel for the efforts of the Brotherhood. For if that Brotherhood has the knowledge and power and objects attributed to it, then it must use every agency which is in touch with humanity. Nor is it necessary to assume that the distinct efforts made in each century, as contradistinguished from the general current of influence in all directions, should be called Theosophical. The Rosicrucians are often supposed not to have existed at all as a body, but deep students have come to the conclusion that they had an organization. They were Christian in their phraseology

and very deep mystics; and while they spoke of Holy Ghost, Sophia, and the like, they taught Theosophy. They were obliged by the temper of the time to suit themselves to the exigencies of the moment, for it would have been extreme folly to destroy the hope of making any effect by rushing out in opposition then. It is different now, when the air and the thought are free and men are not burned by a corrupt church for their opinions. In one sense the T. S. is the child of the Rosicrucian Society of the past. H.P. B. often said this, and inquiry into their ideas confirms the declaration. The Rosicrucians were Christian in the beginning and descendants afterwards of Christians. Even today it is hinted that in one of the great cities of this new Republic there is a great charity begun and carried on with money which has been given by descendants of the Rosicrucians under inward impulse directed by certain of the Adepts who were members of that body. For blood does count for something in this, that until an Adept has passed up into the seventh degree he is often moved in accordance with old streams of heredity. Or to put it another way, it is often easier for an Adept to influence one who is in his direct physical line than one who by consanguinity as well as psychic heredity is out of the family.

Looking into Germany of 200 years ago, we at once see Jacob Boehme. He was an ignorant shoemaker, but illuminated from within, and was the friend and teacher of many great and learned men. His writings stirred up the Church; they have influence today. His life has many indications in it of help from the Masters of Wisdom. A wide-spread effect from his writings can be traced through Germany and over to France even after his death. He called himself a Christian, but he was also named "Theosopher", which is precisely Theosophist, for it was only after his day that people began to use "ist" instead of "er". Long after his death the influence lasted. In the sixties many hundreds of his books were

deliberately sent all over the world. They were given free to libraries all over the United States, and prepared the way for the work of the Theosophical Society in an appreciable measure, though not wholly.

One hundred years ago there was such a movement in France, one of the agents of which was Louis Claude, Count St. Martin, whose correspondence was called "Theosophical correspondence". He refers to Boehme, and also to unseen but powerful help which saved him from dangers during the Revolution. His books, *L' Homme de De'sir* and others, were widely read, and there are hints of a Society which, however, was compelled to keep itself secret. At the same date almost may be noted the great American Revolution influenced by Thomas Paine, who, though reviled now by ignorant theologians, was publicly thanked by Washington and the first Congress. This republic is a Theosophical effort, for it gives freedom, and fortunately does not declare for any particular religion in the clauses of its Constitution. Hints have been thrown out that the Adepts had some hand in the revolt of the Colonies in 1775. In replying to Mr. Sinnett some years ago, it was written by his Teacher that the Brotherhood dealt with all important human movements, but no one could arraign the body at the bar and demand proofs.

Bro. Buck wrote in 1889: "I have a volume entitled *Theosophical Transactions of the Philadelphian Society*, London, 1697, and another dated 1855, entitled *Introduction to Theosophy or the Science of the Mystery of Christ*, and in 1856 *Theosophical Miscellanies* was issued."

About 1500 years ago Ammonius Saccas made a similar effort which was attended with good results. He had almost the same platform as the T. S., and taught that the aim of Jesus was to show

people the truth in all religions and to restore the ancient philosophy to its rightful seat. It is not at all against the theory we are dealing with that the various efforts were not dubbed with the same name. Those who work for the good of humanity, whether they be Adepts or not, do not care for a mere name; it is the substantive effort they seek, and not a vindication in the eyes of men of being first or original or anything else.

But we have only considered the Western World. All these centuries since A. D. 1, and long before that, Theosophical efforts were put forth in Asia, for we must not forget that our theories, as well as those of Ammonius Saccas, are Eastern in their origin. However much nations may at first ignore the heathen and barbarian, they at last came to discover that it is frequently to the heathen the Christian owes his religion and philosophy. So while Europe was enjoying the delights of rude and savage life, the Easterns were elaborating, refining, and perfecting the philosophy to which we owe so much. We who believe in the Adepts as Brothers of Humanity must suppose that ignorance did not prevail in the Brotherhood as to the effect sure to be one day produced in Europe whenever her attention could be diverted from money-making and won to the great Eastern stores of philosophy. This effect came about through England, Germany, and France. Frenchmen first drew attention to the *Upanishads*, Germans went in for Sanskrit, and England conquered India, so that her metaphysical mines could be examined in peace. We have seen the result of all this more and more every year. There is less ignorant, narrow prejudice against the "heathen", the masses are beginning to know that the poor Hindu is not to be despised in the field of thought, and a broader, better feeling has gradually developed. This is much better than the glorification of any Brotherhood, and the Lodge is always aiming at such results, for selfish pride, arrogance, and the love of personal dominion

have no place therein. Nor should they in our present
Theosophical Society.

The Path

YOGA: THE SCIENCE OF THE SOUL: III — *G. R. S. Mead*

(Concluded)

Now the object of all religion seems to me to be the union of man with Deity, by whatever means and in whatever sense we understand these terms. The most important part of religion, and the part most easily comprehended by all men, is its ethical teaching. Why this should be so we have hitherto been mostly in ignorance; in fact scepticism has run to such lengths in these latter days that some men of great ability and intelligence deny that there is any scientific basis of ethics, and most assert the impossibility of our ever knowing why we should carry out any particular ethical precept. These teachings are for the most part merely dogmatic commands, or the reasons given are not of an explanatory nature, but rather of the nature of promises or threats. Do this, for otherwise you will not obtain an inheritance in the kingdom of light, and so on.

Now the higher science of the soul is rich in manifold compelling reasons for living a purer and more unselfish life. Asserting, as it does, the possibility of rolling up the dark curtain of sleep, and rending in twain the veil of death while still we live, in the very statement of the method whereby these things are to be accomplished, and of the instruments which man has to use to effect this purpose, it shows that morality is the indispensable preliminary training. Man has to look his own nature squarely in the face before he can look in the face of Nature. If he would tread the solitary path of Yoga whereby he steps out from the ranks of his fellow-beings and becomes a self-appointed pioneer of humanity, he must equip himself with fit instruments and, as the Scripture says truly, "gird himself with the breastplate of

righteousness". Without these requisites it is useless to volunteer for this pioneer work.

The track to be followed leads through strange lands, peopled with strange inhabitants, an inner path that, at the beginning, passes mostly through the country of our own creations that we have at each moment been busily bringing into existence ever since we have had bodies and minds. If we attempt to enter this country unarmed, that is to say, before we have prepared ourselves by a most careful scrutiny into the very recesses of our moral nature, and by a most rigid discipline that never relaxes its vigilance for a moment, then we are like a general in a fort at the head of a mutinous army in league with the enemy outside, and we shall find that in very truth our foes are "they of our own household" and that like attracts like by an unavoidable law of nature.

There is much talk among certain religionists about "conversion", and there is a great truth hidden under the strange externals that so often clothe the idea. Perhaps some of you do not know that the Greek word for repentance, found in the *New Testament* and in the writings of the many mystical schools of the early years of Christianity, means, literally, a change of mind. The theory of this change and the history of its mystical degrees are elaborately treated of by some of these schools, and that which takes place unconsciously in a lower stage of the ordinary conversion, takes place consciously in a higher stage in Yoga. This is the real new birth spoken of by Christian mystics, and this is why Brahmins (which really means those who are at one with Brahma, the Deity) are called the twice-born. You will understand by what I have said about the importance of the mind in Yoga what this change of mind or repentance means. Now this repentance is of a very mystical nature and one difficult to comprehend. Suppose we look upon the whole series of lives of an individual as a

necklace of pearls. The one that hangs lowest in front will represent this turning-point in the whole cycle of births, when the great change of mind occurs which shows that the soul is beginning to shake off the attractions of matter. In each succeeding birth this change will repeat itself on a smaller scale, and those may rejoice to whom it comes early in life. Only let us remember that there is no respect of persons, no aristocracy, no privileges, no monopoly. The path of self-knowledge, self-conquest, and self-devotion is open to everyone of us at every moment of time. It is idle to say: "What you tell me is very fine, but it is not for me!" There is no time but the eternal present. It is idle to put off to the future when none of us know what our past has been. How are we to be sure that we may not have gone some portion of the way before, and that the incidents we have lived through in our present birth are only the representation on a small scale of the lives we have lived before; that once we have reached the turning-point we shall again repeat all those strivings upwards which have characterized those of our past lives which have been on the ascending path of our soul pilgrimage?

No man can say what power for good may not lie latent in those who are commonly supposed to be most distinctly vicious, once the force of their character is turned in the right direction.

There is nothing historical in religion nor in Yoga. "Choose ye this day what gods ye will serve" is applicable to every moment of our lives. There is no time but the present, and only the ignorant pin their faith to historical events.

Of course this is no new thing to hear. It is very old, very ancient, but what I wish to insist upon is that it is practical and scientific in the best sense of the word; not, however, that I by any means believe that a thing must needs be scientific in the ordinary sense to be true, but because Yoga can claim everything that is best in

the scientific method and at the same time immeasurably transcend it. It is necessary to state and restate this, for people are beginning to go in fear and trembling at the term "scientific".

And now if any one asks whether I recommend him to study Yoga, the answer is: If a person honestly tries to live a moral, clean, and unselfish life, he is unconsciously training himself for the practice of this science, and he will thus gradually develop a consciousness of his spiritual nature which will grow into direct cognition, if not in this birth, at any rate in a succeeding incarnation. But I would also go beyond this, for I believe that neither goodness alone nor knowledge alone makes the perfect man, but that the two must join hands to bring him to perfection. I would therefore add: By all means study the theory of Yoga, and as for the practice of it, subject yourself continually to the most searching analysis in order to discern the secret of your motives of action; watch your thoughts, words, and acts; try to discover why you do this or that thing and not another; be ever on your guard. I do not mean to say, use your head only. By no means: use your heart also to its full capacity. Learn to sympathize with all, to feel for everyone; but to yourself be as hard as steel, never condone a fault, never seek an excuse. We need none of us retire from the world to do this; we need not shun association with others; we need not even make a "Sunday in the day", as we make a Sunday in the week, in which to turn our thoughts to higher things and for the rest of the time be off our guard. But at the same time it is a most salutary daily practice to try and definitely concentrate the mind on some thought, or on some imaginary object in order to learn how to steady it, and to cultivate at the same time a continual aspiration towards and contemplation of the highest ideal we can in any way conceive. Perhaps some of you may think this the advice of a mere mystical platitudinarian, and that you could hear something very much resembling it from

the nearest pulpit. Maybe; but my answer is still, Try! Try to find out why you do any particular action, or think some thought; try to fix your mind even for sixty seconds; and try to meditate on some high ideal when you are quiet and alone, and free from all hatred and malice; believe me, you will not repent the endeavor.

Perhaps you have noticed that I have said nothing of the farther practices of the higher Yoga. My reason for the omission is that the subject is too lofty and too sacred for any student like myself to attempt. Its practices are so marvellous and its attainments so stupendous that they absolutely transcend all words and all descriptions; and this is why they are invariably treated of in symbolical and allegorical language. But I need hardly tell students of Theosophy that the Yoga is the most important key to the interpretation of the world-scriptures, a key that even our teacher H. P. Blavatsky refrained from giving. But none of us need feel surprise or resentment at this omission if we reflect that it has been the immemorial custom to withhold the key until the pupil is ready to receive it. It is not withheld for any caprice, for it cannot be kept back when the pupil is ready, and they who hold the key are such as give their life-blood to guard mankind from even greater misery and sorrow than they are at present plunged into — though, indeed, mankind knows not of their ceaseless sacrifice.

It is easy to see that the subject I have dealt with is one of enormous difficulty; I could have presented you with a long treatise, full of technical terms gleaned from difficult works in a vast library of literature, but my purpose has rather been to try and show that in itself the science of the soul is not beyond the reach of any, and that it is the most practical and important branch of knowledge that man is heir to.

In conclusion, it is well to remember there is one indispensable

condition of success in this science, without which our efforts will be as Dead Sea fruit. It must be undertaken solely for the service of others; if it is attempted for ourselves, it will prove nought but an illusion, for it will pertain to the "I am I", to the personal human animal, whose characteristic is selfishness, whereas the nature of true spiritual Yoga is that of devotion to all beings, of love to all that lives and breathes, and the duty of the disciple becomes like that of the stars of heaven who "take light from none, but give to all".

Companions, may we all tread the path of peace!

The Path

THOUGHTS ON KARMA — *Eusebio Urban*

EVERY day in life we see people overtaken by circumstances either good or bad and coming in blocks all at once or scattered over long periods of time. Some are for a whole life in a miserable condition, and others for many years the very reverse; while still others are miserable or happy by snatches. I speak, of course, of the circumstances of life irrespective of the effect on the mind of the person, for it may often be that a man is not unhappy under adverse circumstances, and some are able to extract good from the very strait lines they are put within. Now all this is the Karma of those who are the experiencers, and therefore we ask ourselves if Karma may fall in a lump or may be strung out over a long space of years. And the question is also asked if the circumstances of this life are the sum total result of the life which has immediately preceded it.

There is a little story told to a German mystic in this century by an old man, another mystic, when asked the meaning of the verse in the Bible which says that the sins of the father will be visited on the children to the third and fourth generation. He said: "There was once an Eastern king who had one son, and this son committed a deed the penalty of which was that he should be killed by a great stone thrown upon him. But as it was seen that this would not repair the wrong nor give to the offender the chance to become a better man, the counsellors of the king advised that the stone should be broken into small pieces, and those be thrown at the son, and at his children and grandchildren as they were able to bear it. It was so done, and all were in some sense sufferers yet none were destroyed". It was argued, of course, in this case that the children and grandchildren could not have been born in the family of the prince if they had not had

some hand in the past, in other lives, in the formation of his character, and for that reason they should share to some extent in his punishment. In no other way than this can the Christian verses be understood if we are to attribute justice to the God of the Christians.

Each Ego is attracted to the body in which he will meet his just deserts, but also for another reason. That is, that not only is the body to give opportunity for his just reward or punishment, but also for that he in the past was connected with the family in which the body was born, and the stream of heredity to which it belongs is his too. It is therefore a question not alone of desert and similarity, but one of responsibility. Justice orders that the Ego shall suffer or enjoy irrespective of what family he comes to; similarity decrees that he shall come to the family in which there is some characteristic similar to one or many of his and thus having a drawing power; but responsibility, which is compounded of justice, directs that the Ego shall come to the race or the nation or the family to which its responsibility lies for the part taken by it in other lives in forming of the general character, or affecting that physical stream of heredity that has so much influence on those who are involved in it. Therefore it is just that even the grandchildren shall suffer if they in the past have had a hand in moulding the family or even in bringing about a social order that is detrimental to those who fall into it through incarnation. I use the word responsibility to indicate something composed of similarity and justice. It may be described by other words probably quite as well, and in the present state of the English language very likely will be. An Ego may have no direct responsibility for a family, national, or race condition, and yet be drawn into incarnation there. In such an event it is similarity of character which causes the place of rebirth, for the being coming to the abode of mortals is drawn like electricity along the path of

least resistance and of greatest conductivity. But where the reincarnating Ego is directly responsible for family or race conditions, it will decide itself, upon exact principles of justice and in order to meet its obligations, to be reborn where it shall receive, as grandchild if you will, physically or otherwise the results of its former acts. This decision is made at the emergence from Devachan. It is thus entirely just, no matter whether the new physical brain is able or not to pick up the lost threads of memory.

So today, in our civilization, we are all under the penalty of our forefathers' sins, living in bodies which medical science has shown are sown with diseases of brain and flesh and blood coming in the turbid stream of heredity through the centuries. These disturbances were brought about by ourselves in other centuries, in ignorance, perhaps, of consequences so far-reaching, but that ignorance lessens only the higher moral responsibility and tends to confine the results to physical suffering. This can very well lead, as it often does, to efforts on the part of many reincarnating Egos in the direction of general reform.

It was through a belief in this that the ancients attempted to form and keep up in India a pure family stream such as the highest caste of Brahmin. For they knew that if such a clean family line could be kept existing for many centuries, it would develop the power of repelling Egos on the way to rebirth if they were not in character up to the standard of that stream of life. Thus only teachers by nature, of high moral and spiritual elevation, would come upon the scene to act as regenerators and saviors for all other classes. But under the iron rule of cyclic law this degenerated in time, leaving now only an imitation of the real thing.

A variation of the Eastern story told above is that the advice of the

king's counsellors was that the broken stone should be cast at the prince. This was done, and the result was that he was not killed but suffered while the pieces were being thrown. It gives another Karmic law, that is, that a given amount of force of a Karmic character may be thrown at one or fall upon one at once, in bulk, so to say, or may be divided up into smaller pieces, the sum of which represents the whole mass of Karmic force. And so we see it in life. Men suffer through many years an amount of adverse Karma which, if it were to fall all at once, would crush them. Others for a long time have general good fortune that might unseat the reason if experienced in one day; and the latter happens also, for we know of those who have been destroyed by the sudden coming of what is called great good fortune.

This law is seen also in physics. A piece of glass may be broken at once by a single blow, or the same amount of force put into a number of taps continuously repeated will accomplish the same result and smash the glass. And with the emotions we observe the same law followed by even the most ignorant, for we do not tell bad news at once to the person who is the sufferer, but get at it slowly by degrees; and often when disaster is suddenly heard of, the person who hears it is prostrated. In both cases the sorrow caused is the same, but the method of imparting the news differs. Indeed, in whatever direction we look, this law is observed to work. It is universal, and it ought to be applied to Karma as well as to anything else.

Whether the life we are now living is the net result of the one just preceding is answered by Patanjali in his 8th and 9th aphorisms, Book IV.

"From these works there results, in every incarnation, a manifestation of only those mental deposits which can come to fructification in the environment provided. Although the

manifestation of mental deposits may be intercepted by unsuitable environments, differing as to class, place, and time, there is an immediate relation between them, because the memory and the train of self-reproductive thought are identical", and also by other doctrines of the ancients. When a body is taken up, only that sort of Karma which can operate through it will make itself felt. This is what Patanjali means. The "environment" is the body, with the mind, the plastic nature, and the emotions and desires. Hence one may have been great or the reverse in the preceding life, and now have only the environment which will serve for the exhaustion of some Karma left over from lives many incarnations distant. This unexhausted Karma is known as stored-up Karma. It may or may not come into operation now, and it can also be brought out into view by violent effort of the mind leading to such changes as to alter the bodily apparatus and make it equivalent to a new body. But as the majority of men are lazy of mind and nature, they suffer themselves to run with the great family or national stream, and so through one life make no changes of this inner nature. Karma in their cases operates through what Patanjali calls "mental deposits". These are the net results stored from each life by *Manas*. For as body dies, taking brain with it, there can be no storage there nor means of connecting with the next earth-life; the division known as *Kama* is dissipated or purged away together with astral body at some time before rebirth; astral body retains nothing — as a general rule — for the new life, and the value or summation of those skandhas which belong to *Kama* is concentrated and deposited in *Manas* or the mind. So, when the immortal being returns, he is really *Manas-Buddhi-Atma* seeking a new environment which is found in a new body, *prana*, *Kama*, and astral double. Hence, and because under the sway of cyclic law, the reincarnation can only furnish an engine of a horsepower, so to say, which is very much lower than the potential energies stored in *Manas*, and thus there

remain unexhausted "mental deposits", or unexhausted Karma. The Ego may therefore be expending a certain line of Karma, always bringing it to similar environments until that class of Karma shall be so exhausted or weakened as to permit another set of "mental deposits" to preponderate, whereupon the next incarnation will be in a different environment which shall give opportunity for the new set of deposits to bring about new or different Karma.

The object that is indicated for life by all this is, to so live and think during each life as to generate no new Karma, or cause for bondage, while one is working off the stock in hand, in order that on closing each life-account one shall have wiped off so much as that permits. The old "mental deposits" will thus gradually move up into action and exhaustion from life to life, at last leaving the man in a condition where he can master all and step into true consciousness, prepared to renounce final reward in order that he may remain with humanity, making no new Karma himself and helping others along the steep road to perfection.

The Path

MODERNISED UPANISHAD

THE TALAVAKARA UPANISHAD

THE TEACHING OF BRAHMAN

CHAPTER FIRST (1)

The Master was asked by the pupil to tell at whose wish the mind of man, when sent forth for any act, proceeds on its errand, by whose command the first breath goeth forth, and at whose wish do men utter speech. He was also asked to tell what intelligent power directs the eye or the ear in the performance of natural functions.

The reply given by the Master, thus approached by the pupil, was that in respect to the ear, the brain, the speech of man, the breathing, and the eye, the other organs are of themselves wholly unable to act, but are the means whereby the real, but unseen, inner organs of sight, speech, hearing, seeing, and breathing obtain touch with nature, make themselves manifest, and become able to cognize outside objects.

The perfectly trained man, one fully grounded in philosophy, who has gained control of these organs both within and without, and who can locate his consciousness in the inner being, becomes really immortal when death releases him from the connection with the body. But the ordinary man, by reason of his being fully entrapped and deluded by the outer senses which are always intimately connected with the inner ones, is compelled after death to go into the Devachanic state and to return again to earthly life where he takes up a fresh set of material organs and sense connections.

But there is another sort of consciousness which cannot be

expounded to one who has not himself gained an experience of it. It is beyond description in words used on this plane. For it is different from the known, above what we suppose to be the unknown, and not that which people here adore as their highest conception of being.

Know, therefore, that the basis for the operations of the mind, of the senses, of the organs is Brahman alone. Without that we could neither taste, smell, hear, see, nor think.

SECOND CHAPTER

Then to the pupil the Master said, so as to impress it on his mind, "If thou thinkest I know the form of Brahman well, thou art not wise; but perhaps thou knowest it thyself; if so, then tell me."

To this the pupil replied that we cannot know or describe Brahman, the substratum of all, in the ordinary manner by connecting him with some things already known to us, but at the same time we are not able to say that we do not know him. We feel the actuality of Brahman, but cannot enter into a description of it as we would of an object, by giving its known characteristics, or of a piece of land by its metes and bounds, its quality and its vegetation. The knowing of it at last, its full realization, is a species of awakening out of the present state, and then the knowledge bursts upon us. By the real Self we gain and keep strength in the interior nature, and by knowledge we become able to destroy the bonds of material reincarnation, thus attaining conscious immortality. And by knowing this, one has discovered the true aim of life. If this is not understood while a man is existing here on earth in a body, then he will be compelled to reincarnate until he does comprehend it. But the wise, who have directed their thoughts to all things, and have at last come to recognize the real Self within themselves, are possessors of conscious immortality and pass unfettered out of this life never to

return.

THIRD CHAPTER

The elemental spirits of all grades that work in nature on every plane, in air, water, earth, and fire in all their correlations and combinations, were evolved from lower and less conscious states through aeons of effort by the highest mind. This was a constant struggle between the informing power of mind and the heavy non-conscious material base which alone existed before what we now call matter had been differentiated from primordial cosmic substance. It was in ages long passed away, while the elemental model of all material things was under construction. Without the informing power, which was itself brought over from previous and incalculably distant periods of evolution, the elemental spirits would not have come into existence, as they had no power of their own to stir the depths of cosmic matter. Hence their evolution is called the "Victory of Brahman".

They were evolved on many planes, each in a different degree, (2) and among them were the higher order related to fire, air, and nascent mind. These being the highest were in possession of a consciousness peculiar to their own plane of existence, and were destined to become the conscious human beings of the future. But it seemed to them that they had themselves obtained the victory over cosmic substance and brought about their own evolution.

And in order to raise these cosmic spirits by gentle steps to a higher state of development, the highly progressed entities from other *Manvantaras* appeared to them on their own plane and in their own sphere of consciousness, but were not comprehended. Then the ruling spirits of fire were unable to burn, and those of air unable to move, a straw that was created before them. Next, Indra, representing the nascent power of mind and imagination, advanced toward those who came to teach, but instead of them

perceived only the primordial root and basis of matter. (3) For spirit as distinguished from matter cannot be perceived. It is from spirit — the eternal *purusha* — that matter is emanated, and together they form the two phases of the one Absolute and Unknowable.

FOURTH CHAPTER

The elemental spirits had to fall down into material existence, suffer in its toils, and at last by experience gain further development through evolution.

But the principles of fire and air, and the thinking man, are nearest to Brahman in the eternal scheme of nature's evolution.

And as Brahman flashed forth only to at once disappear from the sight of the gods, so in like manner a knowledge of the elemental spirits in this manvantara is evanescent and fitful. And in respect to the psychological being called Man, he perceives the truth either directly or by reflection. When he has perceived it by reflection, his imagination keeps the images together through the means of the eternal base which is Brahman itself. After repeated experiences of these reflections of truth he is at last able to look directly on it, and then he may become consciously immortal.

A name of Brahman is expressed by the words "The desire of it", and by that name it may be pondered upon. He who has discovered what the true aim of life is should meditate upon it and make all his desires bend to it. And as he progresses toward a knowledge of it, so all beings are insensibly impelled to aid him in the search, because there exists in all the desire to know the root of all things.

Thus you have been told the teaching of Brahman. It stands upon penance, restraint of self, and sacrifice; the Holy books are its limbs and the True is its abode. He who comprehends in their

entirety and subtle connection these teachings, and has shaken off all evil, has become conscious of the endless, unconquerable world of spiritual knowledge.

FOOTNOTES:

1. In the original this is called *Khanda* instead of *Chapter*. ([return to text](#))
2. They are called *devas* or gods in the original. ([return to text](#))
3. In the Sanskrit this is called *Mulaprakriti*. ([return to text](#))

The Path

CONSCIENCE — *Katharine Hillard*

In listening to a conversation upon "Conscience" the other day, I was struck by the apparent confusion in the minds of many of the speakers between the instinct itself and the opinions which we formulate upon its promptings. A desire was shown by nearly all to base an absolute ethical rule upon this inward voice, and to decide beforehand certain vexed questions in morals by an appeal to its jurisdiction. But surely this is to consider conscience as equivalent to a well-considered and carefully balanced *opinion* upon a given course of action, instead of the swift unreasoning impulse that impels to action. In other words, should we not consider conscience as of another nature than reason, or at least as acting upon a different plane?

The instinct that deters us from doing wrong is an intuition, and is quite independent of all formulas. It is not necessarily based upon such ethical knowledge as we may have acquired, because it often acts under conditions that are entirely novel, and in circumstances that we have never anticipated.

The old conundrum compares it to an omnibus strap, as being "an inward check to the outward man", and this is precisely what it is, an inward check. It gives no direction, it formulates no law, it simply stings. Thereupon reason steps in and says to us; "Conscience forbids you to do this thing, therefore it must be wrong, and it is wrong because it is contrary to such and such received ideas of morals". And before we realize the fact, we have gone through this mental process, and are ready to declare that our conscience told us that we must not vote illegally, for instance, whereas it has told us nothing of the kind, but we have felt its prick and have translated it into our own opinion as to

what is wrong; we have transferred an impression upon the spiritual plane into an expression upon the mental and moral plane.

We can call conscience the divine light in the soul of man, burning in each one of us with different degrees of brightness according to the nature of the lamp that holds the light. If the lamp be neglected, the wick untrimmed, the oil unreplenished, the glass coated with dust and dirt, the light will burn dim and low, and its rays be of little service, nay, often invisible to the careless eye. And then we go stumbling along the dark and stony road, often bruising ourselves against obstacles that another would avoid, enlightened by a clearer ray of the Divine wisdom. And as men's natures vary in quality, so in one the lamp may be of tinted glass, and throw a lurid or a ghastly light on all around, and in another be of crystal clearness, without imperfection or distortion to obscure or to divert the ray within.

But whatever be the character of the lamp, so formed by our own Karma, which has built its many-sided form and wrought its purity or its foulness out of the work of our own hands, nevertheless within every lamp most surely burns that Divine ray. If we would have our conscience, then, to be in very truth "a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path", we must purify the medium through which it shines, and so order our lives that we may become transparent to that heavenly light. It will never formulate for us a code of ethics that will enable us to decide beforehand upon difficult questions in morals, but the more we listen to its voiceless promptings the more clearly we shall hear them, and the more we shall find these problems of our imagination to be indeed "the baseless fabric of a vision", that shall dissolve at the first touch of reality.

How often, in sailing up a winding river, our way seems suddenly

shut in by hills; some great mountain-shoulder thrusts itself across our road, and there seems no outlet through which our boat can pass. "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther" the unrelenting hills seem to say, and we can see no possibility of further progress. But still the boat goes on, until all at once a sudden turn takes us round what seemed an impassable barrier, and the river still stretches out before us.

And so with these puzzles that we make for ourselves and call "problems of conscience". When we really get to the tight place, a way that we never dreamed of opens out before us. There is no such thing, actually, as "a problem of conscience". Conscience simply says "Halt!" or "March!": it is ours to reason why, and instead of obeying to befuddle ourselves with questions of casuistry.

No one can decide for another what is right for that other to do, because, however wise and good he may be, it is impossible for him to understand all his brother's nature and circumstances, to say nothing of the unseen influences which his Karma heaps about him. Therefore none may be the keeper of his brother's conscience, nor, for the same reasons, can he be his brother's judge.

Each must be content to manage his own lamp, and to keep it so clear and clean that the light from it shall not only guide his own feet, but shine out upon the world, so that they who walk in darkness shall be helped to find the way.

THE CURE OF DISEASES — *William Q. Judge*

Mortal ills and the needs of the stomach rank next after the instinct of self-preservation among all the subjects which engage the attention of the race. If we do not go on living we cannot do the work we think there is to do; if we remain hungry we will lose the power to work properly or to enjoy, and at last come to the door of death. From bad or scanty food follows a train of physical ills called generally disease. Disease reaches us also through too much food. So in every direction these ills attack us; even when our feeding is correct and sufficient it is found that we fall a prey because our Karma, settled by ourselves in some previous life, ordains that we enter on this one handicapped by the hereditary taint due to the wickedness or the errors of our fathers and mothers. And the records of science show that the taint in the blood or the lymph may jump over many lives, attacking with virulence some generation distant very far from the source. What wonder, then, that the cure of disease is an all-absorbing subject with every one! The Christian knows that it is decreed by Almighty God that He will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children even to the third and fourth generation, and the non-believer sees that by some power in nature the penalty is felt even so far.

All of this has given to the schools of mental and so-called "metaphysical" healing a strong pull on the fears, the feelings, the wishes, and the bodies of those to whom they address themselves, and especially in the United States. That there is more attention given to the subject in America seems true to those who have been on the other side of the Atlantic and noticed how small is the proportion of people there who know anything about the subject. But in the United States in every town many can be found who

know about these schools and practise after their methods. Why it has more hold here can be left to conjecture, as the point under consideration is why it has any hold at all. It is something like patent medicine. Offer a cure to people for their many ills, and they will take it up; offer it cheap, and they will use it; offer it as an easy method, and they will rush for it under certain conditions. Metaphysical healing is easy for some because it declares, first, that no money need be paid to doctors for medicine; second, that medical fluids and drugs may be dispensed with; and third, that it is easily learned and practised. The difficulties that arise out of the necessities of logic are not present for those who never studied it, but are somewhat potent with those who reason correctly; — but that is not usual for the general run of minds. They see certain effects and accept the assumed cause as the right one. But many persons will not even investigate the system, because they think it requires them to postulate the non-existence of that which they see before their eyes. The statements quoted from the monthly *Christian Science* in March PATH are bars in the way of such minds. If they could be induced to just try the method offered for cure, belief might result, for effects indeed often follow. But the popular mind is not in favor of "mind cure", and more prominence is given in the daily papers to cases of death under it than to cures. And very full reports always appear of a case such as one in March, where "faith curers", in order to restore life, went to praying over the dead body of one of the members of a believing family.

During a recent tour over this country from the Atlantic to the Pacific and back, I had the opportunity of meeting hundreds of disciples of these schools, and found in nearly all cases that they were not addicted to logic but calmly ignored very plain propositions, satisfied that if cures were accomplished the cause claimed must be the right one, and almost without exception they

denied the existence of evil or pain or suffering. There was a concurrence of testimony from all to show that the dominant idea in their minds was the cure of their bodily ills and the continuance of health. The accent was not on the beauty of holiness or the value to them and the community of a right moral system and right life, but on the cure of their diseases. So the conclusion has been forced home that all these schools exist because people desire to be well more than they desire to be good, although they do not object to goodness if that shall bring wholeness.

And, indeed, one does not have to be good to gain the benefit of the teachings. It is enough to have confidence, to assert boldly that this does not exist and that that has no power to hurt one. I do not say the teachers of the "science" agree with me herein, but only that whether you are good or bad the results will follow the firm practice of the method enjoined, irrespective of the ideas of the teachers.

For in pure mind-cure as compared with its congener "Christian Science", you do not have to believe in Jesus and the gospels, yet the same results are claimed, for Jesus taught that whatever you prayed for with faith, that you should have.

Scientific research discloses that the bodies of our race are infected with taints that cause nearly all of our diseases, and school after school of medicine has tried and still tries to find the remedy that will dislodge the foulness in the blood. This is scientific, since it seeks the real physical cause; metaphysical healing says it cures, but cannot prove that the cause is destroyed and not merely palliated. That there is some room for doubt history shows us, for none will deny that many a pure thinking and acting pair have brought forth children who displayed some taint derived from a distant ancestor. Evidently the pure

individual thoughts had no power over the great universal development of the matter used by those human bodies.

Turning now to medicine, we find the Italian Count Mattei promulgating a system of cure by the homoeopathic use of subtle vegetable essences which may well give pause to those who would make universal the curing by faith or mind alone. Some of his liquids will instantly stop violent pain, restore sight, give back hearing, and dissipate abnormal growths. His globules will make a drunken man sober, and, given to the nurse who suckles a babe, will cure the child who takes the milk. The drunkard and the child do not think about or have faith in the remedies, yet they cure. Is it not better to restore health by physical means and leave the high teachings of the healers, all taken from well known sources, for the benefit of our moral nature?

And if Christian healers read these lines, should they not remember that when the prophet restored the widow's son he used physical means — his own magnetism applied simultaneously to every member of the child's body, and Jesus, when the woman who touched his garment was cured, lost a portion of his vitality — not his thoughts — for he said "virtue" had gone out from him? The Apostle also gave directions that if any were sick the others should assemble about the bed and anoint with oil, laying on their hands meanwhile: simply physical therapeutics following a long line of ancient precedent dating back to Noah. Moses taught how to cure diseases and to disinfect places where contagion lurked. It was not by using the high power of thought, but by processes deemed by him to be effectual, such as sprinkling blood of animals slaughtered in peculiar circumstances. Without declaring for or against his methods, it is very certain that he supposed by these means subtle forces of a physical nature would be liberated and brought to bear on the case in hand.

The mass of testimony through the ages is against healing physical ills by the use of the higher forces in nature, and the reason, once well known but later on forgotten, is the one given in the article of January, 1892, — that diseases are gross manifestations showing themselves on their way out of the nature so that one may be purified. To arrest them through thought ignorantly directed is to throw them back into their cause *and replant them in their mental plane.*

This is the true ground of our objection to metaphysical healing-practises, which we distinguish from the assumptions and so-called philosophy on which those methods are claimed to stand. For we distinctly urge that the effects are not brought about by any philosophical system whatever, but by the practical though ignorant use of psycho-physiological processes.

The Path

SPIRITUALISM OLD AND NEW: I — *An Embodied Spirit*

I am a spirit myself, but in some respects different from those spoken of at modern *seances*. I have a body and a brain to work with, while they have not; I can prove and feel my identity as son of my father, while they are not able to do so; and, more important than all, I have my due proportion of experience in the trinity of body, soul, and spirit — or in material, intellectual, and universal nature — while they, being deprived of material nerves, sensory organs, brain, blood, and flesh, are confined to a plane of consciousness where they are devoid of those organs of action and sensation which are necessary if one is to come in contact with matter and nature, with human personal experience, or with the great resounding heart-strings of the man who is made in the image of the gods.

The Chinese books called *King*, the Fireworshippers' *Zend Avesta*, the Egyptian mysterious monuments and papyri, the grandly-moving Aryan books of India, the Greek religions, the Roman records, and the Christian scriptures new and old, speak of spiritualism, write of it, explain it, symbolize it. As we see it in the olden times it is grand and philosophical, scientific and religious; but today, in Europe and America, spiritualism is deadly commonplace, bent upon nothing, without a philosophy as confessed by its leaders, piled all round with facts of many years' collection, but wholly undigested, marred with fraud and a daily pouring forth of platitudes for wonder-seekers. It is a revolt from Christianity, and yet with nothing to replace an unjust heaven but an illogical and materialistic summer-land. In the olden times its seers and vestals neither touched money nor engaged in the vulgar strife of competition for private advancement and personal pleasure; in these modern times the mediums, left

unprotected by their leaders, offer to sell the spirits and the spirit-land for a dollar or two to any customer. It is a trade for a living, and not the pursuit of the things of the spirit. Such are the differences. Is the case improperly stated?

The sort of spiritualism which now prevails in the West was well known in the older days, but it was called necromancy and existed under prohibition. The history of the Jewish King Saul, and especially the 28th chapter of 1st Samuel, show this to be so. Saul was a medium of the obsessed kind. His particular variety of devil required music to still him, music furnished by David, but even then he broke out sometimes, on one occasion flinging a javelin at the player, who barely missed instant death. And that mediums flourished is proven in the chapter of Samuel I mentioned: "And Saul had put away those who had *familiar spirits*, and the witches, out of the land," but he retained the higher spiritualism of the Urim and Thummim, of the High Priest, and of the inspired utterances of prophets who were men of austerity working without pay. Saul fell upon evil times, and needed ghostly counsel. He consulted Urim and the prophets in vain. "And when Saul enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, *neither by dreams, nor by Urim*, nor by the prophets." So he asked his servants to seek him a woman who had a familiar spirit, and they mentioned one — who was not called a witch — living at Endor. It is to be noted that only a few verses above an account of Samuel's death and burial at Ramah is given; hence Samuel had not been long buried, and, as Theosophists know, his astral remains were probably not disintegrated. Saul, medium as he was, added fasting to his practise that day, and sought out the woman at Endor for the purpose of calling up the shade of Samuel. When the materialized astral form of the recently-deceased prophet arose, the woman was frightened and discovered the identity of Saul. Her clairvoyance was aroused,

and, as she said, she "saw gods ascending from the earth". Here were two powerful mediums, one Saul and the other the woman. Hence the materialization of the spook was very strong. Saul had come full of the wish to see Samuel, and the strong combination brought on a necromantic evocation of the Shade, by which — reflecting through the clairvoyance of both mediums and drawing upon Saul's mind and recent history — the king was informed of his easily prognosticated defeat and death. Quite properly Moses had interdicted such *seances*. This one, repeating Saul's fears and indecision, weakened further his judgment, his conscience, and his resolution, precipitated his defeat, finished his reign. That the shade was merely Samuel's astral remains is very plain from its petulant inquiry as to why Saul had disquieted it to bring it up. The whole story is an ancient description of what happens every month in America among our modern necromancers and worshippers of the dead. When Moses wrote his Codes, the "voice of Bath-Col" — modern, *independent voice*, as well as many other mediumistic practises, prevailed, and those who could evoke the shades of the dead or give any advice from *familiars* were so well known to the people that the law-giver framed his oft-followed "them shalt not suffer a witch to live" which his religious descendants obeyed to the letter in Salem, Mass., in England, in Scotland, many centuries after. In the temple erected in the wilderness, as also in the permanent structure attributed to Solomon at Jerusalem, there was the Holy of Holies where the chief medium — the High Priest ringing the bells around his robe — communed with the controlling spirit who spoke from between the wings of the Cherubim. And in the Talmudic stories the Jews relate how Jesus obtained and kept the incommunicable name, although he was roared at by the animated statues that guarded the portal. All through the Old Testament the various prophets appear as inspirational mediums. One falls down in the night and the Lord, or spirit, speaks to him;

another fasts for forty days, and then his controlling angel touches his lips with fire from the altar; Ezekiel himself hears the rushing of waters and roaring of wheels while his inspired ideas are coming into his amazed brain. All these duplicate our modern styles, except that the ancient inspirations have some sense and loftiness. But none of these old mediums and seers and inspired speakers — except the necromancers — took money for what they saw and said. That constituted the difference between a prophet, or one with a god, and a contemned necromancer. Could it be possible that the ancients made these distinctions, permitting the one and condemning the other, without any knowledge or good reason for such a course?

The great oracles of Greece and other places had their vestals. These were mediums through whom the "controls", as Spiritualists would say, made answer to the questions put. It is true that money and gifts were poured into the establishments, but the officiating vestals were not in the world; they received no money and could not fix a fee; they accumulated no property; they were unfettered by ambitions and petty daily strifes; but their lives were given up to the highest spiritual thought the times permitted, and they were selected for their purity. And, still more, the Oracle could not be compelled by either money or gifts. If it spoke, well and good; if it remained silent, the questioner went sorrowfully and humbly away. There was no expressed or hidden demand for the worth of the money. In fact, very often, after the Oracle had spoken and a large gift had been made, another utterance directed the entire gift to be given back.

This is another difference between the old and new spiritualism, as shown in the attitude of the attendant upon mediums. Ask any of the latter and you will find how strong is the demand for a compensating return for the money paid beforehand for the privilege of a sitting. It presses on the unfortunate creature who

offers to be a channel between this plane and the next one. If no results are obtained, as must often be the case, the seeker is dissatisfied and the medium hastens to offer another sitting, somewhat on the principle of the quacks who promise to return the fee if there is no cure of the disease.

Turning to India, living yet although once, without doubt, contemporary with the Egyptians from whom the Jews obtained their magic, necromancy, and spiritualism, we have the advantage of studying a living record. The Hindus always had spiritualism among them. They have it yet, so that there it is both old and new. They made and still make the same distinction between the higher sort and the modern necromantic perversion. Through ages of experience their people have discovered the facts and the dangers, the value of the higher and the injury flowing from the lower. It is very true that we have not much to learn from the simple lower classes who with oriental passivity cling to the customs and the ideas taught by their forefathers. But that very passivity brings up before us as in a gigantic camera the picture of a past that lives and breathes when the philosophy which is the foundation of the present beliefs is studied. Women there, just as here, often become obsessed. "Controlled" would be the word with our spiritualistic friends. But they do not hail with joy this *post-mortem* appearance of immediate or remote ancestor. They abhor it. They run to the priest, or pursue a prescription physical or psychical, for exorcising the obsessor. They call it a *bhuta*, which with the vulgar means "devil", but among the educated class means "elemental remains". They neither fail to admit the fact and the connection of the obsession with the deceased, nor fall into the other error of supposing it to be the conscious, intelligent, and immortal centre of the one who had died. Just as the ancient philosophy universally taught, so they assert that this spook is a portion of the psychic clothing the

departed soul once wore, and the thing is as much to be respected as any old suit of clothes a man had discarded. But as it belongs to the psychic realm and has a capability of waking up the lower elements in man's being as well as mere mechanical hidden forces of nature, and is devoid of soul and conscience, it is hence called a devil, or rather, the word *elementary* has acquired with them the significance of devil from the harm which follows in the wake of its appearance.

In following papers I will carry the enquiry into present spiritualistic phenomena, their dangers, their use and abuse, as well as reviewing the ancient higher spiritualism and the possibility of its revival.

The Path

A CONVERSATION ON MAHATMAS — *William Main*

BETWEEN SMITH, AN INQUIRER, AND JONES, AN F. T. S.

Smith. — I have been dipping a little into Theosophy lately and have become quite interested. Some persons of ability seem to be taking part in the movement, and I like many things that they say, but many others seem to me to be fanciful, either unproved, or in their very nature wholly unsusceptible of proof.

Jones. — To what points do you especially refer?

S. — Well, for instance, I have read and heard a good deal about Mahatmas; the authority of these real or imaginary beings seems to count for a great deal, but I have yet to come across any real proof of their existence.

J. — What kind of proof do you want?

S. — Any proof. I should like to see one. That would be the best kind of proof.

J. — Why would it? What would he look like?

S. — Like a Mahatma of course.

J. — What does a Mahatma look like?

S. — How should I know, never having seen one? If I had, of course I would be less skeptical.

J. — Very logical: but I am really trying to put myself in your frame of mind so as to understand you, so I will change the form of my question. What have you decided a real Mahatma should look like, if merely seeing one is to be proof to you of the existence of such a being?

S. — [After a little thought.] I see what you are driving at. I was speaking off-hand when I said that seeing a Mahatma would prove that he was one. I should not expect to see a monster; he would have to look like any other man of course, except that his face might show some evidence of nobility and power. That alone I know would not prove anything, but what was really in my mind was the exhibition of some powers transcending those of common men.

J. — What would you expect him to do?

S. — I don't know exactly; some miraculous thing such as floating in the air, making gold, dematerializing something, himself for instance, and again reappearing, doing all this, of course, under test conditions so that I could be sure that there was no fraud.

J. — What would be the use of his taking so much trouble?

S. — To prove to me and through me to others that he was a Mahatma, and that consequently if there was one there might be more of them.

J. — Would these performances prove that he was a Mahatma?

S. — It seems to me that they would.

J. — What is your idea of a Mahatma?

S. — I am told that the word means "great soul". If so, it should refer to one who has overcome all animal and selfish passions and ambitions, whose knowledge and wisdom extend far into the unseen world, and who is therefore able to give tangible proof of this wisdom.

J. — I will not criticize your definition; but the proof you demand, apparently considered by you so exacting, would seem to me wholly inadequate. I should be more skeptical, and you, on the

other hand, would be more credulous than I take you to be, if the production of these phenomena, genuine and remarkable as they might be, would be sufficient to convince you of the wisdom and purity of the producer.

S. — Perhaps I may still be a little off; but what are you driving at?

J. — If you lived in India, a half-naked juggler might come into your court yard, and on your own ground, surrounded by your own friends and servants and in broad daylight, produce phenomena as remarkable as anything you have named. You might see the floating of heavy bodies in the air, the production and disappearance of solid objects, even of living persons, without any possibility of stage machinery, the visible growth of plants, even of trees reaching a height of fifty feet or more, solid and tangible, yet vanishing into thin air at the close of the performance. These and many similar things are exhibited by these strolling performers, who receive your coins with a thankful salaam and depart like an organ-grinder to repeat the performance elsewhere. Would you call these men "great souls"? Mr. Crookes, the eminent English scientist, made many experiments in the phenomena of so-called materialization, and was nearly turned out of the Royal Society for saying that he believed in occult forces, although specially organized committees of experts were unable even to suggest an explanation. Would you say that the ignorant school-girl through whom many of these phenomena were produced was a "great soul"? Mr. Home, the celebrated medium, has floated in the air scores of times, in many places, and in presence of many competent and critical witnesses. Other phenomena, if possible still more extraordinary, have been produced either by or through him under the most exacting test conditions, yet his life was one long exhibition of petty jealousy and ill-temper, and not a sentence of his has left the world wiser or better. Would you call

him a "great soul"?

S. — Hold on there. I will come down of my own accord, like the coon, so you need not load again. I see that phenomena alone are insufficient, although I confess I had not fully realized it before; but still I think you will admit that the Mahatmas need not make themselves so scarce. They might show *some* phenomena, just enough to attract and interest people, and then having arrested attention might proceed to explain the phenomena and give some of their higher wisdom to the world.

J. — What would you have them say?

S. — Jones, seeing that it is you I do not mind telling you that you have a most exasperating and disagreeable way of asking questions when I am trying to get some solid information, or at least some points from you, yet I don't suppose you intend it in that way.

J. — I certainly do not, and am glad you do not really misunderstand me. Even a single question will often clear up an issue amazingly, so with your leave please consider my question repeated.

S. — Of course I don't know what they would say, for if I did it would be because I knew these things myself: you must see that. But I should expect them to tell us things that were wise and true, susceptible of verification and tending to the elevation of mankind.

J. — How would you know that they were wise and true?

S. — Why, because some things we might know to be true, and others we would feel *must* be true, and others again if they seemed strange and incredible ought to be capable of verification.

J. — Very good. Now let me analyze your answer. It involves no

wisdom to tell us things that we already know to be true; this alone would be mere repetition and platitude, although a starting point from the well-known is necessary. Other truths which are new we feel to be true because the elements of this new experience are already in our minds, although not brought to the surface or combined before. New truths are truths relatively only to a certain number of persons, those who are ready to receive them. The simplest geometrical demonstration would sound like nonsense to a savage; a lecture on calculus would be unintelligible to a class of school-boys. This would be because the elementary conceptions of abstract form and of indiscrete and simultaneously varying qualities exist in but a rudimentary stage in undeveloped minds. An Adept's power of explaining consciousness and modes of existence on other planes would be limited by the capacity of the listeners and could compel the attention of but very few. You say also that statements seeming strange and incredible ought to be capable of verification. That of course is true, broadly speaking, but wholly untrue if coupled with the tacit assumption that the verification must of necessity be an easy thing, convenient to the idly curious. We may listen to a lecture from an astronomer, but to verify his statements would require a telescope like his own, to say nothing of the skill to use it and the mathematical knowledge involving long years of patient study. If there are Adepts, their powers are the results of lives of constant effort, carried on under the most favorable circumstances. How many are there who will even enter upon the rough and rugged road that leads to adeptship, and even of these few how many will follow it for any great distance?

S. — I appreciate the force of your remarks, but still it appears to me that the Adepts or Mahatmas, without going wholly into incomprehensible profundities, could give to the world some of their wisdom in a form that would be partly understood by the

more intelligent or intuitional, could at least indicate the lines of research that would lead most directly to new discoveries. They might smooth the path that leads to higher knowledge and better life, hard enough for common humanity, even if it be less rugged and dangerous than that which leads more directly to adeptship. They might tell us something of the past of our own race and this globe, and of its probable future; something of the unseen world and its forces, even if language could not be found to make it all very plain.

J. — Suppose that they did so and that people were not interested enough to read or to listen.

S. — You are making a very foolish supposition. I do not overrate the numbers of the really thinking portion of the community, for I know them to be relatively small, but still if such knowledge was put in book form the printers would hardly be able to work fast enough.

J. — Are you quite sure of that? I will venture to say that it would be a long time before it would be read by any considerable proportion of the members of the Theosophical Society, still longer before the majority would really study it.

S. — You astonish me. You seem to place a very low estimate upon the intelligence of your fellow members. I should have rated them more highly, although I am not a member of the Society.

J. — I do not underrate them. On the contrary, I consider them a body of men and women of more than average intelligence; but I do rate the proportion of really independent opinion in any community at a very low figure. People are not so hungry for the higher knowledge as they think they are.

S. — I do not agree with you, and should like to see the matter put to the test.

J. — It has been put to the test. The knowledge you are so eager for has been published in book form.

S. — When, where? Is it in English or any language I can learn?

J. — You will not have to study Sanskrit. You know all about the book and have looked into it. It is called the *Secret Doctrine*.

S. — What, that book! Why yes, I have seen it and looked into it a little bit here and there, but then you know there is so much of it, and it seemed rather dry, and you have no idea how busy I have been.

J. — I don't suppose I have.

S. — Besides, I thought Madame Blavatsky wrote that book.

J. — Suppose she did; some human fingers had to be employed, whether those of an Adept or an agent. She drew almost wholly upon the wisdom of the Masters, unless she lies. That book goes straight to the center of every great question in science, religion, and metaphysics, with a boldness of statement and clearness of thought for which there is no parallel in the history of literature. Setting aside its philosophy and history drawn from occult records, no single writer ever equalled its wealth of learning, illustration, and quotation; drawn from the most varied and often recondite sources, from history, theology, and comparative mythology, from science in all its branches and from the philosophical writings of all ages. It is well known and can be amply proved, that this great work was written rapidly and without library or references; yet its quotations and statements are accurate and there is food for profound thought on every page. H. P. Blavatsky was a woman of remarkable intellect, it is true, but neither scholarly nor systematic. During her life of travel and adventure she had no opportunity of evolving this

wonderful philosophy or accumulating this enormous mass of literary and philosophical learning, nor did she ever make any pretense of having done so. In my judgment she could no more have composed that work from her own resources than she could have built the pyramids of Egypt. If after reading it with more attention you still find no evidence of the existence of more highly evolved men, call them what you will, further search would be a waste of time.

You must excuse me, Smith, for I have an appointment elsewhere and am overdue.

Come and see me if you think I can help you at any time.

S. — [Soliloquizing.] Now that is the way with these Theosophical people. I have an independent mind and have attended several of their meetings and asked a good many questions with a view of finding things out for myself without so much studying. They seem to answer you, but have an annoying way of throwing a man back upon himself that I don't like.

I wish I knew whether there are any Mahatmas, without reading all of that big book.

I don't much believe there are, perhaps shouldn't know when I got through. [Exit Smith with a puzzled and somewhat disgruntled air.]

The Path

SPIRITUALISM OLD AND NEW: II — *An Embodied Spirit*

II

Some of the commands of Moses — speaking for Jehovah — given to the Jews on the subject of spiritualism are not without interest. As they enter into no description of the various phases included in the regulations, it is certain that the whole subject was then so familiar it could be understood as soon as referred to without any explanation. And if Moses and his people ever were really in Egypt in bondage or as inhabitants of the land of Goshen, they could not have been there without learning many of the spiritualistic and necromantic practices of the Egyptians. In Exodus ch. 22, v. 18, he directs "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live". The witch spoken of was a different person from the others who had familiars and the like; they were not destroyed. But a witch must have been a malevolent practitioner of occult arts either for money or for mere malice. In Deuteronomy the lawgiver, referring to the land the people were soon to occupy, said: "There shall not be found among you anyone a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer." Hence these varieties of occult practices are mentioned and prohibited. There is not much doubt that the very powerful spirit calling himself "Jehovah" issued these directions not only to protect the people in general, but also to preclude the possibility of any other equally powerful tribal God setting up communication with the Jews and perhaps creating confusion in the plans of Jehovah.

The "consulters with familiar spirits" were those who had in one way or another — either by training or by accident of birth — opened up intercourse with some powerful nature-spirits of either the fire or air element, from which information on various

matters was obtainable. These elementals are difficult to reach, they are sometimes friendly, at others unfriendly, to man. But they have a knowledge peculiar to themselves, and can use the inner senses of man for the purpose of getting him answers beyond his power to acquire in the ordinary manner. This is done somewhat in the way the modern hypnotiser awakes the inner person, to some degree disengaged from the outer one, and shows that the hidden memory and perceptive powers have a much wider range than the healthy person usually exhibits. These familiar spirits were well known to the ancients, and Moses speaks of them so simply that it is very evident it was a matter of history at that period and not a new development. The same kind of "familiar" is also mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles (1). Paul and his companions came to Macedonia — if the confused statements as to places are to be relied on — and there "It came to pass as we went to prayer a certain damsel *possessed with a spirit of divination* met us, which brought her Masters much gain by soothsaying." Paul drove the possessing spirit out of the woman, thus depriving her masters of gain and probably herself of support. This was not a mere case of ordinary mediumship where the astral garments of some departed soul had possession of the girl, but was a genuine elemental of the divining kind which Paul could drive out because of the power of his human will.

The "familiar" is not our higher nature giving us useful information, but is always an entity existing outside of and not belonging to the human plane. They are known of to day in the East, and communication with them is regarded there as dangerous. This danger arises from the fact that "familiar spirits" are devoid of conscience, being of a kingdom in nature which is yet below the human stage and therefore not having Manas and the spiritual principle. They act automatically, yet by the uniting to them of the reason and other powers of the person whom they

afflict there is a semblance of reason, judgment, and intelligence. But this appearance of those qualities is equally present in the modern phonograph, which is certainly devoid of them in fact. Being of such a nature, it is natural that the influence exerted by them upon the human being is directed only to our lower nature to the exclusion of the higher, and thus in time the moral qualities are paralyzed. Other results ensue in certain cases where what might be styled "astral dynamite" is liberated through the disturbance in the human being's nature as well as in the other plane, and then destruction arrives for others as well as for the person who has engaged in this intercourse. For these reasons the wise all through the past have discouraged dealing with a familiar spirit.

The next class mentioned by Moses is the wizard, who was on a grade higher than the first and corresponding to the witch. The failure to mention wizards in the verse directing the death of a witch may mean that witches were more common than wizards, just as to-day the "voodoo women" are far more plentiful than "voodoo men".

The last spoken of, and called an abomination, is the necromancer. This one corresponds exactly to any modern spiritualist who calls upon the dead through a medium, thus galvanizing the astral corpse which ought to be left in quietness to dissipate altogether. Moses received his education in Egypt and Midian as a priest of the highest order. In those days that meant a great deal. It meant that he was fully acquainted with the true psychology of man and could see where any danger lurked for the dabbler in these matters. It is not of the slightest consequence whether there ever existed such a man as Moses; he may be a mere name, an imaginary person to whom these books are ascribed; but the regulations and prohibitions and occult lore included in what he did and said make up an ancient record of

great value. When he prohibited necromancy he only followed the time-honored rules which vast experience of many nations before he was born had proved to be right. An ancient instance of necromancy was given in the first article from, the history of King Saul.

I propose therefore to call what is now miscalled spiritualism by another name, and that is *necromancy*. This is the worship of the dead. It has put itself in the position of being so designated, and the title is neither an invention nor a perversion. The journals supported by those who practice it and the books written by some of its best advocates have declared year after year that the dead were present — as spirits — at *seances*; the mediums have said they were under the control of dead white men and women, long dead red Indians, or babies, as the case might be; and at the time when materializing *seances* were common the ancient dead or the newly dead have been made to appear, as in the case of Samuel to Saul, before the eyes of the sitters, and then, as the latter looked on in astonishment, the apparition has faded from sight. Nor has this been confined to the ordinary unscientific masses. Men of science have practiced it. Prof. Crookes certified that in his presence the "Katie King spook" materialized so strongly as to give as much evidence of density of flesh and weight of body as any living person. It is therefore necromancy pure and simple, and the next question to be determined is whether, as said by Moses, it is an abomination. If it leads to nought but good; if it proves itself to be communication with spirit — the word being used in its highest sense; if it gives no evidence of a debasing effect; if it brings from the world of spirit where the spiritualist declares all knowledge exists, that which is for the enlargement of human knowledge and advancement of civilization; if it has added to our information about the complex nature of man as a psychological being; if it has given either a

new code of ethics or a substantial, logical, and scientific basis for the ethics declared by Buddha and Jesus, then it is not an abomination although still necromancy.

For forty years or more in Europe and America there has been a distinct cultivation of this necromancy, a time long enough to show good intellectual results by any two men in other departments. What does the history of these years give us? It presents only a morbid sort of wonder-seeking and a barren waste of undigested phenomena, the latter as unexplained today by "spirits" or spiritualists as they were when they took place. Such is the general statement of the outcome of those forty years. Before going further into the subject as outlined above, I will close this paper by referring to a first prime defect of the modern necromancy, the defect and taint of money-getting on the part of mediums and those who consult with them.

There was formed not ten years ago in Chicago and New York a syndicate to work some silver mines under the advice of the "spirits". A medium in each city was consulted and paid a pittance for the sittings. The controlling spook directed the investments and many of the operations. Shares were issued, sold, and bought. The familiar result of the enterprise coming to nought but loss for the investors has here no great bearing, though under another head it is important. But before the concluding crash there was a certain amount made by sales and purchases. Very little was paid to the poor medium, and it is to be doubted if any more than the regular price per day would have been paid even had the golden promises of the "spirits" been fully realized. All this has been repeated dozens of times in other instances.

There have been a few isolated cases of a so-called medium's giving in relation to business a long course of directions which came to a successful conclusion. One of these related to

operations in the stock market in New York. But they were all cases of "consulting a familiar", and not at all the same as the work of an ordinary medium. If they were the same as the latter, then we should expect to find such successes common, whereas the opposite is the fact in the history of mediums. The extent to which even at this day mediumship is devoted to giving assumed rise and fall of railroad stocks and the grain market in New York and Chicago at the request of brokers in those cities would surprise those who think they are well acquainted with these gentlemen.

This is the great curse of the American cult called spiritualistic, and until it is wholly removed, no matter at what individual cost, we shall not see the advent of the true spiritualism. St. Paul was right when he dispossessed the girl in Macedonia of her familiar, even if thereby she lost her employment and her masters their gains. If spiritualists will not eliminate the money element from their investigations, it would be well if some St. Paul should arise and with one wave of his hand deprive all public mediums in the land of the power to see visions, hear from dead or living, or otherwise pursue their practises. The small amount of individual suffering which might ensue would be more than compensated for by the wide immediate as well as future benefit.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Acts, ch. 16. ([return to text](#))

The Path

REPLANTING DISEASES FOR FUTURE USE — *William Q. Judge*

The ills I wish to speak of now are those of the body. Our moral nature will be purified and ennobled, widened and strengthened, by attention to the precepts of the saints and sages who through all the ages continue speaking for our benefit. And I refer to these with a view to "mind-cure" and "metaphysical healing".

In the article on the "Cure of Diseases" I stated our real ground of objection to the practices demonstrated variously as the practitioners have been Theosophists, Christians, or followers of mind healers, to be directed to methods which in fact introduce a new sort of palliative that throws back into our inner, hidden planes of life diseases otherwise *passing down and out* through the natural gateway, our bodily frame.

A consideration of this subject requires that we enquire awhile into the complete nature of man. This inquiry has been made before by much greater minds than mine, and I only hand on what they have found and what I have corroborated for myself. Mind-healers and Spiritual Scientists and the rest do not make any reference to this subtle nature of ours except to admit thought to be powerful and to say that the "spiritual body is pure and free from disease." Mind itself is not described by them, nor is it stated that the "spiritual body" has any anatomy possible of description. But the field of Theosophic research is not devoid of an anatomical enumeration, so to say, of the parts of the inner body — the "spiritual body" of some of these schools — nor of the "mind" spoken of by them all.

The mind is *manas* of the Hindus. It is a part of the immortal man. The "spiritual body" is not immortal. It is compounded of astral body with the passions and desires. *Mind* is the container of the

efficient causes of our circumstances, our inherent character and the seeds that sprout again and again as physical diseases as well as those purely mental. It is the mover who is either voluntary in his motion, free if it will, or moved hither and thither by every object and influence and colored by every idea. From life to life it occupies body after body, using a new brain instrument in each incarnation. As Patanjali put it ages ago, in mind lie planted all seeds with self-reproductive power inherent in them, only waiting for time and circumstances to sprout again. Here are the causes for our diseases. Product of thought truly, but thought long finished and now transformed into cause beyond our present thought. Lying like tigers by the edge of the jungle's pool ready to spring when the hour arrives, they may come forward accompanied by counteractions due to other causes, or they may come alone.

When these seeds sprout and liberate their forces they show themselves in diseases in the body, where they exhaust themselves. To attack them with the forces belonging to the plane of mind is to force them again to their hiding place, to inhibit their development, to stop their exhaustion and transfer to the grosser levels of life. They are forcibly dragged back, only to lie waiting once more for their natural expression in some other life. That natural expression is through a body, or rather through the lowest vehicle in use in any evolutionary period.

This is a great wheel that ever revolves, and no man can stop it. To imagine we can escape from any cause connected with us is to suppose that law and order desert the manifested universe. No such divorce is possible. We must work everything out to the last item. The moment we evolve a thought and thus a cause, it must go on producing its effects, all becoming in turn causes for other effects and sweeping down the great evolutionary current in order to rise again. To suppose we can stop this ebb and flow is

chimerical in the extreme. Hence the great sages have always said we have to let the Karmic effects roll on while we set new and better causes in motion, and that even the perfect sage has to endure in his bodily frame that which belongs to it through Karma.

The inner anatomical structure should also be known. The ethereal body has its own currents — nerves, for want of a better word, changes and method of growth and action, just as the gross body has. It is, in fact, the real body, for it seldom alters throughout life, while the physical counterpart changes every moment, its atoms going and coming upon the matrix or model furnished by the ethereal body.

The inner currents emanate from their own centers and are constantly in motion. They are affected by thoughts and the reflection of the body in its physiological changes. They each act upon the other incessantly. (Every center of the inner body has its appropriate correspondent in the physical one, which it affects and through which it is in turn acted upon.) It is by means of these subtle currents — called vital airs when translated from the Sanskrit — that impressions are conveyed to the mind above, and through them also are the extraordinary feats of the *seance* room and the Indian Yogi accomplished.

And just as one may injure his body by ignorantly using drugs or physical practices, so can the finer currents and nerves of the inner man be thrown out of adjustment if one in pride or ignorance attempts, uninstructed, to deal with them.

The seeds of disease being located primarily in the mind, they begin to exhaust themselves through the agency of the inner currents that carry the appropriate vibrations down upon the physical plane. If left to themselves — aside from palliations and aids in throwing off — they pass out into the great crucible of

nature and one is free from them forever. Therefore pain is said to be a kind friend who relieves the real man of a load of sin.

Now the moment the practises of the mind-curer are begun, what happens is that the hidden inner currents are violently grasped, and, if concentration is persisted in, the downward vibrations are thrown up and altered so as to carry back the cause to the mind, where it is replanted with the addition of the purely selfish desires that led to the practice. It is impossible to destroy the cause; it must be allowed to transform itself. And when it is replaced in the mind, it waits there until an opportunity occurs either in this life or in the next rebirth.

In some cases the physical and psychological structures are not able to stand the strain, so that sometimes the return of the downward vibrations is so great and sudden that insanity results: in other cases disease with violent characteristics sets in.

The high tone of thought enjoined by some schools of healers has the effect of making the cause of trouble sink deeper into hiding, and probably adds to concentration. But any thought would do as well, provided concentration is persisted in, for it is the concentration that makes the effect, and not the philosophy. The system of affirming and denying makes concentration easier.

For when the practitioner begins, he immediately brings to play certain inner forces by virtue of his dwelling on one thing. The veriest savages do the same. They have long taught it for various purposes, and their ideals go no higher than food and sleep, fetishes and superstitions.

When one is thus operating on another who is willing, the change of inner nerve currents is brought about by sympathy, which in these cases is the same as the phenomenon so well known in physics by the name of *induction*. When a person is operated on

— or against, I call it — the effect is either repelled or produced. If produced, it is by the same induction brought about without his knowledge and because he was not stronger than the operator.

Here is the danger again. The schools of hypnotists are teaching how to do it. The mind-curers and "metaphysicians" are doing the same. An army of possibilities lurks under it all: for already there are those practitioners who deliberately practise against their opponents, sitting day after day to paralyze the efforts of other people. It is like dynamite in the hands of a child. Some day it will explode, and those who taught it will be responsible, since instead of being taught it ought to be warned against. The world could get along with what disease there is, if it only turned attention to high ethics and altruistic endeavor. For after a few centuries of right living the nations would have purged themselves and built up a right moral building well founded on the rocks of true philosophy, charity, and love.

The Path

SALVATION BY FAITH — *Alexander Fullerton*

The making safe by faith defines the popular idea that a human soul is to escape punishment for evil, not through a reformation of character, or through the cancellation of evil by a subsequent effectuation of good, but through gratuitous pardon made possible because the one believed in has already suffered to an extent which the law will regard as a vindication. Beyond trusting wholly to the merits and work of a Savior, the culprit has nothing to do in the procurement of salvation. It is an act of reliance, not a process of relief. Later reformation attests the reality of the faith, but does not constitute it.

There are many grave objections to this scheme, logical, ethical, and moral. It is eminently artificial, it is in harmony with nothing else in nature, it enthrones unreality in Heaven. By making punishment a mere matter of debt, it voids it of its other two aspects — disciplinary and deterrent, and by making it transferable the connection between it and offense is lost. Nor is the suffering congruous. It is resolved wholly into physical pain. But this is a different thing from compunction, sorrow, remorse, which mentally follow transgression. The poignant shame of repentance cannot be recast in terms of bleeding flesh and agonized nerves.

Then, too, moral sentiments are unbalanced. The shock at seeing the innocent suffer and the guilty escape may be to some extent checked by urging that the suffering was voluntary and from love of the guilty, but a question then arises as to the sacrifice of justice. Surpassing love can hardly supplement defective justice, for in a Divine and therefore perfect system all moral qualities are equally exhibited. And the supposed effect is circuitous. If a

man is aroused to consciousness of guilt by perceiving what some one else has undergone on his behalf, the stimulants are sympathy and gratitude. Yet these do not demonstrate that the broken law was right in itself, or that he ought not to have disregarded it, or that an arrangement made without his consent binds him in honor to future obedience. Indeed, if the debt of all humanity has been paid, it cannot properly be exacted a second time, and therefore the inducement to obedience is to that extent logically lowered. Moreover salvation by faith has but a partial operation. It deals only with the sentimental side of man. It is not educative nor reformatory; still less does it take hold of the several elements in our composite nature and make each evolve to the ideal of perfection.

These are but a few of the logical objections to the doctrine. Historically and individually its consequences are what might be expected from the disconnecting of character from retribution, and from the use of any other factor than desert in determining destiny. Substitute a mechanism for a simply-acting law, and you are sure to have not only complication but disaster. And so the consequence of displacing Karma for Faith has been to set religion apart from morals, and to relieve from responsibility at the very point where it needs the sternest enforcement. The test of character has become not merit but belief, and the gauge of acceptability is not the degree to which self-discipline has attained, but the degree in which self-discipline is renounced and the spiritual interests handed over to another.

And yet here, as in so many other theologizings, there is a root of truth beneath the perversion and distortion. It is in the fact that a real faith in spiritual law must precede any actual attempt at improvement. Men will not greatly exert themselves to secure that which is hazy or dubious. If a thing is uncertain or ill-defined, there can be no heart in the pursuit of it. If evil is not

seen to be real, salvation will not appear to be valuable. Before there can be any wish, much more any effort, to attain security from the penal consequences of wrong, the wrong must be sensed, the consequences apprehended, and the security assessed. Only as the solemn reality of these spiritual facts is felt acutely by the soul standing in their presence, will it rouse itself to act thereon. And so salvation must come by faith.

The same faith must attend any true salvation, any scientific salvation, at every step of its progress. As the steady discipline by which ordinary man is transformed from a vacillating, inconstant tool of prejudice and passion to the calm, collected master of himself and Nature goes on through incarnation after incarnation, there is not an action of the will without its background of assured certainty in the correctness of the training. The human constitution, the method of its evolution, the possibilities it enshrines, the laws regulating the seen and the unseen spheres, the validity of the process, the certitude of its outcome, the existence of Those who have attained, the assurance of Their sympathy and aid, — all these must be truths to the advancing soul or there can be no advance at all. It is not a blind faith, for it has evidence sustaining it; yet it is not entire vision, for much is still unseen. But the faith grows. Its inception is only partial and may be feeble. It was enough for the first step. As each increment of vision verified the prophecy, the faith was confirmed. Things it took on trust are now portions of consciousness; much that was confidence has now become certainty. Still, the same condition to advance persists. The new step must be made because it is believed to lead to greater heights, and if there was no such belief the soul would pause and droop. Doubt would check, not as criminal but as weakening. And if faith is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen", it is because as a scientific fact there can be no

pressing forward into the region of the as yet experimentally unknown without an inward certainty that we shall find it as represented and shall rejoice when there.

And so we are saved by faith. Not faith in another's merits, but in the possibility of evolving our own; not faith in another's atoning work, but in our ability to so work that atonement shall be needless; not faith in a visionary mechanism of substitution, but in the universal scheme of Law; not faith in ecclesiastical systems, but in Divine order; not faith in a revelation *from* God, but in a revelation *of* God. Braced with such a faith, salvation progresses steadily to its end. It is a salvation from ignorance and paucity and feebleness, a salvation of the Divine in man from the animal.

The Path

SCIENTIFIC SALVATION — *Alexander Fullerton*

Salvation means "the making safe". But safe from what? In the usage of contemporary religionism, safe from future punishment for sin. If we inquire further as to the means to safety, we find it to be reliance upon another who has purchased the right to save by having himself undergone the punishment. The popular conception therefore considers the safety as from suffering, its date the hereafter, and its reception a gift.

But this whole operation is evidently external to the cause which once produced the liability to punishment and may produce it again. Punishment is the result of breaking of law; law is broken because the individual's sympathies are with the thing prohibited; and if still with the thing prohibited, they will continue to violate the prohibition. Hence law will be broken and penalties incurred just so long as the law is distasteful, and the only way to ensure obedience and a consequent immunity is a reversal of sympathy from the thing prohibited to the prohibition.

Now the springs of this sympathy are in the physical appetites, the intellectual convictions, and the moral sense. The state of the body, the mind, and the soul dictates the attitude towards law, and if the attitude is to be changed, that state must be changed because its cause. If a man who loves drunkenness, for instance, is to become sober by preference, it must be through his body's loss of craving for stimulant, his mind's conviction of the good of sobriety, and his soul's repugnance to the evil of indulgence. In other words, the *whole* man must face about, — not his taste merely, or his judgment, or his morals, but all in their totality. Only then is he "safe", for he has no inducement to offend, no conviction to oppose, no impulsion to resist. All unite in

producing harmony with the law, conformity to its injunction, immunity from its penalty.

In such a change, furthermore, each section of the composite being must receive distinct treatment. A cancellation of the physical appetite will not alter the mental status or affect the moral sense. Intellectual beliefs will not cure a disordered physique or reverse the pose of the soul. Revolution in moral sentiment will not effect corresponding revolution in the body and the mind. A radical change — "conversion", from *con*, together, and *verto*, to turn — can come only as each is turned, and each can only be turned as the handling appropriate to it is given.

If, then, a man is to be made safe from sin and from its penal effects, it can be by nothing short of such a physical treatment of physical state, mental treatment of mental state, and moral treatment of moral state as shall transform him from a hater of law to a lover of law. He now obeys from preference, and is therefore free both from temptation and from punishment.

Yet freedom from suffering in the pilgrimage of an Ego no more exhausts its evolutionary demands than would a like freedom in one incarnation. Who would consider a life perfect if guaranteed from all risk of disease or accident? Irrespective of such negative good, there is a whole cycle of positive and progressive development. The body has to be trained to such dexterity as is demanded by its avocation; the mind has to be fed with fact from many separated areas and its powers educated to their highest potency; the soul has to be nurtured with truth from above, and its voice in conscience grow clear and regnant. Each component of man needs its copious expansion if it is to fulfil the law of being and mount to the heights designed for it by the Supreme. Every separate incarnation in the chain is to contribute something to

the attainment of the ideal, until that ideal is complete and incarnations needless. So long as any element is deficient must incarnations be repeated, and he only can be "safe" from the hamperings of rebirth who has surmounted its necessity.

Considered as immunity from either violation of law or imperfection of existence, "salvation" must, then, be achieved through the perfecting of each component of the being, and that perfecting must be through the specific training required for each. In other words, it must be *scientific*. Now what does this mean?

It means, negatively, that the accomplishment is not by a pious sentiment or a generous sympathy or a spasmodic aspiration. It means, positively, that it is a systematic education of every faculty under the laws impressed by Nature thereon, and after the experience which the most enlightened practitioners have accumulated during aeons of action. Evolution of the whole man beyond the danger-limit is as much a matter of formulated knowledge as is the training for athletic sport or a college examination. Neither is done by an emotion or a spurt or a faith: nor is it. Under accepted rules, crystallizing ancestral wisdom, the physical nature is so disciplined that it becomes pliant to the will; the mind is so broadened and vivified that it educes dormant faculty and ranges over areas previously unknown; the spiritual nature secures uninterrupted action and harmonizes the whole being with the highest truth. Nothing is left to haphazard or to impulse. All parts are developed in accord with law, and the several faculties, fully ripened and in entire coordination, work without jar or an approach to friction. As wisdom and goodness together advance, cognate powers appear, and when the whole nature has reached the point of complete identification with the consciously-perceived scheme of the universe, it is at one therewith in knowledge, character, and function. Thus identified,

it is an integral part. It has no discordant efforts, for its purposes are the same; it has no isolated interests, for it is one with the All; it has no risks from broken law, for it is fused with law. Possibilities of deflection are forever at an end. There is no danger of fracture, for not a spot is weak. Having been harmoniously developed in every department after the ideal mode, it is symmetrical and perfect. It exhibits the design of the Great Architect; it reflects His will. It has no need of salvation. There is nothing to be saved from. It is scientifically safe.

The Path

WHAT SHALL WE CALL OURSELVES? — *M. Loring Guild*

I do not know how widespread is the tendency, but I have been noticing among many of our best and most thoughtful members a reluctance to style themselves "Theosophist". Instead, the unwieldy title, "a member of the Theosophical Society", is used. To this is usually added "and I am trying to become a Theosophist". The reason given for this course is that to them a Theosophist is, or more truly would be, a being of perfect virtue and perfect wisdom.

With this meaning attached to the title it is entirely comprehensible that they disclaim it for themselves. But it is a meaning which, to me, seems to have been needlessly and arbitrarily assigned. Needlessly, because we have many other words which will better serve the purpose, as "altruist" from the European terminology, and, in the rarely rich vocabulary which has come to us from the East, a series of titles for the whole hierarchy of spiritually-striving beings, from the lowly Chela to the Buddha of Compassion; arbitrarily, for the etymology implies no such meaning.

In most words of like formation the suffix implies only "one who labors at", while in words such as realist and materialist it means still less, merely "one who believes in". We do not refuse to term a man "geologist" because he is not an Agassiz; we call many a man, and rightly, an artist, although between him and Michael Angelo there be degrees which it must take him ages to climb.

According to all analogy, then, a Theosophist is not one who has attained, but one who labors to reach, Divine Wisdom. To make perfection a necessary qualification for bearing the title would be, in Kali Yuga, to put that title out of use.

Fortunately, whatever the struggle of individuals, the world in general will not be content to use a phrase when it can find a word: and a word it must and will find to express that a man is not merely "a member of the Theosophical Society", but that he recognizes the truth of its chief teachings, that he believes in the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, in Karma and Reincarnation, and — in H. P. B.

Since, then, to raise the word to its highest is to debar ourselves from using it, and since there is a need which in its lower meaning it well fills, let us accept this lower meaning and call ourselves Theosophists. The title may be borne in all humility; to say "I strive" is but to confess the goal unreached. In so using the word we cannot belittle it, for not the achievement but the effort that makes it possible is truly great.

The Path

CITIES UNDER CITIES — *Bryan Kinnavan*

The theory that the remains of ancient cities exist under those of the present is not a new one. Dr. Schlegel held it, and working upon the clues found in Homer unearthed the buried Troy. Some have held it in respect to London, asserting that St. Paul's stands over the ruins of an old Pagan temple, and Roman ruins have been excavated in different parts of England. In India there is a mass of traditions telling of many modern cities said to stand over ancient ones that lie buried intact many feet below the present level. *Lucifer* for September noticed the "find" of an Amorite fortress sixty feet below the surface, with walls twenty-eight feet thick. It is well known to those who enjoyed intimate conversations with H. P. Blavatsky that she frequently gave more detailed and precise statements about great cities being built on the exact spots where others had stood long ages ago, and also about those over which only villages stand now. And as the constant explorations of the present day — reaching almost to the North Pole — give promise that perhaps soon the prophecies about revelations from mother Earth made by her will be fulfilled, I am emboldened to give the old theory, very likely known to many other students, to account for this building and rebuilding of cities over each other after such intervals that there can be no suspicion of communication between present and past inhabitants.

As man's civilization has traveled around the globe many times, filling now one country and now another with populous places, creating an enormous metropolis here and another there, his influence has been left on nearly every spot upon the earth, and that as well upon lands now beneath the seas as on those above them. If we can imagine the first coming of a population to a

place never before inhabited, the old theory asks us to believe that certain classes of elementals — called *devas* generically by the Hindus — are gathered over the place and present pictures of houses, of occupations of busy life on every hand, and, as it were, beckon to the men to stay and build. These "fairies", as the Irish call them, at last prevail, and habitations are erected until a city springs up. During its occupation the pictures in the astral light are increased and deepened until the day of desertion arrives, when the genii, demons, elementals, or fairies have the store of naturally impressed pictures in the ether to add to their own. These remain during the abandonment of the place, and when man comes that way again the process is repeated. The pictures of buildings and human activity act telepathically upon the new brains, and the first settlers think they have been independent thinkers in selecting a place to remain. So they build again and again. Nature's processes of distributing earth and accumulating it hide from view the traces of old habitations, giving the spot a virgin appearance to the new coming people. And thus are not only cities built in advantageous positions, but also in places less convenient.

Evidence is accessible and plentiful in every country to show that the winds, the trees, birds, and beasts can in time cover over completely, while leaving them intact, the remains of roads and buildings once used and occupied by men. In Central America there are vast masses of ruins among which trees of considerable girth are now growing. In other districts the remains of well-made roads are sometimes found creeping out from tangled underbrush and disappearing under a covering of earth. At Elephanta near Bombay, and in other places in India, the earth has been blown gradually under pillars and gateways, rendering entrance impossible. On the Pacific Coast, in one of the Mexican States, there is old and new San Bias, the one on the hill, deserted

and almost covered with trees and *debris* of all sorts which is surely constructing a covering that will ere long be some feet in thickness. So without regard to volcanic eruptions or landslides, which of course suddenly and forcibly overlay a city, it is quite possible for Nature through her slower processes to add to thickness of earthy covering at any place abandoned by man, and the very best illustration of this is in the coral islands which rise out of the ocean to be soon covered with earth and trees.

But, our ancient theory says, no process of a mechanical or physical kind has any power over the pictures impressed in the retentive ether, nor over those classes of elementals which find their natural work in presenting pictures of cities and buildings to the receptive brain of man. If he is materialistic he will recognize these pictures only subconsciously. But the subconscious impressions will translate themselves into acts just as hypnotized subjects respond to a suggestion they have no memory of. When, however, these elementals encounter a race of men who are psychically developed enough to see not only the pictures but also those entities which present them, it will then result that a conscious choice will be made, leading to a deliberate selection of one place for building on and the rejection of another.

I present this interesting old theory without proof except such as can be obtained by those few persons who are themselves able to see the devas at work on their own plane.

The Path

ILLUSION — *E. Kislisbury*

If man were capable of receiving and assimilating the whole of Truth, pure and undiluted, he would no longer be man, but a god. The whole of evolution throughout every kingdom of nature seems to be carried on by a series of illusions, the proportion of Truth or reality concealed under each process, or evolved by its means, being infinitesimally small in proportion to the bulk of its evolutionary veils or garments. Indeed, the lower we descend in the scale of being, the greater the disproportion — the less of spirit, the more of matter, as in the stone, the rhinoceros, and the prizefighter. That which to the purely outward observer seems the essential portion in the flower, the exquisitely tinted petals of the rose, the gorgeous rays of the sunflower or the dahlia, plays a comparatively unimportant part in the economy of nature, whose intention is fruit, seed, reproduction. The increase of the ornamental, such as doubling or trebling the petals of the rose or cherry, is at once resented by the cessation of fruit-bearing, which would seem to imply that, though illusion is in the scheme of nature, it is yet only useful when directed toward a certain end. So long as this is the case, illusion, even when perceived to be such, is never unbeautiful or ridiculous; on the contrary, it can only be pleasing, for it possesses one of the truest essentials of beauty, that of the perfect adaptation of means to an end. Thus the play of the little child, the one with her dolls and her imitations of domestic life, the other with his soldiers, horses, ships, or fortresses, is never unpleasing, though even the child itself is conscious of the illusion; it is one of nature's educative processes. The play of fancy of the poet, the painter, and the sculptor, even the effort of the actor, illusive and transitory though these may all be, are not in their best aspects mere

pastimes and foolishness, but beautiful, inasmuch as they subserve their true end, as they are capable of producing fruits in the minds or hearts of others. Yet if the idea behind the form had been presented bare and devoid of the beautiful imagery and language in which it was clothed, would it have produced the same effect on the minds of the majority? A few would have appreciated and cherished it, but what of the many? Shall they not be ministered unto, and is not all the beauty of the external world for this purpose, illusion though it be?

The same rule applies to religions in their ceremonial and externals generally. To the Sage the words "Know thyself" may be the core of all philosophy, may suggest endless possibilities of victories to be gained over the lower nature, of the final triumph of good over evil, of the true place of man in the universe, of his potentiality for godhood. But for those of lesser mould, myth and allegory, ritual and ceremonial must shadow forth the deeper truths, some rule of life must be imposed by authority on those who cannot steer their course in safety alone, some easily comprehended theory must account for the riddle of existence, some consolation must be attainable for those who cannot yet bear the burden of sorrow unaided, or face the fierce light that is reflected from the pure rays of naked truth. And it seems to lie in the nature of things that such illusions must appear and be received as truth so long as the necessity of each mind requires it; even after its illusiveness is perceived, it is scarcely possible to dispense with it at once, without danger of excessive re-action and a fall into blank despair or a denser superstition. To ask people to abandon a creed or even a church which has served them through many years of life as the garment by means of which they have clung to the Infinite, is to assume a responsibility from which the pious would refrain, and which the wise man would scarcely dare to arrogate to himself.

It is doubtful whether the conception of the Eternal is or can be received by any man at second-hand from priest or minister. Each one must surely image to himself the Divine after some fashion of his own, based partly perhaps on the suggestions of book or teacher, still thrown into new form by every separate mind, whether it be as Light Illimitable, as Love Unspeakable, or even as a Man of Sorrows, forgiving the sins and compassionating the woes of a tortured humanity. It would be a sacrilegious hand that would tear away the crucifix from the heart of one who had given up every worldly tie to serve those whom she regarded as the poor of Christ, and tried to substitute for this "illusion" the triangle, the square, and the circle. The husk which covers the ripening fruit must be left to the compelling power of nature to open gradually and at its proper time; those who tear away the protecting calyx will never see the bud expand into the blossom. The child deprived of toys and fun, of the merry voices of companions and of healthy romping exercise, who instead of devouring John Gilpin was fed at five years old on Greek verbs, might develop into a John Stuart Mill, but the man who had missed the illusions of youth fell into a far more lamentable one in his old age.

Not less inevitable to gradual evolution are the illusions of motherhood. Is it not partly the belief that the new-born child is her own, her "very own", fresh from the hand of God, that is the spring of the mother's tender, ceaseless, and self-sacrificing care through all the years of its helplessness and the waywardness of its youth, before blind affection ripens into a reasoning friendship? Were prospective motherhood to learn that the offspring so patiently and hopefully expected would be the reincarnation of a former murderer, would she love and cherish it at the expense of her own life, and give up her best years to its upbringing and education? The whole question of love and

marriage with its results, including as it does some of life's greatest illusions, is one of the deepest problems with which Theosophic thought will have to deal in the future.

Many persons skip the preface of a book, and in so doing miss the whole drift of the author. When we can afford to smile at our own illusions, we need not forthwith seek to deprive others of theirs, so long as the charm lasts and they are satisfied.

The poet's warning is not without significance:

"Lift not the painted veil
Which those who live call life.

The Path

ICONOCLASM TOWARD ILLUSIONS — *A. T. Mana*

A disposition not to interfere in any way with beliefs which are illusions prevails with many who dislike the pain caused by such tearing away of the veil. And the argument that illusionary beliefs, creeds, and dogmas should not be done away with so long as the believer is happy or good has been used by the Christian Church — and more especially by the Roman Catholic branch of it — as a potent means of keeping the mind of man in an iron chain. They are accustomed to add that unless such creeds and beliefs shall stand, morality will die out altogether. But experience does not prove the position to be correct.

For numerous examples exist in the dissenting or Protestant form of Christianity showing that the important doctrines of the Church are not necessary for the prevailing of good morals; and, on the other hand, immorality, vice, and crime in places high and low coexist with a formal declaration of belief in the church dogmas. In many parts of Italy the grossest superstition and murderous vengefulness and crooked hearts are found side by side with an outwardly pious compliance with the ordinances of the Church and a superstitious belief in its dogmas. The whole Christian assembly of nations officially violates the commands of Jesus every day and hour.

Shall it be worse or better, or kind or harsh, to tear away the veil as quickly as possible? And if the iconoclastic attack should be made, for what reason ought one to hesitate because the operation and the attack may result in mental pain?

The only reason for hesitation lies in this fear to give pain; there can be nothing but good result from the change from an untrue and illogical, and therefore debasing, creed, if a system that is

complete and reasonable be furnished in its place.

Were we dealing with children or with a race mind which though dwelling in an adult body is but that of a child, then, indeed, it would be right to lead them on by what may be entirely an illusion. But the day of man's childhood as an immortal being has passed away. He is now grown up, his mind has arrived at the point where it must know, and when, if knowledge be refused, this violation of our being will result in the grossest and vilest superstition or the most appalling materialism. No child is born without the accompanying pains, and now the soul-mind of man is struggling for birth. Shall we aid in preventing it merely for the avoidance of preliminary pain? Shall we help a vast brood of priests to refasten the clamps of steel which for so many centuries they have held tightly on the race-mind? Never, if we see the great truth that we are preparing for a cycle when reason is to take her place beside the soul and guide the pilgrim to the tree of life eternal.

Be not beguiled by the argument that 'tis unwise to tell the truth. It is but the song of the siren, intended to lure the traveler to his doom.

Tell the truth, but do not force it. If even a pious soul should lose the historical Jesus Christ and see instead the glorious image of the Self in every man, that were a gain worth all the pain the first rude shock might give. The danger of lifting the veil of Isis lies not in the doctrines of Unity, Reincarnation, and Karma, but in untaught mysteries which no Theosophist is able to reveal. The change from dogma or creed to a belief in law and justice impartial will bring perhaps some tears to the soul, but the end thereof is peace and freedom.

That "great orphan Humanity", now grown up, no longer needs the toys of a thousand years ago, but requires, and with a voice

like the rush of mighty waters demands, that every veil shall be lifted, every lie unveiled, and every light be lighted that can shed a ray upon the remainder of its toilsome road.

The Path

PROBLEMS IN PSYCHOLOGY — *J. D. Buck*

The materialist will claim the eternity of Matter, the eternity of Force, the universality of Law, and therefore the Eternity of Nature. Eternal Nature is, therefore, an expression with which the intelligent materialist has no reason to quarrel. A ceaseless Evolution takes the place of the old idea of Creation. All Time, past, present, and future, is involved in this ceaseless Evolution. Matter exists in many forms, and differs very widely in density, mobility, etc. So also with force, which manifests in an endless variety of modes. We use the generic terms matter and force so as to include all forms, and these generic terms have been admitted by many leading scientists of the present day to imply a common substratum, a universal substance from which all forms of matter have differentiated, and a universal energy appearing in many forms. A very considerable portion of modern investigation proceeds from these general concepts of Eternal Nature. When, however, it is proposed also to use the generic terms Universal Spirit, Universal Mind, Universal Consciousness, and Universal Life, the average materialist protests, because of the Mechanical Theory of modern science which undertakes to reduce all problems to mass and motion.

Without stopping to show the absurdity of such a position, we may simply remark that there is precisely the same justification for the idea of Universal spirit, mind, consciousness, and life as for matter, force, and law. In any last analysis we know as much of the one as of the other. Neither is any one less justified by sound reason than another. The materialist without greatly changing his idea has simply to enlarge his thought and improve his methods. We might add that universal spirit, mind, consciousness, and life are latent and potential in Eternal Nature,

though manifesting under certain definite conditions, in certain definite forms, and always under the dominion of universal law. The ability to recognize any of these multitudinous manifestations depends on the point gained in the evolution of the individual. We are compelled by logic and analogy to admit that manifestations may be continually occurring around us of which we are entirely unconscious, and as a higher consciousness is evolved in us these manifestations may become known to us. These are logical deductions from common experience, and warranted by the known laws of evolution. In other words, man is capable of recognizing and apprehending universal evolution, according to the degree and extent of his own evolution.

Now the common factor in Eternal Nature and in man by which, while involved in and evolving with nature, man is enabled to know both nature and himself, is *Consciousness*. All of manifested nature has been designated as embodied consciousness. The relation of universal consciousness and individual consciousness is as logical and apprehensible as universal and individual life, or as universal matter and force, and any special differentiation of matter and force occurring either in man or in nature. What consciousness may be *per se*, we know as little as we know the ultimate nature of matter and force. Nearly all of the leading scientists of the day admit that in the last analysis we know really nothing of matter and force. It may, therefore, be logically claimed that our knowledge of mind, life, and spirit is of precisely the same character, derived in the same way as is our knowledge of matter and force, *viz.*, through conscious experience in the process of evolution. Beyond this is simply a war of words, empty and profitless. In the Theosophical classification of the seven-fold principles or planes of eternal nature we find *Mahat*, or Cosmic Ideation. It is the principle of all forms, universal mind, the phenomenal aspect of universal spirit, or consciousness.

Universal consciousness manifests only as universal mind, and this universal mind is the origin of consciousness in man. Universal consciousness is latent, potential, unmanifested. It is the "rootless root". Universal mind or cosmic ideation is the phenomenal aspect of universal consciousness, is its differentiation, while this root from which it springs remains potential and forever concealed. Cosmic Ideation, therefore, manifests that eternal potency which is itself forever concealed, and by differentiation throughout the universe gives form and law to all phenomena, while sinking its roots into that which is itself rootless, because it is the universal, unknown, and forever unknowable source of all. However widely differentiation proceeds, even down to the lowest plane of matter, there is through every manifestation, in every atom of matter, and in every element of force, the endless thread or root connecting the latest differentiation with its primal source. Out from this unknown source of all nature, all being and all life, have all things come, and back into it must all things return.

Here, then, we have the metaphysical basis and the sound philosophy for all psychological problems. Man is an epitome of eternal nature. Mind in man is related to his own consciousness, as cosmic ideation or universal mind is related to universal consciousness. The known, the manifested, the phenomenal is differentiated from the unknown, the unmanifested, the *noumenal*. Observe the logical sequence. Consciousness in man is the root of mind; universal mind is the root of man's consciousness: universal consciousness is the root of universal mind. In the outbreathing of Brahm, or the one life, an unbroken chain runs through all being and all creation, connecting all with the ever concealed "Principle of Principles". Nature and man evolve on lower and still lower planes by virtue of their continually involving their original source or potency, and their

continual differentiation of the original substance and energy. Man is thus at one with eternal nature, and his consciousness is but one remove from its original source. Beyond this the problem in man's evolution is his Manasic development, or the differentiation and phenomenal display through his varied experience of his states of consciousness. Amid all of man's varied experiences, in all mental states, in delirium, hallucination, hypnotization, insanity, even down to imbecility and idiocy, the substratum of mind, *i.e.*, consciousness, remains the same. In sleep, in dreams, and in dreamless sleep, consciousness still remains. That which so continually and so greatly changes is the relations and manifestations of mind to its root, consciousness. Mind is the basis of man's experience, the theater of his evolution, the battle-ground wherein is fought out his triumph or his defeat as a self-conscious, rational individuality.

All that I am is the result of what I have thought. It is composed of my thought, it is made up of my thoughts.

The potency of all that I may yet be lies concealed in my consciousness, as the source of the fountain lies concealed in the bosom of mother earth. The plane of all illusions is in my mind. If I control and suppress thought and sink back into consciousness, silencing the voice of the many, I shall hear the voice of the *One*, the Eternal.

The Path

REINCARNATION IN THE BIBLE — *William Brehon*

An exhaustive paper on this subject is not contemplated in this article, but even a sketch will show that the Christian Bible has in it the doctrine of Reincarnation. Of course those who adhere only to what the church now teaches on the subject of man, his nature and destiny, will not quickly accept any construction outside of the theological one, but there are many who, while not in the church, still cling to the old book from which they were taught.

In the first place, it must be remembered that the writers of the biblical books were Jews with few exceptions, and that the founder of Christianity — Jesus — was himself a Jew. An examination of his own sayings shows that he thought his mission was to the Jews only and not to the Gentiles. He said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel". This clearly referred to the Jews and as clearly excluded the Gentiles. And on one occasion he refused for some time to do anything for a Gentile woman until her importunity at last compelled him to act: and then too he referred to his mission to the Jews. So in looking into these things we must also look at what were the beliefs of the day. The Jews then most undoubtedly believed in reincarnation. It was a commonly accepted doctrine as it is now in Hindustan, and Jesus must have been acquainted with it. This we must believe on two grounds: first, that he is claimed by the Christian to be the Son of God and full of all knowledge; and second, that he had received an education which permitted him to dispute with the doctors of divinity. The theory of reincarnation was very old at the time, and the old testament books show this to be so.

"Proverbs" gives the doctrine where Solomon says he was with the Creator from the beginning and that then his (Solomon's)

delights were with the sons of men and in the habitable parts of the earth. This disposes of the explanation that he meant he existed in the foreknowledge of the Creator, by the use of the sentences detailing his life on the earth and with men. Then again Elias and many other famous men were to actually return, and all the people were from time to time expecting them. Adam was held to have reincarnated to carry on the work he began so badly, and Seth, Moses, and others were reincarnated as different great persons of subsequent epochs. The land is an oriental one, and the orientals always held the doctrine of the rebirth of mortals. It was not always referred to in respect to the common man who died and was reborn, but came up prominently when the names of great prophets, seers, and legislators were mentioned. If readers will consult any well educated Jew who is not "reformed", they will gain much information on this national doctrine.

Coming now to the time of Jesus, all the foregoing has a bearing on what he said. And, of course, if what he said does not agree with the view of the church, then the church view must be given up or we will be guilty of doubting the wisdom of Jesus and his ability to conduct a great movement. This, indeed, is the real position of the Church, for it has promulgated dogmas and condemned doctrines wholly without any authority, and some that Jesus held himself it has put its anathema upon.

When there was brought into the presence of Jesus a man who was born blind, the disciples naturally wondered why he had thus been punished by the Almighty, and asked Jesus whether the man was thus born blind for some sin he had committed, or one done by his parents. The question was put by them with the doctrine of reincarnation fully accepted, for it is obvious the man must have lived before, in their estimation, in order to have done sin for which he was then punished. Now if the doctrine was wrong and pernicious, as the church has declared it to be by

anathematizing it, Jesus must have known it to be wrong, and then was the time for him to deny the whole theory and explode it, as well as definitely putting his seal of condemnation upon it for all time. Yet he did not do so; he waived it then and said the blindness was for other reasons in that case. It was not a denial of it.

But again when John the Baptist, who had, so to say, ordained Jesus to his ministry, was killed by the ruler of the country, the news was brought to Jesus, and he then distinctly affirmed the doctrine of reincarnation. Hence his waiving the matter in the case of the blind man is shown to have been no refusal to credit the theory. Jesus affirmed the doctrine, and also affirmed the old ideas in relation to the return to earth of the prophets by saying that the ruler had killed John not knowing that he, John, was Elias "who was for to come".

On another occasion the same subject arose between Jesus and the disciples when they were talking about the coming of a messenger before Jesus himself. The disciples did not understand, and said that Elias was to come first as the messenger, and Jesus distinctly replied that Elias had come already in the person called John the Baptist. This time, if any, was the time for Jesus to condemn the doctrine, but, on the contrary, he boldly asserts it and teaches it, or rather shows its application to certain individuals, as was most interesting and instructive for the disciples who had not enough insight to be able to tell who any man was in his real immortal nature. But Jesus, being a seer, could look into the past and tell them just what historical character any one had been. And so he gave them details about John, and we must suppose more particulars were gone into than have come down to us in the writings naturally incomplete and confessed to be but a partial narrative of the doings and sayings of Jesus.

It must now be evident that there is a diametrical disagreement between the church and Jesus. The church has cursed the doctrine he taught. Which is right? The true believer in Jesus must reply that Jesus is; the church will say it is right by acting on that line. For if the doctrine be taught, then all men are put on an equal basis, and hence the power of the human rulers of heaven and earth is at once weakened. Such an important doctrine as this is one that Jesus could not afford to pass over. And if it is wrong, then it was his duty to condemn it: indeed, we must suppose that he would have done so were it not entirely right. And as he went further, even to the extent of affirming it, then it stands with his seal of approval for all time.

John the Revealer believed it of course, and so in his book we find the verse saying that the voice of the Almighty declared that the man who overcame should "go out no more" from heaven. This is mere rhetoric if reincarnation be denied; it is quite plain as a doctrine if we construe it to mean that the man who by constant struggle and many lives at last overcomes the delusions of matter will have no need to go out into life any more, but from that time will be a pillar, what the Theosophist knows as "Dhyan Chohan" forevermore. And this is exactly the old and oriental doctrine on the point.

St. Paul also gives the theory of reincarnation in his epistles where he refers to the cases of Jacob and Esau, saying that the Lord loved the one and hated the other before they were born. It is obvious that the Lord cannot love or hate a non-existing thing, and that this means that Jacob and Esau had been in their former lives respectively good and bad and therefore the Lord — or Karma — loved the one and hated the other before their birth as the men known as Jacob and Esau. And Paul was here speaking of the same event that the older prophet Malachi spoke of in strict

adherence to the prevalent idea. Following Paul and the disciples came the early fathers of the church, and many of them taught the same. Origen was the greatest of them. He gave the doctrine specifically, and it was because of the influence of his ideas that the Council of Constantinople 500 years after Jesus saw fit to condemn the whole thing as pernicious. This condemnation worked because the fathers were ignorant men, most of them Gentiles who did not care for old doctrines and, indeed, hated them.

So it fell out of the public teaching and was at last lost to the Western world. But it must revive, for it is one of the founder's own beliefs, and as it gives a permanent and forceful basis for ethics it is really the most important of all the Theosophical doctrines.

The Path

INTERFERENCE BY ADEPTS — *Alexander Fullerton*

When things are palpably going wrong in any department of life, and it is known that men deeply interested therein have both the power and the skill to effect correction, they are naturally expected to apply them. To abstain seems a denial of either the interest or the ability. And so when the bitter sorrows of a vast humanity, or calamitous mismanagement in national affairs, or the ills of a locality pain a philanthropic heart, and when it ejaculates a wish that it was mighty enough to arrest the whole evil and dry away the tears from every face, instinctively it wonders why Those who are do not. What is the use of prerogative if it lies motionless when most needed; of what real value are superior knowledge and power if they do not avert catastrophe and abate suffering? And, indeed, what are we to think of the claim that They are tender and sympathetic and beneficent, if on the face of things They appear wholly indifferent and inactive? Masters would seem a superfluity in Nature if, while able to cure evil and establish good, They let each work itself out untouched.

We shall never solve this anomaly unless through the principle of analogy. Do we instantaneously rectify every evil where we have the power? Every parent and employer can answer this question, every teacher and guardian. All intelligent education is based on the doctrine that truth is real to a mind only as it is realized, and that the realization comes through experience. Guidance, suggestion, warning may be proffered, but, if defied, no amount of coercive restraint can vindicate their wisdom to the recipient: he must learn it only through the results of defiance. A muscular father could always hold back a son from games or projects involving risk, but only at the sacrifice of his own time and the

boy's experience. A teacher could always interpose when a pupil was at bay over a problem in mathematics or translation, but what would become of the patience, the resolution, the persistence, the mental dexterity which are the fruit only of self-effort? And what, too, of the healthy glow from conquest which is sweeter far than a relief conferred? It is by undergoing all the processes which lead from inexperience to maturity that a mind becomes developed in its own powers, and that it sees the reason for things and the reality underlying form. This never arrives through the dictum of another, or his enforcement of counsel however wise. The governments known as "paternal" are fatal to self-reliance, and foster a childishness of spirit and judgment which results in national decay. It is as men and nations work out their own problems that they reach wise and enduring issues.

Nor is this the only reason why Adepts are not interposing powers. Ordinary men, being less enlightened, must necessarily have other convictions, and the less the enlightenment the more positive the adherence to them. Any different course would therefore have to be secured through sheer coercion, and the violent subjection of another's will is a thing repugnant to the universal Law, to Justice, Right, and the very initial principles of Occult training. An Adept's nature would preclude the wish for any pressure beyond currents of intelligence and good feeling, and, if it could so far reverse itself, it would be held in check by Law.

And then there is the deep conviction of the sacredness of Karma. To wrest forces from their natural course would do much more than introduce confusion and disorder into the moral world: it would be to create new forces to re-act on their authors. Thus the two-fold result would follow, that the normal order would be disarranged and its ordained good be lost, and the created forces would rebound into the sphere which, because of its occultly-

acquired harmony with Law, has surpassed the range of Karmic influence. Illegal interference by Adepts would therefore not only make things worse for men, it would put an end to Adeptship.

But how, then, it may be asked, can Adepts act at all? Why is not suggestion, influence, thought-impression as much an interference as restraint? Simply because it is in accordance with Law and not in contravention of Law. Here again analogy illustrates. We point out to a less experienced person a better way than his own, we suggest to our fellow-men more sagacious plans and easier methods. The bringing of more light is ever a gracious and worthy act. It proffers, it does not insist; it aids, it does not coerce. The choice, and therefore the responsibility, still rest on the one approached. There is no subversion of will, no restraint of freedom. No counter-forces are aroused, and no Karmic reaction excited. The gentle influences of a kind cooperation steal peacefully over the mind addressed, and what would be resentment at dictation is gratitude for assistance. There is health in help: there would be palsy in prescription.

And so, it would seem, the policy of Adepts finds its vindication in our own. When we wish to change the course of a neighbor or a nation, we know that it can effectively be done only as the conviction prompting to that course is changed, and so we expound the contrary considerations and suggest such facts as may operate on reason. Absence of dogmatic method is the first requisite to tact. The plastic material of the human mind is moulded by manipulation, not by blows. Thus the Adepts work. On the flowing currents They let loose a thought which shall be borne along to a harbor where it will be welcomed; They put a motive within the attractive range of a vigorous soul; They gently feed an aspiration which is weakening or a force which has declined. Ever alert for that beneficence of which They are the embodiment, They see with eagerness every glance towards

higher possibilities, every motion to a loftier plane. And then They aid it. They know how They were aided as They struggled on to Their present sphere, and They pay the debt by passing on that given strength. It may not be possible to obliterate human misery, for nothing can do that save obliteration of the human ignorance and folly which produce misery, but it is possible to prompt a wish for its obliteration, and then to help each philanthropist attempting it. And however silent the Masters may seem, and however remote and listless, no man who deeply feels the call to altruistic effort need doubt that it comes from that hidden Brotherhood, and no man who responds to it need imagine that They who have reached him with Their voice will not reach him with Their help.

The Path

ROUNDS AND RACES — *Alpha*

A fundamental axiom in Theosophy is that no one should accept as unquestionably true any statement of fact, principle, or theory which he has not tested for himself. This does not exclude a reasonable reliance upon testimony; but only that blind credulity which sometimes passes for faith. As we understand the rule, it is that we should at all times keep a clear and distinct boundary between what we know, and what we only accept provisionally on the testimony of those who have had larger experience until we reach a point of view from which we can see its truth. We owe it to ourselves to enlarge the sphere of clear knowledge and to push back as far as possible the boundary of opinion and hypothesis.

The realm of knowledge has various departments. Our physical senses furnish us one class of knowledge; our intellectual powers investigate another field on mathematical lines; and yet another faculty enables us to apprehend ethical teachings and to trace them to their true basis in Karma. That we have other faculties, now largely latent, which when developed will enable us to enter other fields of observation and investigation, is beginning to be seen and appreciated. Among the subjects which man may thus in the future examine for himself is a large block of truth concerning evolution, the out-breathing of the Great Breath, the birth and development of a chain of globes, and of human life thereon, some part of which has been imparted to us by those who claim to know, and which is chiefly useful, perhaps, for the light which it throws on our surroundings, our destiny, and our duty.

The grander sweeps of this block of truth are given to us in the

barest outline, and not until our present physical earth is reached do we find anything like detailed information. From the hints given out, however, and reasoning according to the doctrine of correspondences, "as above, so below", we may plausibly infer many things in regard to other globes and other systems; but such flights can hardly be taken with much profit or advantage until we become thoroughly familiar with the things that are revealed in regard to our immediate surroundings.

The planetary chain consists of seven companion globes, which for convenience of reference are named from the first seven letters of the alphabet, A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. We occupy globe D, the fourth in the chain. The course of evolution begins on globe A, and proceeds by regular stages through globes B, C, D, E, etc. In the beginning, globe A was first evolved, and life received a certain degree of development upon it; then globe B came into existence, and the life-wave removed from globe A to B, where it went forward another stage; then globe C was evolved and received the life wave for a still further stage in its progress; and so on, until at the end of the first round globe G was evolved and furnished the field for the highest development attainable in that round.

The first round — the first tour of the life-wave through the seven globes from A to G — having been completed, the monads — the life wave — passed again to globe A, and commenced the second round, or the second tour through the chain. Without following out details, it is enough to say that three such rounds have been completed, and the fourth round has commenced its sweep and is still in progress; and that we now occupy globe D in this fourth round. Three times the life-wave has passed from globe A to globe G; and has now reached globe D in its fourth tour through the chain.

Now, leaving entirely out of sight for the present what has happened during the former three rounds, and on globes A, B, and C in this fourth round, let us consider what has happened on globe D since the life-wave reached it this fourth time; prefacing, however, the general statement that this globe will be exhausted and the life-wave be ready to pass from it to Globe E when seven root-races shall have finished their course here. Each root-race is divided into seven sub-races; and each sub-race into seven family-races; and so on; these divisions and subdivisions following each the other, and not coexisting, except as an earlier race or division of a race may survive its time and overlap a subsequent race or division. Since the life-wave reached globe D in this fourth round, four root-races have run their course upon it, and the fifth root-race has reached its fifth subdivision or sub-race, of which we are part. This fifth sub-race is said to be preparing in America for transition or transformation into the sixth sub-race: it is not entirely clear whether we in the United States today belong to the seventh family-race of the fifth sub-race, or to the first family race of the sixth sub-race. It seems certain that we are near the transition point, unless there must be an intervening pralayaic period.

The sixth and seventh sub-races of the fifth root-race must run their course, and these must be followed by the sixth and seventh root-races with their various subdivisions, before the life-wave passes from our present globe D and begins its further evolution on globe E. From analogy we may infer that seven great races, with their sub-races, etc., will be necessary to complete the work of that globe; and the same for globes F and G, before the fourth round shall be concluded and the life-wave be ready to pass to globe A for the beginning of the fifth round.

Thus the planetary chain consists of seven globes; the life-wave makes during the existence of the chain seven complete tours of

the chain from globe A to globe G, these tours being called rounds; the life-wave remains on each globe after reaching it in each round, until it completes seven root races, divided into forty-nine sub-races and into three hundred and forty-three family-races.

It should be remembered that the flow of the life-wave is not continuous: it has its ebb as well as its flood. There is a period of rest or pralaya after the close of each round before another is commenced: a pralaya after each globe in the round; similarly each race, sub-race, etc., is preceded and followed by its pralayaic rest. The purpose of this paper is not to develop the entire scheme in all its completeness, even if that were possible; but to bring out as sharply as may be the general outlines, and especially to note the distinction between rounds and races, the seven rounds being seven circuits of the entire chain, while the seven root-races are seven life-waves (or seven repetitions of the same wave) which consecutively flow and ebb on each globe before leaving it. There are seven root-races on each globe; forty-nine root-races in each round; three hundred and forty-three root-races in the seven rounds which complete the life of the planetary chain.

In studying this subject, it must be borne in mind that, while numerous passages in the *Secret Doctrine* refer to universal cosmogony and the evolution of the solar system and of our planetary chain, still the bulk of that work is devoted to the evolution of humanity on globe D in the fourth round only. It must also be remembered that the groups of monads discussed in "Theosophical Gleanings" in vol. vi of *Lucifer* are not to be taken as identical with the seven root-races through which the monadic host passes on each globe in each round.

The foregoing outline of the course of evolution through the SEVEN ETERNITIES of a maha-manvantara is mechanical and clumsy; it is

only a skeleton, which must be clothed upon with muscles and sinews by reading between the lines before its true relations and proportions can be understood. The following quotations from *The Secret Doctrine* will perhaps throw a ray of light upon the connection of the globes of the chain: "It only stands to reason that the globes which overshadow our earth must be on different and superior planes. In short, as globes, they are in CO-ADUNITION but not IN CONSUBSTANTIALITY WITH OUR EARTH". (The capitals are in the text). Vol. I, p. 166.

"When 'other worlds' are mentioned . . . the Occultist does not locate these spheres either *inside* or *outside* our earth . . . for their location is nowhere in the space *known* to and conceived by the profane. They are, as it were, blended with our world, interpenetrating it and interpenetrated by it". Vol. I, p. 605.

In a foot note to page 265 of Walker's work on Reincarnation, (Lovell's edition), the opinion is expressed that the figures (seven planets, seven rounds, seven races, etc.), are only symbols; even so: if they are symbols, they must no less be clearly apprehended before the truths symbolized can be grasped.

The Path

IMAGINATION AND OCCULT PHENOMENA — *William. Q. Judge*

The faculty of imagination has been reduced to a very low-level by modern western theorists upon mental philosophy. It is "only the making of pictures, day-dreaming, fancy, and the like": thus they have said about one of the noblest faculties in man. In Occultism it is well known to be of the highest importance that one should have the imagination under such control as to be able to make a picture of anything at any time, and if this power has not been so trained the possession of other sorts of knowledge will not enable one to perform certain classes of occult phenomena.

Those who have read Mr. Sinnett's *Occult World* will have noticed two or three classes of phenomena performed by H. P. Blavatsky and her unseen friends, and those who have investigated spiritualism will know that in the latter have been many cases of similar phenomena done by so-called "controls". Others who made no such investigations have, however, on their own account seen many things done by forces not mechanical but of a nature which must be called occult or psychical. In spiritualism, and by the Adepts like H. P. Blavatsky and others, one thing has excited great interest, that is the precipitating on to paper or other substances of messages out of the air, as it were, and without any visible contact between the sender of the message and the precipitated letters themselves. This has often occurred in *seances* with certain good mediums, and the late Stainton Moses wrote in a letter which I saw many years ago that there had come under his hand certain messages precipitated out of the air. But in these cases the medium never knows what is to be precipitated, cannot control it at will, is in fact wholly ignorant of the whole matter and the forces operating and how they operate. The elemental

forces make the pictures through which the messages are precipitated, and as the inner nature of the medium is abnormally developed, acting subconsciously to the outer man, the whole process is involved in darkness so far as spiritualism is concerned. But not so with trained minds or wills such as possessed by Madame Blavatsky and all like her in the history of the past, including the still living Adepts.

The Adepts who consciously send messages from a distance or who impress thoughts or sentences on the mind of another at a distance are able to do so because their imagination has been fully trained.

The wonderworker of the East who makes you see a snake where there is none, or who causes you to see a number of things done in your presence which were not done in fact, is able to so impress you with his trained imagination, which, indeed, is also often in his case an inheritance, and when inherited it is all the stronger when trained and the easier to put into training. In the same way but to a much smaller degree the modern western hypnotizer influences his subject by the picture he makes with his imagination in those cases where he causes the patient to see or not to see at will, and if that power were stronger in the West than it is, the experiments of the hypnotizing schools would be more wonderful than they are.

Take the case of precipitation. In the first place, all the minerals, metals, and colored substances any one could wish for use are in the air about us held in suspension. This has long been proved so as to need no argument now. If there be any chemical process known that will act on these substances, they can be taken from the air and thrown down before us into visibility. This visibility only results from the closer packing together of the atoms of matter composing the mass. Modern science has only a few

processes for thus precipitating, but while they do not go to the length of precipitating in letters or figures they do show that such precipitation is possible. Occultism has a knowledge of the secret chemistry of nature whereby those carbons and other substances in the air may be drawn out at will either separately or mixed. The next step is to find for these substances so to be packed together a mold or matrix through which they may be poured, as it were, and, being thus closely packed, become visible. Is there such a mold or matrix?

The matrix is made by means of the trained imagination. It must have been trained either now or in some other life before this, or no picture can be precipitated nor message impressed on the brain to which it is directed. The imagination makes a picture of each word of each letter of every line and part of line in every letter and word, and having made that picture it is held there by the will and the imagination acting together for such a length of time as is needed to permit the carbons or other substances to be strained down through this matrix and appear upon the paper. This is exactly the way in which the Masters of H. P. B. sent those messages which they did not write with their hands, for while they precipitated some they wrote some others and sent them by way of the ordinary mail.

The explanation is the same for the sending of a message by words which the receiver is to hear. The image of the person who is to be the recipient has to be made and held in place; that is, in each of these cases you have to become as it were a magic lantern or a camera obscura, and if the image of the letters or if the image of the person be let go or blurred, all the other forces will shoot wide of the mark and naught be accomplished. If a picture were made of the ineffectual thoughts of the generality of people, it would show little lines of force flying out from their brains and instead of reaching their destination falling to the earth just a few

feet away from the person who is thus throwing them out.

But, of course, in the case of sending and precipitating on to paper a message from a distance, a good many other matters have to be well known to the operator. For instance, the inner as well as the outer resistance of all substances have to be known, for if not calculated they will throw the aim out, just as the billiard ball may be deflected if the resistance of the cushion is variable and not known to be so by the player. And again, if a living human being has to be used as the other battery at this end of the line, all the resistances and also all the play of that person's thought have to be known or a complete failure may result. This will show those who inquire about phenomena, or who at a jump wish to be adepts or to do as the adepts can do, what a task it is they would undertake. But there is still another consideration, and that is that inasmuch as all these phenomena have to do with the very subtle and powerful planes of matter it must follow that each time a phenomenon is done the forces of those planes are roused to action, and reaction will be equal to action in these things just as on the ordinary plane.

An illustration will go to make clear what has been said of the imagination. One day H. P. Blavatsky said she would show me precipitation in the very act. She looked fixedly at a certain smooth piece of wood and slowly on it came out letters which at last made a long sentence. It formed before my eyes and I could see the matter condense and pack itself on the surface. All the letters were like such as she would make with her hand, just because she was making the image in her brain and of course followed her own peculiarities. But in the middle, one of the letters was blurred and, as it were, all split into a mass of mere color as to part of the letter.

"Now here," she said, "I purposely wandered in the image, so that

you could see the effect. As I let my attention go, the falling substance had no matrix and naturally fell on the wood any way and without shape."

A friend on whom I could rely told me that he once asked a wonderworker in the East what he did when he made a snake come and go before the audience, and he replied that he had been taught from very early youth to see a snake before him and that it was so strong an image everyone there had to see it.

"But," said my friend, "how do you tell it from a real snake?"

The man replied that he was able to see through it, so that for him it looked like the shadow of a snake, but that if he had not done it so often he might be frightened by it himself. The process he would not give, as he claimed it was a secret in his family. But anyone who has made the trial knows that it is possible to train the imagination so as to at will bring up before the mind the outlines of any object whatsoever, and that after a time the mind seems to construct the image as if it were a tangible thing.

But there is a wide difference between this and the kind of imagination which is solely connected with some desire or fancy. In the latter case the desire and the image and the mind with all its powers are mixed together, and the result, instead of being a training of the image-making power, is to bring on a decay of that power and only a continual flying to the image of the thing desired. This is the sort of use of the power of the imagination which has lowered it in the eyes of the modern scholar, but even that result would not have come about if the scholars had a knowledge of the real inner nature of man.

A COMMENTARY ON THE GAYATRI — *An Obscure Brahman*

Unveil, O Thou who givest sustenance to the Universe, from whom all proceed, to whom all must return, that face of the True Sun now hidden by a vase of golden light, that we may see the truth and do our whole duty on our journey to thy sacred seat. — *The Gayatri*.

I have adopted a translation as above, which is excellent in its giving of the meaning of this verse. What is the Gayatri? It is the sacred verse of the Hindus and begins with Om, their sacred word and letter. Its first words are: *Om, Bhur, Bhurvah!*

The first word contains in it a declaration of the three periods of a Manvantara and the three powers of that great Being who alone Is. Of a manvantara it is the beginning, the middle, and the end, and the three powers are Creation (or manifesting), Preservation (or carrying on), and Destruction. The three first words, Om, bhur, bhurvah, draw attention to and designate the three worlds. The whole verse is an aspiration in the highest sense. Every Brahman at his initiation is further instructed in this verse, but from giving that I am necessarily excused, as I cannot give it in a way in which I have not received it.

Unveil is the cry of the man who is determined to know the truth and who perceives that something hides it from him. It is hidden by his own Karmic effects, which have put him now where the brain and the desires are too strong for the higher self to pierce through so long as he remains careless and ignorant. The cry is not made to some man-made god with parts, passions, and attributes, but to the Self above who seeth in secret and bringeth out to light. It is directed to that on which the Universe is built and standeth, — no other than the Self which is in every man and

which sitteth like a bird in a tree watching while another eats the fruit.

From this the whole Universe proceeds out into manifestation. The ancients held that all things whatsoever existed in fact solely in the idea, and therefore the practitioner of Yoga was taught — and soon discovered — that sun, moon, and stars were in himself, and until he learned this he could not proceed. This doctrine is very old, but today is adopted by many modern reasoners. For they perceive on reflection that no object enters the eye, and that whether we perceive through sight or feeling or any other sense whatever all objects are existing solely in idea. Of old this was demonstrated in two ways. First, by showing the disciple the actual interpenetration of one world by another. As that while we live here among those things called objective by us, other beings were likewise living in and among us and our objects and therein actually carrying on their avocations, perceiving the objects on their plane as objective, and wholly untouched by and insensible to us and the objects we think so material. This is no less true today than it was then. And if it were not true, modern hypnotism, clairvoyance, or clairaudience would be impossible. This was shown by a second method precisely similar to mesmeric and hypnotic experiments, only that to these was added the power to make the subject step aside from himself and with a dual consciousness note his own condition. For if a barrier of wood were erected in the sight of the subject which he clearly perceived and knew was wood, impervious to sight and an obstacle to movement, yet when hypnotised he saw it not, yet could perceive all objects behind it which were hidden in his normal state, and when he pressed against it thinking it to be empty air and feeling naught but force, he could not pass but wondered why the empty air restrained his body. This is modern and ancient. Clearly it demonstrates the illusionary nature of

objectivity. The objectivity is only real relatively, for the mind sees no objects whatever but only their idea, and at present is conditioned through its own evolution until it shall have developed other powers and qualities.

The request made in the verse to *unveil the face of the True Sun* is that the Higher Self may shine down into us and do its work of illumination. This also spreads forth a natural fact unknown to moderns, which is that the Sun we see is not the true sun, and signifies too that the light of intellect is not the true sun of our moral being. Our forefathers in the dim past knew how to draw forth through the visible Sun the forces from the True one. We have temporarily forgotten this because our evolution and descent into the hell of matter, in order to save the whole, have interposed a screen. They say in Christian lands that Jesus went into hell for three days. This is correct, but not peculiar to Jesus. Humanity is doing this for three days, which is merely the mystical way of saying that we must descend into matter for three periods so immense in time that the logarithm of one day is given to each period. Logarithms were not first known to Napier, but were taught in the pure form of the mysteries, because alone by their use could certain vast calculations be made.

Which is now hidden by a vase of Golden Light. That is, the light of the True Sun — the Higher Self — is hidden by the blood contained in the vase of the mortal body. The blood has two aspects — not here detailed — in one of which it is a helper to perception, in the other a hindrance. But it signifies here the passions and desires, *Kama*, the personal self, the thirst for life. It is this that veils from us the true light. So long as desire and the personality remain strong, just so long will the light be blurred, so long will we mistake words for knowledge and knowledge for the thing we wish to know and to realize.

The object of this prayer is that we may carry out our whole duty, after becoming acquainted with the truth, while we are on our *journey to thy Sacred Seat*. This is our pilgrimage, not of one, not selfishly, not alone, but the whole of humanity. For the sacred seat is not the Brahmanical heaven of Indra, nor the Christian selfish heaven acquired without merit while the meritorious suffer the pains of hell. It is that place where all meet, where alone all are one. It is when and where the three great sounds of the first word of the prayer merge into one soundless sound. This is the only proper prayer, the sole saving aspiration.

The Path

THE ADEPTS — *William Brehon*

SOME OBJECTIONS AND ANSWERS TO THEM.

In this I purpose to give but the condensed form of some objections made to the theory of the existence of the Adepts, and of the answers which might be made. The objections are variously founded, applying as well to the names Masters and Mahatmas as to other designations.

"MASTERS" IS OBJECTIONABLE because contrary to Republicanism or Democracy or Individualism.

But *master* comes from *magister*, who is a teacher, an expounder as well as applier of the law; hence *magistrate*. Every one, in fact, has a master, whether it be physically, mentally, or morally; and this objection is but the old and foolish exhibition of contempt for regulations of a government from which America escaped long ago.

THE OBJECTOR HAS NEVER SEEN AN ADEPT. This would apply equally to the assertion of the existence of Napoleon or any other character one has not seen, and with more force. For there was but one Napoleon, while there have been and are many Adepts. The ancients all relate histories of Adepts; the Hindus of today do the same; many of the writers of the middle ages and the traditions of the same period speak of them as accepted facts; the traditions of all countries not so new as this give similar testimony; the Chinese, Tibetans, Burmese, and other Oriental people tell of such personages, while Chinese, Buddhist, and Hindu literature teems with testimony. Hence to support the doctrine there is a mass of human testimony larger than that which declares that Buonaparte once dominated Europe. Lastly, several reputable

Europeans and Americans, members of the Theosophical Society, affirm on their own knowledge the existence of these Adepts.

THE MODERN CRITIC SAYS: *First*, why do not these Adepts come out to satisfy curiosity if they are men? This question is out of the same spirit that creates the sensational, vulgar, and prying newspaper which spreads before the public, because it is called for by the public, the private details of everyone's existence. *Second*, why not appear and destroy evil if they have great powers? The Adepts have replied that there is no power to destroy the evil man has produced but in the efforts he himself makes for purification. *Thirdly*, why not come and wipe out abuses? *Fourthly*, why not multiply food in famine time?

Other replies to these may be thus tabulated:

(a) The nature of humanity at present is the product of evolution, and only evolution conducted in an orderly manner can alter by perfecting, refining, and purging.

(b) It is ridiculous for the Western nations to demand that the Adepts shall multiply food when every one knows there is at all times enough food in hand, either unused or locked up by the men of greed, to feed all the hungry.

(c) If food were multiplied thus in the Western world, those who did it would be imprisoned and classed as criminal, for inevitably either the food would be said to be stolen or else the charge of interfering with trade would follow. In Berlin in 1892 the starving people took bread from the shops and were punished for theft. The moral and conclusion are obviously against the objector.

(d) No one can disprove the claim made that Adepts have multiplied food in famine times in Eastern lands where condemnation and persecution do not follow that act.

(e) Admitting that the Adepts have great powers, they have disclaimed the power to alter human nature in any other way than through the processes of evolution and always strictly under a rigid law of justice.

(f) The Adepts do not yet appear publicly and proclaim themselves to the world for reasons found in the above replies, and also because the cycle must run its course, since, if they proclaimed themselves out of time, a wrong result would be produced, just as a note, good in itself, is a producer of discord when sounded out of time, place, or tune. This reason is the reason deduced from the law of cycles.

WHAT, THEN, ARE THE ADEPTS DOING? Not possibly could all their work be stated. But, for a part:

(a) Assisting all good movements by acting on men from behind the scenes through mental influence.

(b) Preparing as many men and women who are fit for it so that they may, in their next incarnation, appear in the world as active devotees to the good of the Human Family.

(c) Spreading now, through impulses given in many places which must not be mentioned, a philosophy of life which will gradually affect the race mind, and in particular the active, conquering Western peoples, thus preparing the whole people to change and evolve yet further and further until evils disappear and better days and people reappear.

FRIENDS OR ENEMIES IN THE FUTURE — *Eusebio Urban*

The fundamental doctrines of Theosophy are of no value unless they are applied to daily life. To the extent to which this application goes they become living truths, quite different from intellectual expressions of doctrine. The mere intellectual grasp may result in spiritual pride, while the living doctrine becomes an entity through the mystic power of the human soul. Many great minds have dwelt on this. Saint Paul wrote:

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

The Voice of the Silence, expressing the views of the highest schools of occultism, asks us to step out of the sunlight into the shade so as to make more room for others, and declares that those whom we help in this life will help us in our next one.

Buttresses to these are the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation. The first shows that we must reap what we sow, and the second that we come back in the company of those with whom we lived and acted in other lives. St. Paul was in complete accord with all other occultists, and his expressions above given must be viewed in the light Theosophy throws on all similar writings. Contrasted with charity, which is love of our fellows, are all the possible virtues and acquirements. These are all nothing if charity be absent. Why? Because they die with the death of the uncharitable

person; their value is naught, and that being is reborn without friend and without capacity.

This is of the highest importance to the earnest Theosophist who may be making the mistake of obtaining intellectual benefits but remains uncharitable. The fact that we are now working in the Theosophical movement means that we did so in other lives, must do so again, and, still more important, that those who are now with us will be reincarnated in our company on our next rebirth.

Shall those whom we now know or whom we are destined to know before this life ends be our friends or enemies, our aiders or obstructors in that coming life? And what will make them hostile or friendly to us then? Not what we shall say or do to and for them in the future life. For no man becomes your friend in a present life by reason of present acts alone. He was your friend, or you his, before in a previous life. Your present acts but revive the old friendship, renew the ancient obligation.

Was he your enemy before, he will be now even though you do him service now, for these tendencies last always more than three lives. They will be more and still more our aids if we increase the bond of friendship of today by charity. Their tendency to enmity will be one-third lessened in every life if we persist in kindness, in love, in charity now. And that charity is not a gift of money, but charitable thought for every weakness, to every failure.

Our future friends or enemies, then, are those who are with us and to be with us in the present. If they are those who now seem inimical, we make a grave mistake and only put off the day of reconciliation three more lives if we allow ourselves today to be deficient in charity for them. We are annoyed and hindered by those who actively oppose as well as others whose mere looks, temperament, and unconscious action fret and disturb us. Our

code of justice to ourselves, often but petty personality, incites us to rebuke them, to criticise, to attack. It is a mistake for us to so act. Could we but glance ahead to next life, we would see these for whom we now have but scant charity crossing the plain of that life with ourselves and ever in our way, always hiding the light from us. But change our present attitude, and that new life to come would show these bores and partial enemies and obstructors helping us, aiding our every effort. For Karma may give them then greater opportunities than ourselves and better capacity.

Is any Theosophist who reflects on this so foolish as to continue now, if he has the power to alter himself, a course that will breed a crop of thorns for his next life's reaping? We should continue our charity and kindnesses to our friends whom it is easy to wish to help, but for those whom we naturally dislike, who are our bores now, we ought to take especial pains to aid and carefully toward them cultivate a feeling of love and charity. This adds interest to our Karmic investment. The opposite course, as surely as sun rises and water runs down hill, strikes interest from the account and enters a heavy item on the wrong side of life's ledger.

And especially should the whole Theosophical organization act on the lines laid down by St. Paul and *The Voice of the Silence*. For Karmic tendency is an unswerving law. It compels us to go on in this movement of thought and doctrine; it will bring back to reincarnation all in it now. Sentiment cannot move the law one inch; and though that emotion might seek to rid us of the presence of these men and women we presently do not fancy or approve — and there are many such in our ranks for every one — the law will place us again in company with friendly tendency increased or hostile feeling diminished, just as we now create the one or prevent the other. It was the aim of the founders of the Society to arouse tendency to future friendship; it ought to be the

object of all our members.

What will you have? In the future life, enemies or friends?

The Path

A REMINISCENCE — *One of the Staff*

The interesting series of historical papers now running in the *Theosophist* entitled "Old Diary Leaves" by Col. Olcott naturally recalls to the mind various small events of the early years of the Theosophical Society, but nearly all the first members have disappeared from sight, some wholly uninterested in our work, others gone over to the other side of death. But some remain who do not concur in all the details written by Col. Olcott.



The origin of our seal is one of the things yet to be cleared up, and which will be at the proper time. The cut here shown is from the original electroplate made in 1874 or '75 or even earlier from a wood-cut produced at the same time. The wood-cut would have been used in this printing but that the impression might destroy it. Both, the plate and the wood-cut, have been many years quietly resting in a drawer. Very plainly this cut is substantially our seal. The omitted portion is the Egyptian cross in the centre. In place of that cross the letters "E. B." appear, and those letters mean "Elena Blavatsky", the initial E being aspirated. Above is the coronet of a Countess. Added within the circle are astrological and cabalistic signs referring to the owner who used it. That owner was H. P. Blavatsky. It has been used often by her for stamping letter paper, and a quantity of the same letter-paper she used is in the drawer with the wood-cut.

Who, then, is the person from whom came the idea of our seal? Is it H. P. B. or some one else? If not H. P. B., how is it that she was using this design for her paper so many years ago? Several persons have claimed to be the founders of the Society, or designers of its seal, or first movers in its early years. A Philadelphia Doctor some years ago had the hardihood to write to the New York Headquarters saying that he was the one who designed our seal. Since then he has passed away. The plain unvarnished truth, which hurts no one save the man who denies it, is that H. P. Blavatsky was the head, front, bottom, top, outskirts, past and future of the Theosophical Society. We were all but pawns on the chessboard. What is the use of permitting vanity to influence us toward denying the facts?

No game, no battle, no diplomacy can go forward without agents, subordinates, generals, privates, but there is always a moving head without whom there would be no success. Not only was H. P. B. predominant with us in 1875, but she is yet. The very organization was suggested by her in a letter which will be published in facsimile if any one feels disposed to deny the foregoing assertion. She wrote that we ought to model our Society on the United States, which is a collection of sovereign bodies united in one aim.

In the "Diary Leaves" Col. Olcott says that it was proposed to make the Theosophical Society an extra-Masonic degree. The impossibility of this may be seen when we reflect that such a thing — out of the question in itself — would leave out H. P. B. But, you say, he refers to letters from William Q. Judge and Gen. Doubleday asking for the ritual. This is but one of the little errors that creep in after lapse of years. An examination of the correspondence shows that Brothers Judge and Doubleday wrote — often — that if there was to be a ritual for the initiation into the Theosophical Society, then it should be sent, or the whole

initiation abandoned. And many members recollect how much was said *pro* and *con* about abolishing initiation and accompanying ritual altogether, until at last it so came about. Masonic degrees were not once talked of, unless Col. Olcott may have said he would have wished us to be affiliated with Masons. This item in the "Diary Leaves" is clearly *lapsus calami*. In the same number of the "Leaves" there is a reference to G. H. Felt and a long draft of a letter of his as to which Col. Olcott is not clear. This is easy to settle. The letter was drafted by William Q. Judge and copied out by Felt, and the person he speaks of in the letter as experimenting with is Brother Judge. These things I state advisedly and with permission. It was intended for use at a meeting of the T. S. in 1876, but instead of using that a paper was read by Bro. Judge embodying the facts and including many other records of different experiments.

Other flitting scenes will recur later. Some embrace the funeral of Baron de Palm and what led up to it, others the making of our early diplomas by hand, and so on. But however the facts may come out, it remains a fact that the T. S. stands or falls by H. P. Blavatsky. Give her up as an idea, withdraw from the path traced by her under orders, belittle her, and the organization will rot; but remember her and what she represented, and we triumph.

The Path

PLANETARY INFLUENCES — G. E. W.

Some writers, in order to avoid what seems like fatalism or predestination in astrology, have denied that the planets possess any inherent influence or exercise it upon the human race. They do not question the main features of astrology, nor do they, like many materialistic and scientific authors, dismiss it as visionary and unworthy of examination. They admit that the directions at which the planets arrive with regard to each other seem to tally with certain events which happen in the life of the native. But they claim that this coincidence is due to the fact that the planets are only markers, and that they indicate things which occur without their active interposition. They are thus merely recorders of Karmic effects. At first sight there appears to be much weight to this argument, since none can deny that we fashion our own selves and by our own actions bring upon ourselves certain results either good or evil. To deny volition would be to deny the law of Karma. We must insist upon a certain amount of free-will; without it, existence has no reason and humanity no hope.

We are, however, brought face to face with the perceptible facts of astrology; and these will not down even to save a theory. It is evident that the sun and moon exercise a direct influence upon the material world. It would be absurd for us to attempt to explain the tides of the ocean by saying that the moon did not cause them, but was only an indicator; or to say that the sun's heat did not produce the summer, but was only a coincident record of that season. How much simpler is it for us to imagine that each of these orbs of the solar system is continually pouring down upon us its astral waves, just as it sends down upon us its ethereal rays of light! And then, moving on in endless procession, as it were, new angles are constantly being formed, new positions

are momentarily being developed, and consequently new effects are being produced.

This is the natural view to take. It is the one adopted by all astrologers that have ever lived. But how is it to be reconciled with the law of Karma, which says that all actions are the result of other actions, and good and evil conditions are caused by good or evil conduct? This seems a perplexing question, and no doubt it has puzzled many young students, especially those who have never given much attention to the subject of astrology and who do not have any clear idea of its relation to the Theosophic philosophy. In order to understand that relation, however, it is only necessary to obtain a just understanding of the principles of astrology so far as fatalism, or determination, is concerned.

Let us see what is meant by fate. In Zadkiel's *Grammar of Astrology*, chapter 10, entitled "To judge the future fate by the figure of the heavens at the moment of birth", occurs the following remark:

The word fate does not here imply *inevitable* fate; for though the planets produce a certain influence on the native's affairs, yet that influence is capable of being opposed by the human will, and may by that means be entirely or greatly mitigated. If, however, it be not attended to, but allowed its full scope, it will then certainly produce its full effect; and the reader must remember that astrologers in predicting events always presuppose that the last circumstance will be the case.

We see here that there is no absolute fatality. On the contrary, each person is given an instrument known as the human will, with which he may oppose the evil influences and may take advantage of the good. To be explicit, the planets are continually shedding down their astral rays upon us, and according as they

make certain angles in the course of their revolutions, so do their influences become good or malefic. But there is no necessity, no absolute law, that we should succumb to those influences. It is, on the contrary, our duty to oppose them when evil, just as it is our duty to turn away from every temptation. And the human will is all-powerful. When well developed, it can avert evil equally as well as it can magnify good.

We thus see that there is no fatality, but only a tendency in certain directions which, when evil, we have to combat. Let us now try to learn how this may be reconciled with Karmic law. The latter supposes certain acts as a result of previous acts. But no explicit time is given by any authority on the subject as being the date when Karma takes effect. There is an old Hindu aphorism saying that Karma acts after two days, two fortnights, two years, or two lives, which is equivalent to saying that it has no stated season, but comes whenever the occasion is ripe. We can, then, very easily suppose that Karmic action takes effect in accordance with the principles of planetary motion. In other words, if a given result is to take place, it will wait until in their regular revolutions the spheres have reached a certain combination answering to or corresponding with the event. The planets are not markers; they influence. But they only exercise that influence in accordance with the law of Karma.

Now, as to the extent of that influence, it may be said that it is limited. Some people are much less affected by planetary positions than others. This, as has been previously suggested, is due to the extent to which they have cultivated the will. Most people, it is true, respond promptly to their astrological directions. Some succeed in opposing evil influences to which the majority succumb. There are a few — a very few — who have risen above the planetary suggestions, and whom evil does not harm. Such have evolved themselves beyond the astral plane, and

are no longer subject to Saturn. For it should be known that astrology acts only through the astral form and upon the astral plane. It is therefore only concerned with humanity in its lower stages. It is exoteric and base to that extent. Whenever we can as a race pass beyond the limitations of the flesh, astrology can no longer be a science. It teaches us at present very much about our organization, and is indeed one of the keys to a knowledge of the universe. Rightly understood, it is of inestimable value. Wrongly looked at or used for evil ends, it is worse than ignorance. No doubt it has been in the past very often employed for selfish ends. Let us hope that the students of the future will have a better aim, and will turn astrology into a means for helping and enlightening the race rather than to employ it as a mere money-making agency.

It is not generally known that there are three sets or kinds of astrological directions, each producing certain effects, yet all dependent to a considerable extent upon each other. They may be described briefly as primary directions, secondary directions, and local transits. The latter are extremely simple and are generally employed by professional astrologers. They are based upon the direct motion of the planets around the sun. While to the observer of the heavens night after night the planets which are visible appear to retain about the same relative position to each other, in reality they are moving onward at varying rates of speed, and each night take a slightly different position. While our earth completes the circuit of the sun in one year, it takes about thirty years for Saturn to finish its orbit. Each planet has a different motion. Hence the combinations of position that arise daily are practically infinite. The local transits are the transits of one planet over the place of another in any nativity. They produce the minor events of life, the daily cares, annoyances, triumphs, and joys which every one has, but which do not as a

rule produce any lasting effect. If, however, there is a coincidence of several evil transits at about the same time, particularly if the primary and secondary directions are also bad, then serious results may be expected. It is said that even primary directions cannot take effect without having transits of a similar nature to work through, and on this many professional astrologers ignore primary directions altogether, claiming that the local transits furnish all the data required for making predictions. In reality the reason for such omission is the difficulty of computing such primary directions. Local transits, on the other hand, require no mathematical skill or labor. The positions of the planets from day to day are given in every ephemeris or almanac that is published.

Secondary directions are also comparatively easy to compute, although it is difficult to explain the nature of their influence. They are said to be "merely the aspects formed by the Sun or Moon within a few weeks after birth by their proper motion, in longitude, in the heavens". But this definition fails to convey any meaning to the ordinary reader. I would therefore add that in astrology each day is but a micro-cosmic aspect of a longer period, and in a nativity each day succeeding birth is regarded as equivalent to a year of life. Thus the tenth day after birth will show events that will happen in the tenth year, the twentieth day the twentieth year, and so on. Most astrologers use the secondary directions; and, in fact, it is said that the old Arabian astrologers used nothing else for their prognostications. Certain it is that, however inexplicable it may appear, the secondary directions are generally reliable. Their effects are short-lived, not lasting over two or three weeks at most.

Primary directions are what prove the stumbling-block for nearly all would-be students of astrology. They require very complicated and abstruse computations, and one must be acquainted with logarithms and sines and tangents in order to make any progress

whatever. Hence most modern professional astrologers discard them altogether, and even speak slightly of them. In fact, Raphael openly advises against their use in his latest *Guide to Astrology*. But all the older astrologers considered primary directions as being of primary importance. They bring about the great events of life. Marriage, death of parents, bankruptcy, professional success, are all denoted by them. Sometimes the influence of a primary direction is so great that it will last through several years. Hence these directions should not be ignored. It is no doubt true that a primary direction cannot act until there is a suitable combination of local transits for it to act through, but that does not give us sufficient ground for depending entirely upon the transits or even upon secondary directions.

The principle upon which is based the doctrine of primary directions is the same macro-cosmic and micro-cosmic idea which underlies the secondary directions. The earth turns upon its axis every twenty-four hours. In that time each planet apparently travels completely around us, making a circuit of 360 degrees. As in 24 hours there pass over the meridian 360 degrees, in one hour there will pass over 15 degrees, and one degree, being equal to one-fifteenth of an hour, is therefore equivalent to four minutes. Hence an error of four minutes in the time of birth will cause an error of one degree in right ascension, or of one whole year in the life of the native. It should be explained, however, that there are two methods of computing time. By the Ptolemaic system one degree equals a year of life. The Placidian theory, while more complex, has much to recommend it in the way of exactitude. As there are only 360 degrees in a circle, and as there are 365¼ days in a year, it follows that to take a degree for a day or for a year is not, strictly speaking, correct, although much more convenient. According to the Placidian rule, the right ascension of the sun is added to the arc of direction, and then to this-are added the actual

degrees and fractional parts thereof, in proportion as the days are actually longer or shorter. By this method a degree is sometimes greater and sometimes less than a year of life, but it is always proportional to the exact length of the day as shown by the ephemeris. Zadkiel and most modern astrologers employ the Ptolemaic system of measurement. The difference between the two is so slight that it does not cut much of a figure either way. . There is one fact, however, about astrology which cannot be too strongly dilated upon, and that is the necessity for ascertaining the exact time of birth. Astrologers who pretend to set up horoscopes, merely guessing at the hour of birth (in the absence of definite information), know very well that their predictions are extremely precarious. While the difference of a few hours does not affect materially the local transits — and it is from these that they draw their deductions — the difference of *one minute* in the time of birth will cause an error of three months in the time of any subsequent primary event, and an error of four minutes will throw a prediction out an entire year. Hence it cannot be too strongly urged that the first and greatest necessity in the casting of nativities is the determination of the exact time of birth.

Fortunately rules are laid down in the astrological books by which the true time of birth may be obtained. Without that knowledge astrological prediction is futile, striking here and there perhaps a few unimportant details, but leaving out all of the main and determining events. With a knowledge of the exact minute of birth the astrologer may confidently set forth all the leading and minor occurrences of life, may warn of impending danger and prepare people to take advantage of fortunate incidents and epochs in their careers.

THE EARTH CHAIN OF GLOBES: I — *William Q. Judge*

Although H. P. B. gave out to several of those who met her during the period from 1875 to 1878 the very same teachings in respect to the nature of man and of the "worlds" he evolves in as were afterwards publicly expounded in *Esoteric Buddhism* by Mr. Sinnett upon letters received by him through her from her Teachers, the credit of thus publishing those teachings, if such credit is desired, must be granted to that author. But at the time he began his publications, we who had known the doctrines so many years before wrote to H. P. B. complaining that the method adopted would lead to confusion on the one hand and to a materializing of the doctrines on the other, while, of course, no objection was made in general to the divulgement of what at a prior date had been given us in confidence, for he could not and would not have given the teachings to the public at all unless he had been permitted to do so. And after all these years the confusion to which our letters adverted has arisen among Theosophists, while there has been an apparent lack of attempt to clear it away. In respect to the "Earth Chain of Globes", the materializing of the doctrine and the confusion in the minds of students have been greater than in regard to any other of the teachings. This cloudiness I will now attempt to dissipate, if possible, with the help of some of H. P. B.'s own words in her book, the time having arrived and permission being granted, and access being also had to certain plain statements thereupon from the original sources.

In *Esoteric Buddhism*, 6th ed., p. 77, we find in reference to the "Chain of Globes":

Separated as these are in regard to the grossly mechanical

matter of which they consist, they are closely and intimately bound together by subtle currents and forces. ... It is along these subtle currents that the life elements pass from world to world. . . . The most ethereal of the whole series. ... As it passes from world Z back again to world A.

Then follows, for illustrative purposes, the figure of a series of tubs to represent the various globes of the whole series, one filling up from the overflow out of the preceding tub. Further, that the life wave *reaches* Globe A or B, and so on.

All this, in the absence of other explanations, and naturally consequent upon modern habits of thought, has fixed the idea in minds of many that the seven globes through which the evolution of man is carried on are in fact separated from each other; that they have between each other spaces along which currents flow to and from; and although the illustration of the series of tubs might be very well used for even the most metaphysical of problems, it had the effect of additionally deepening the idea of the actual separation from each other of the seven "globes". It has been thought that they were as much apart from each as any visible planet, although connected by "subtle currents and forces."

But the fact is otherwise. The seven globes of earth's chain are not separated at all, and are interblended and mixed with each other. To make it clearer, if we were to develop inner sight so as to perceive on the plane of the next globe, the fifth, it would not appear as a definite ball in the sky or space. Whether it be smaller or larger than this earth — a fact not yet cleared up — it would be seen to possess the earth as the earth holds it.

It may be asked, Why was this not told in the beginning? Because it was useless to tell, no one being at hand to understand it; and also because if insisted on — and it was not of enough importance

to require insistence — the consequence might have been that even Mr. Sinnett would not have published his invaluable and extremely useful book. He confessed in that work that the doctrines propounded were new to him, and seemingly opposed to modern ideas of nature. In great part this was true, though there were very many who did not find them new but who were not sufficient in number to risk then an insistence on a point that might too far violate the materialistic conceptions prevalent. Since then, however, times have altered, and a large and daily increasing number of minds are ready for the destruction of the idea contained in these words from the above quotation:

"Separated as these are in regard to the grossly mechanical matter of which they are composed." Strike out this statement, and the rest of the explanation can be construed to agree with the facts as laid down by those who inspired the book.

The globes of the earth-chain are not "separated in regard to the grossly mechanical particles", but their particles are interblended. When we pass on to the plane of life which Globe 5 or E represents, it will be and appear to our then senses as gross, while the particles of this one will not be visible although still interblended with the other. It was to this very sentence that we objected in 1875, because it contains the statement of a fallacy growing out of materialistic conception.

On this very subject the teachers of H. P. B. wrote, *Secret Doctrine*, v. 1, p. 166:

Were psychic and spiritual teachings more fully understood, it would be next to impossible to even imagine such an incongruity. . . . In short, as globes, they are in COADUNITION but not in CONSUBSTANTIALITY WITH OUR EARTH, and thus pertain to quite another state of consciousness."

This should be clear enough, and, as if to draw special attention to

it, the very words which give the correct doctrine about our "fellow globes" were printed in capital letters.

"Consubstantiality" means *the state of being the same substance*. This is negatived in respect to the globes; but it is asserted that they, *being of different substances, are united in one mass*, for such is the meaning of "co-adunition". If this be the case, as must be on the original authority, it then follows that the "seven globes of earth's chain, while differing from each other as to what is commonly called substance, are united together in a single mass. And when one is asked to shake off the dense veil of matter which beclouds the sight so as to perceive another of the globes, it is by no means meant that the companion globe, or globes as the case may be, would be seen rolling in space all by itself:" — and this is from another explanatory letter from the first authority. In the paragraph from *Secret Doctrine* attention is called to the fact that just because the seven globes are in co-adunition but not in consubstantiality with each other they pertain to a state of consciousness quite other than that we are compelled to be in now.

As H. P. B. used a diagram in which the globes are set down as separated, it only requires to be remembered that the system could not, on a flat surface by mere lines, be illustrated in any other way and be at all clear. Besides, all the diagrams and illustrations must be construed with the quotation on p. 166 in view, as well as the numerous pages of similar explanations.

Every student should make inquiry of himself to see what his ideas are on this subject, and revise them if they are found not to be in accord with what was so clearly explained in the words above quoted. For this lies at the root of many other difficulties. Materialistic conceptions on this will lead to materializing, localizing, and separating of states such as Devachan, and to

perhaps dogmas about places that do not exist, when states of consciousness should be dwelt upon. For, as was written in a letter quoted by H. P. B.:

Unless less trouble is taken to reconcile the irreconcilable — that is to say, the metaphysical and spiritual sciences with physical or natural philosophy, "natural" being a synonym to them [men of science] of that matter which falls under the perception of their corporeal senses — no progress can be really achieved.

And on page 169 of vol. 1 of *Secret Doctrine* is a sentence not printed as a quotation, but which is really one from one of the same teacher's letters, reading:

To be fully realized [the evolution of the monads on the globes] both this process and that of the birth of the globes must be examined far more from their metaphysical aspect than from what one might call a statistical standpoint.

Although the Lodge has declared through the mouth of H. P. B. that the complete truth on these matters is the heritage of future generations, yet we who are working in the movement now, believing in reincarnation and knowing the force of Karmic tendencies, must not forget that we are destined to return in future years once more to the same work. We should therefore study the pure spiritual, psychic, and metaphysical aspects of the doctrines, leaving disputes with the changing science of the day to those who are amused by it. For those disputes are wholly unimportant, since they will all pass away; but the spirit of truth will not pass, nor shall we who endeavor to find her and to understand what she says to us.

APHORISMS ON KARMA — *William Q. Judge*

The following, among others not yet used, were given to me by teachers, among them being H. P. Blavatsky. Some were written, others communicated in other ways. To me they were declared to be from manuscripts not now accessible to the general public. Each one was submitted for my judgment and reason; and just as they, aside from any authority, approved themselves to my reason after serious consideration of them, so I hope they will gain the approval of those my fellow workers to whom I now publish them. — William Q. Judge.

APHORISMS.

- (1) There is no Karma unless there is a being to make it or feel its effects.
- (2) Karma is the adjustment of effects flowing from causes, during which the being upon whom and through whom that adjustment is effected experiences pain or pleasure.
- (3) Karma is an undeviating and unerring tendency in the Universe to restore equilibrium, and it operates incessantly.
- (4) The apparent stoppage of this restoration to equilibrium is due to the necessary adjustment of disturbance at some other spot, place, or focus, which is visible only to the Yogi, to the Sage, or the perfect Seer: there is therefore no stoppage, but only a hiding from view.
- (5) Karma operates on all things and beings from the minutest conceivable atom up to Brahma. Proceeding in the three worlds of men, gods, and the elemental beings, no spot in the manifested universe is exempt from its sway.

(6) Karma is not subject to time, and therefore he who knows what is the ultimate division of time in this Universe knows Karma.

(7) For all other men Karma is in its essential nature unknown and unknowable.

(8) But its action may be known by calculation from cause to effect; and this calculation is possible because the effect is wrapped up in and is not succedent to the cause.

(9) The Karma of this earth is the combination of the acts and thoughts of all beings of every grade which were concerned in the preceding Manvantara or evolutionary stream from which ours flows.

(10) And as those beings include Lords of Power and Holy Men, as well as weak and wicked ones, the period of the earth's duration is greater than that of any entity or race upon it.

(11) Because the Karma of this earth and its races began in a past too far back for human minds to reach, an inquiry into its beginning is useless and profitless.

(12) Karmic causes already set in motion must be allowed to sweep on until exhausted, but this permits no man to refuse to help his fellows and every sentient being.

(13) The effects may be counteracted or mitigated by the thoughts and acts of oneself or of another, and then the resulting effects represent the combination and interaction of the whole number of causes involved in producing the effects.

(14) In the life of worlds, races, nations, and individuals, Karma cannot act unless there is an appropriate instrument provided for its action.

(15) And until such appropriate instrument is found, that Karma related to it remains unexpended.

(16) While a man is experiencing Karma in the instrument provided, his other unexpended Karma is not exhausted through other beings or means, but is held reserved for future operation; and lapse of time during which no operation of that Karma is felt causes no deterioration in its force or change in its nature.

(17) The appropriateness of an instrument for the operation of Karma consists in the exact connection and relation of the Karma with the body, mind, intellectual and psychical nature acquired for use by the Ego in any life.

(18) Every instrument used by any Ego in any life is appropriate to the Karma operating through it.

(19) Changes may occur in the instrument during one life so as to make it appropriate for a new class of Karma, and this may take place in two ways: (*a*) through intensity of thought and the power of a vow, and (*b*) through natural alterations due to complete exhaustion of old causes.

(20) As body and mind and soul have each a power of independent action, any one of these may exhaust, independently of the others, some Karmic causes more remote from or nearer to the time of their inception than those operating through other channels.

(21) Karma is both merciful and just. Mercy and Justice are only opposite poles of a single whole; and Mercy without Justice is not possible in the operations of Karma. That which man calls Mercy and Justice is defective, errant, and impure.

(22) Karma maybe of three sorts: (*a*) Presently operative in this life through the appropriate instruments; (*b*) that which is being

made or stored up to be exhausted in the future; (c) Karma held over from past life or lives and not operating yet because inhibited by inappropriateness of the instrument in use by the Ego, or by the force of Karma now operating.

(23) Three fields of operation are used in each being by Karma: (a) the body and the circumstances; (b) the mind and intellect; (c) the psychic and astral planes.

(24) Held-over Karma or present Karma may each, or both at once, operate in all of the three fields of Karmic operation at once, or in either of those fields a different class of Karma from that using the others may operate at the same time.

(25) Birth into any sort of body and to obtain the fruits of any sort of Karma is due to the preponderance of the line of Karmic tendency.

(26) The sway of Karmic tendency will influence the incarnation of an Ego, or any family of Egos, for three lives at least, when measures of repression, elimination, or counteraction are not adopted.

(27) Measures taken by an Ego to repress tendency, eliminate defects, and to counteract by setting up different causes, will alter the sway of Karmic tendency and shorten its influence in accordance with the strength or weakness of the efforts expended in carrying out the measures adopted.

(28) No man but a sage or true seer can judge another's Karma. Hence while each receives his deserts appearances may deceive, and birth into poverty or heavy trial may not be punishment for bad Karma, for Egos continually incarnate into poor surroundings where they experience difficulties and trials which are for the discipline of the Ego and result in strength, fortitude, and sympathy.

(29) Race-Karma influences each unit in the race through the law of Distribution. National Karma operates on the members of the nation by the same law more concentrated. Family Karma governs only with a nation where families have been kept pure and distinct; for in any nation where there is a mixture of family — as obtains in each Kali yuga period — family Karma is in general distributed over a nation. But even at such periods some families remain coherent for long periods, and then the members feel the sway of family Karma. The word "family" may include several smaller families.

(30) Karma operates to produce cataclysms of nature by concatenation through the mental and astral planes of being. A cataclysm may be traced to an immediate physical cause such as internal fire and atmospheric disturbance, but these have been brought on by the disturbance created through the dynamic power of human thought.

(31) Egos who have no Karmic connection with a portion of the globe where a cataclysm is coming on are kept without the latter's operation in two ways: (*a*) by repulsion acting on their inner nature, and (*b*) by being called and warned by those who watch the progress of the world.

The Path

DEVACHAN — *William Q. Judge*

A correspondent writes to say that there seems to be some confusion or contradiction in theosophical literature and among theosophical writers in respect to the length of time a person stays in Devachan, and cites the statement by Mr. Sinnett that the number of years is 1500, while I am quoted as giving a shorter time. Two things should be always remembered. First, that Mr. Sinnett in writing on Devachan in *Esoteric Buddhism* was repeating his own understanding of what Mme. Blavatsky's teachers had communicated through her to him — a copy of each letter being kept and now accessible, and he might very easily make an error in a subject with which he was not at all familiar; second, that only the Adepts who gave out the information could possibly know the exact number of years for which any course of life would compel one to remain in the Devachanic state; and as those Adepts have spoken in other places on this subject, the views of Mr. Sinnett must be read in connection with those superior utterances.

There is in reality no confusion save in the way different students have taken the theory, and always the mistakes that have arisen flow from hastiness as well as inaccuracy in dealing with the matter as a theory which involves a knowledge of the laws of mental action.

In *Key to Theosophy*, p. 143, 158, H. P. B. says, "The stay in Devachan depends on the degree of spirituality and the merit or demerit of the last incarnation. The *average* time is from 1000 to 1500 years". . . "Whether that interval lasts one year or a million."

Here the average time means "the time for the average person who has any devachanic tendencies," for many "average persons"

have no such tendencies; and the remark on p. 158 gives a possible difference of 500 years. This is exactly in accord with the theory, because in a matter which depends on the subtle action of mind solely it would be very difficult — and for most of us impossible — to lay down exact figures.

But the Adept K. H., who wrote most of the letters on which Mr. Sinnett's treatment of Devachan was based, wrote other letters, two of which were published in *THE PATH*, in Vol. 5 in 1890, without signature. The authorship of those *Notes on Devachan* is now divulged. They were attributed to "X." He says:

"The 'dream of Devachan' lasts *until Karma* is satisfied in that direction. In Devachan there is a gradual exhaustion of force.

"The stay in Devachan is *proportionate to the unexhausted psychic impulses* originating in earth life. Those whose attractions were preponderatingly material *will be sooner brought back* into rebirth by the force of Tanha."

Very clearly in this, as was always taught, it is stated that the going into Devachan depends upon psychic (which here means spiritual and of the nature of soul) thoughts of earth life. So he who has not originated many such impulses will have but little basis or force in him to throw his higher principles into the Devachanic state. And the second paragraph of his letter shows that the materialistic thinker, having laid down no spiritual or psychic basis of thought, is "sooner brought back to rebirth by the force of Tanha," which means the pulling or magnetic force of the thirst for life inherent in all beings and fixed in the depths of their essential nature. In such a case the average rule has no application, since the whole effect either way is due to a balancing of forces and is the outcome of action and reaction. And this sort of a materialistic thinker might emerge to rebirth out of the Devachanic state in about a month, because we have to

allow for the expending of certain psychic impulses generated in childhood before materialism obtained full sway. But as every one varies in his force and in respect to the impulses he may generate, some of this class might stay in the Devachanic state one, five, ten, twenty years, and so on, in accordance with the power of the forces generated in earth life.

For these reasons, and having had H. P. B.'s views ever since 1875 on the subject, I wrote in *PATH*, V. 5, 1890, p. 190, "In the first place I have never believed that the period given by Mr. Sinnett in *Esoteric Buddhism* of 1500 years for the stay in that state was a fixed fact in nature. It might be fifteen minutes as well as 1500 years. But it is quite likely that for the majority of those who so constantly wish for a release and for an enjoyment of heaven, the period would be more than 1500 years." This contradicts nothing unless Mr. Sinnett shall be shown as saying positively that every man and woman is bound by an arbitrary inflexible rule to stay 1500 years — no more nor less — in the Devachanic state; and this it is quite unlikely he could say, since it would involve a contradiction of the whole philosophy of man's nature in which he has faith. And what was said in vol. 5 of *PATH* accords with the views of those Adepts who have written on the subject, as well as with the very ancient teachings thereupon in the *Bhagavad-Gita* and elsewhere.

In everyday life many illustrations can be found of the operation upon living men of the same force which puts disembodied man into Devachan. The artist, poet, musician, and day-dreamer constantly show it. When rapt in melody, composition, color arrangement, and even foolish fancy, they are in a sort of living Devachanic state wherein they often lose consciousness of time and sense impressions. Their stay in that condition depends, as we well know, on the impulses toward it which they have amassed. If they were not subject to the body and its forces they

might remain years in their "dream." The same laws, applied to the man divested of a body, will give us exactly the results for Devachan.

But no one save a trained mathematical Adept could sum up the forces and give us the total number of years or minutes which might measure Devachan. On the Adepts, therefore, we have to depend for a specific time-statement, and they have declared 1000 to 1500 years to be a good general average.

This will therefore result in giving us what may be known as the general *Cycle of Reincarnation* for the average mass of units in any civilization. By means of this a very good approximation may be made toward forecasting the probable development of national thought, if we work back century by century, or by decades of this century, for fifteen hundred years in history.

The Path

THE MAHATMAS AS IDEALS AND FACTS — *Eusebio Urban*

A visitor from one of the other planets of the solar system who might learn the term *Mahatma* after arriving here would certainly suppose that the etymology of the word undoubtedly inspired the believers in *Mahatmas* with the devotion, fearlessness, hope, and energy which such an ideal should arouse in those who have the welfare of the human race at heart. Such a supposition would be correct in respect to some, but the heavenly visitor after examining all the members of the Theosophical Society could not fail to meet disappointment when the fact was clear to him that many of the believers were afraid of their own ideals, hesitated to proclaim them, were slothful in finding arguments to give reasons for their hope, and all because the wicked and scoffing materialistic world might laugh at such a belief.

The whole sweep, meaning, and possibility of evolution are contained in the word *Mahatma*. *Maha* is "great," *Atma* is "soul," and both compounded into one mean those great souls who have triumphed before us not because they are made of different stuff and are of some strange family, but just because they are of the human race. Reincarnation, karma, the sevenfold division, retribution, reward, struggle, failure, success, illumination, power, and a vast embracing love for man, all these lie in that single word. The soul emerges from the unknown, begins to work in and with matter, is reborn again and again, makes karma, develops the six vehicles for itself, meets retribution for sin and punishment for mistake, grows strong by suffering, succeeds in bursting through the gloom, is enlightened by the true illumination, grasps power, retains charity, expands with love for orphaned humanity, and thenceforth helps all others who remain

in darkness until all may be raised up to the place with the "Father in Heaven" who is the Higher Self. This would be the argument of the visitor from the distant planet, and he in it would describe a great ideal for all members of a Society such as ours which had its first impulse from some of these very *Mahatmas*.

Without going into any argument further than to say that evolution demands that such beings should exist or there is a gap in the chain — and this position is even held by a man of science like Prof. Huxley, who in his latest essays puts it in almost as definite language as mine — this article is meant for those who believe in the existence of the *Mahatmas*, whether that faith has arisen of itself or is the result of argument. It is meant also for all classes of the believers, for they are of several varieties. Some believe without wavering; others believe unwaveringly but are afraid to tell of their belief; a few believe, yet are always thinking that they must be able to say they have set eyes on an Adept before they can infuse their belief into others; and a certain number deliberately hide the belief as a sort of individual possession which separates them from the profane mortals who have never heard of the Adepts or who having heard scoff at the notion. To all these I wish to speak. Those unfortunate persons who are ever trying to measure exalted men and sages by the conventional rules of a transition civilization, or who are seemingly afraid of a vast possibility for man and therefore deny, may be well left to themselves and to time, for it is more than likely they will fall into the general belief when it is formed, as it surely will be in the course of no long time. For a belief in *Mahatmas* — whatever name you give the idea — is a common property of the whole race, and all the efforts of all the men of empirical science and dogmatic religion can never kill out the soul's own memory of its past.

We should declare our belief in the Adepts, while at the same

time we demand no one's adherence. It is not necessary to give the names of any of the Adepts, for a name is an invention of a family, and but few persons ever think of themselves by name but by the phrase "I am myself." To name these beings, then, is no proof, and to seek for mystery names is to invite condemnation for profanation. The ideal without the name is large and grand enough for all purposes.

Some years ago the Adepts wrote and said to H. P. B. and to several persons that more help could be given to the movement in America because the fact of their existence was not concealed from motives of either fear or doubt. This statement of course carries with it by contradistinction the conclusion that where, from fear of schools of science or of religion, the members had not referred much to the belief in *Mahatmas*, the power to help was for some reason inhibited. This is the interesting point, and brings up the question "Can the power to help of the *Mahatmas* be for any cause inhibited?" The answer is, It can. But why?

All effects on every plane are the result of forces set in motion, and cannot be the result of nothing, but must ever flow from causes in which they are wrapped up. If the channel through which water is meant to flow is stopped up, the water will not run there, but if a clear channel is provided the current will pass forward. Occult help from Masters requires a channel just as much as any other help does, and the fact that the currents to be used are occult makes the need for a channel greater. The persons to be acted on must take part in making the channel or line for the force to act, for if we will not have it they cannot give it. Now as we are dealing with the mind and nature of man, we have to throw out the words which will arouse the ideas connected with the forces we desire to have employed. In this case the words are those which bring up the doctrine of the existence of Adepts, Mahatmas, Masters of wisdom. Hence the value of the declaration

of our belief. It arouses dormant ideas in others, it opens up a channel in the mind, it serves to make the conducting lines for the forces to use which the *Mahatmas* wish to give out. Many a young man who could never hope to see great modern professors of science like Huxley and Tyndall and Darwin has been excited to action, moved to self-help, impelled to seek for knowledge, by having heard that such men actually exist and are human beings. Without stopping to ask if the proof of their living in Europe is complete, men have sought to follow their example. Shall we not take advantage of the same law of the human mind and let the vast power of the Lodge work with our assistance and not against our opposition or doubt or fear? Those who are devoted know how they have had unseen help which showed itself in results. Those who fear may take courage, for they will find that not all their fellow beings are devoid of an underlying belief in the possibilities outlined by the doctrine of the existence of the Adepts.

And if we look over the work of the Society we find wherever the members boldly avow their belief and are not afraid to speak of this high ideal, the interest in theosophy is awake, the work goes on, the people are benefited. To the contrary, where there are constant doubt, ceaseless asking for material proof, incessant fear of what the world or science or friends will think, there the work is dead, the field is not cultivated, and the town or city receives no benefit from the efforts of those who while formally in a universal brotherhood are not living out the great ideal.

Very wisely and as an occultist, Jesus said his followers must give up all and follow him. We must give up the desire to save ourselves and acquire the opposite one, — the wish to save others. Let us remember the story in ancient writ of Arjuna, who, entering heaven and finding that his dog was not admitted and some of his friends in hell, refused to remain and said that while

one creature was out of heaven he would not enter it. This is true devotion, and this joined to an intelligent declaration of belief in the great initiation of the human race will lead to results of magnitude, will call out the forces that are behind, will prevail against hell itself and all the minions of hell now striving to retard the progress of the human soul.

The Path

THE EARTH CHAIN OF GLOBES: II — *William Brehon*

No. II.

In February PATH the subject of the *coadunition* but *non-consubstantiality* of the seven globes of the Earth-chain was opened up slightly and discussed in view of certain expressions from the Adepts themselves on the same matter. Since then questions and doubts have arisen, as it seems that — as was suspected — the fundamental principles underlying this doctrine have not been clearly defined in the minds of all. And, indeed, before such clear definition is arrived at most if not all of the naturalistic and materialistic doctrines and modes of thought of the day will have to be abandoned. The true theory of the companion globes of our earth is one which cannot be fully comprehended if we are influenced, as many are, by the education which for centuries has been imposed upon us. When the Adepts say that these doctrines must be examined from a metaphysical standpoint, the nineteenth century person thinks that therefore it must be so vague and unreal as not to constitute an inclusion of facts, since "facts" are hard and visible things, so to say.

The first question, coming from one who grasps to a great extent the theory broached in the paragraph from the Master's pen quoted in *Secret Doctrine*, is whether we will be able to see but one globe at a time as we change our centre of consciousness? That is to say, seeing that we now can perceive the earth with the eye and none of the other companions, does it follow from this that, when the race ceases to function on the earth and has taken up evolution on the next globe in order, we shall see then but that globe and none of the others of the chain among which will then

be included this earth? It by no means follows that we then shall be able to see but one, but to what extent our then vision will be stretched or how many other globes we shall be able to see has not been given out publicly by the Masters, and it is held that alone in the keeping of the Lodge is the knowledge on this detail of the doctrine. We are left therefore to our own deductions, to be drawn from known facts. No very substantial benefit could be derived from exact knowledge about it, as it relates to matters and states of life removed from us inconceivably far both as to time and consciousness. Nor would a full explanation be comprehended. One of the teachers has written:

You do not seem to realize the tremendous difficulties in the way of imparting even the rudiments of *our* science to those who have been trained in the familiar methods of (modern science). You do not see that the more you have of the one the less capable you are to instinctively comprehend the other, for a man can only think in his worn grooves, and unless he has *the courage to fill up these and make new ones for himself* [italics are mine] he must perforce travel on the old lines. . . . Such is, unfortunately, the inherited and self-acquired grossness of the Western mind, and so greatly have the very phrases expressive of modern thought been developed in the line of practical Materialism, that it is now next to impossible either for them to comprehend or for us to express in their own languages anything of that delicate, seemingly ideal, machinery of the occult cosmos. To some little extent that faculty can be acquired by the Europeans through study and meditation, but — that's all. And here is the bar which has hitherto prevented a conviction of the Theosophical truths from gaining currency among Western nations — caused Theosophical study to be cast aside as useless and

fantastic.

As implied in the foregoing, the reason for not telling all about it is that it would not be comprehended, and not that the Lodge desires to keep it back from the world. The same difficulty has often been encountered by ordinary clairvoyants who have tried to give an account of the little they know of the "occult cosmos" to hearers whose modes of thought were purely materialistic or tainted by that kind of education. And I have met estimable theosophists who said to me that if they really were convinced that I believed certain things which I hinted to them they would be forced in sadness to conclude I was a most superstitious person — meaning of course that their ignorance and inability would constitute my superstition.

But as we now reside in a physical body perfectly visible to us, and as the astral body is sometimes seen by certain persons, it follows most surely that some persons can now see another body or form of matter while functioning in their little earth. The fact that all do not see the astral body only proves that as yet the seeing of it is not normal for the whole human race. And looking at the other side of the matter, we know that sometimes persons escaped temporarily from the physical body and functioning wholly in the astral have been able to see the physical one as it slept in trance. From this we may conclude that when the race has gone to some other centre of consciousness called a globe, it may possibly be able to see another of the companions in the sky. This is made more probable from the fact that the Earth is the lowest or at the turning of the circle, and for that reason it is on its own plane and not in company as to plane with any other one. The others might be two at a time on the one plane and then visible to each other.

The next point raised is that if the article of February is accepted,

then it results that we consider the companion globes to be only "phases of the Earth." The letter from the Master above quoted is pertinent here, for this objection arises solely and wholly from a materialistic education leading the objector to give the first place of importance to the earth, just as if it were not possible to say that earth is a phase of the other globes.

The globes are not in any sense phases of each other, but are "phases of consciousness." The consciousness alters and we function in another state of matter, in the same place, but not able to see the state of matter we have left. And as now the whole race is bound up by its total form and quality of consciousness, the units of it are compelled to remain in the general state of consciousness until the race progress permits an advance or change to another. In the evolution of the race it develops new senses and instruments for perception, but these proceed along with the changing centre of consciousness, and are not the causes for the latter but are effects due to the operation and force of that inner power of perceiving which at last compels nature to furnish the necessary instrument. When the new instruments are all perfected, then the whole race moves on to another plane altogether.

All this supports and enforces the doctrine of universal brotherhood upon which the Adepts have insisted. For the changing of consciousness as to centre is not for the benefit of the individual, but is permissible and possible when the whole mass of matter of the globe whereon the beings are evolving has been perfected by the efforts and work of the most advanced of the whole number, and that advanced class is man. If it were otherwise, then we should see millions upon millions of selfish souls deserting the planet as soon as they had acquired the necessary new senses, leaving their fellows and the various kingdoms of nature to shift for themselves. But the law and the

Lodge will not permit this, but insist that we shall remain until the lower masses of atoms have been far enough educated to be able to go on in a manner not productive of confusion. Here again we trench upon the materialism of the age, which will roar with laughter at the idea of its being possible to educate the atoms.

The doctrine of the interpenetration of the planes of matter lies at the root of clairvoyance, clairaudience, and all such phenomena. Clairvoyance would be an impossibility were it not the fact that what for the ordinary sense is solid and an obstacle to sight is in reality for the other set of senses non-existent, free from solidity, and no obstacle. Otherwise clear seeing is impossible, and the learned doctors are right who say we are all deluded and never did any one see through a solid wall. For while the faculty of imagination is necessary for the training of the power to see through a solid wall, we could not so perceive merely by imagination, since objects must have a medium through which they are to be seen. This again strikes against materialistic conceptions, for the "objective" usually means that which can be seen and felt. But in the machinery of the "occult cosmos" the objective is constantly changing to the subjective and *vice versa*, as the centre of consciousness changes. In the trance or clairvoyant state the subjective of the waking man has become the objective. So also in dreams. There, clothed with another body of finer texture, the perceiver finds all the experiences objective as to their circumstances and subjective as to the feelings they produce on the perceiver who registers the sensations. And in precisely similar manner will the race see, feel, and know when it has changed all and begins to function on another globe.

AUTHORSHIP OF SECRET DOCTRINE — *One of the Staff*

A good deal has been said about the writing of *Isis Unveiled*, and later of the *Secret Doctrine*, both by H. P. Blavatsky. A writer in the spiritualistic journals took great pains to show how many books the first work seems to quote from, and the conclusion to be arrived at after reading his diatribes is that H. P. B. had an enormous library at her disposal, and of course in her house, for she never went out, or that she had agents at great expense copying books, or, lastly, that by some process or power not known to the world was able to read books at a distance, as, for instance, in the Vatican at Rome and the British Museum. The last is the fact. She lived in a small flat when writing the first book and had very few works on hand, all she had being of the ordinary common sort. She herself very often told how she gained her information as to modern books. No secret was made of it, for those who were with her saw day after day that she could gaze with ease into the astral light and glean whatever she wanted. But in the early days she did not say precisely to the public that she was in fact helped in that work by the Masters, who gave from time to time certain facts she could not get otherwise. The *Secret Doctrine*, however, makes no disguise of the real help, and she asserts, as also many of us believe, that the Masters had a hand in that great production. The letters sent to Mr. Sinnett formed the ground for *Esoteric Buddhism*, as was intended, but as time went on it was seen that some more of the veil had to be lifted and certain misconceptions cleared up; hence the *Secret Doctrine* was written, and mostly by the Masters themselves, except that she did the arranging of it.

For some time it was too much the custom of those who had received at the hands of H. P. B. words and letters from her

Masters to please themselves with the imagination that she was no more in touch with the original fount, and that, forsooth, these people could decide for themselves what was from her brain and what from the Masters. But it is now time to give out a certificate given when the *Secret Doctrine* was being written, a certificate signed by the Masters who have given out all that is new in our theosophical books. It was sent to one who had then a few doubts, and at the same time copies were given from the same source to others for use in the future, which is now. The first certificate runs thus:

I wonder if this note of mine is worthy of occupying a select spot with the documents reproduced, and which of the peculiarities of the "Blavatskian" style of writing it will be found to most resemble? The present is simply to satisfy the Doctor that "the more proof given the less believed". Let him take my advice and not make these two documents public. It is for his own satisfaction the undersigned is happy to assure him that the *Secret Doctrine*, when ready, will be the triple production of [here are the names of one of the Masters and of H. P. B.] and most humble servant," [signed by the other.]

On the back of this was the following, signed by the Master who is mentioned in the above:

If this can be of any use or help to —, though I doubt it, I, the humble undersigned Faquir, certify that the *Secret Doctrine* is dictated to [name of H. P. B.], partly by myself and partly by my brother —".

A year after this, certain doubts having arisen in the minds of individuals, another letter from one of the signers of the foregoing was sent and reads as follows. As the prophecy in it has come true, it is now the time to publish it for the benefit of those

who know something of how to take and understand such letters. For the outside it will all be so much nonsense.

The certificate given last year saying that the *Secret Doctrine* would be when finished the triple production of [H. P. B.'s name], , and myself was and is correct, although some have doubted not only the facts given in it but also the authenticity of the message in which it was contained. Copy this and also keep the copy of the aforesaid certificate. You will find them both of use on the day when you shall, as will happen without your asking, receive from the hands of the very person to whom the certificate was given, the original for the purpose of allowing you to copy it; and then you can verify the correctness of this presently forwarded copy. And it may then be well to indicate to those wishing to know what portions in the *Secret Doctrine* have been copied by the pen of [H. P. B.'s name] into its pages, though without quotation marks, from my own manuscript and perhaps from —, though the last is more difficult from the rarity of his known writing and greater ignorance of his style. All this and more will be found necessary as time goes on, but for which you are well qualified to wait.

The Path

THE EARTH-CHAIN OF GLOBES: III — *William Brehon*

No. III.

The Editor has handed me a communication from a reader upon this subject which I insert here, as it on the one hand shows a very common defect of students — inaccuracy of reading, thought, and reference, and on the other will serve as a question which arises in other minds. It reads:

Please state in reference to the *Earth Chain of Globes* whether it is meant to be conveyed on page 159 of *S. D.* Vol. 1 that the "seven globes from the 1st to the 7th proceed in seven Rounds", that *each globe revolves seven times around the World Chain with its own particular development* [say *the Mineral Kingdom*], before the next in order [say the Vegetable Kingdom] appears on Globe A? Or does the Mineral Kingdom only go *once* around the World Chain from 1 to 7? In *Esoteric Buddhism*, Page 91, it is stated that the several kingdoms pass "*several times* around the whole circle as minerals, and then again *several times* as vegetables", but there is no distinct statement of this in *S. D.*
— Yours, Ignotus.

Inaccuracies like those in the foregoing are not uncommon. They are constant and all-pervading. It is probably the fault of modern education, accentuated by the reading of a vast amount of superficial literature such as is poured out day by day. Any close observer can detect the want of attention displayed in metaphysical studies in contrast with the particular care given to matters of business and practical affairs of life. All those who are studying Theosophy ought to make themselves aware of this national defect, and therefore give the strictest attention to what

they read upon metaphysics and devote less attention to the amount of such reading than to thinking upon what is read.

In the first place, the *Secret Doctrine* does not say on the page quoted, nor any where else, what "Ignotus" writes. Instead of reading as quoted, the passage is:

1. Everything in the metaphysical as in the physical Universe is septenary [p. 158]. . . . *The evolution of life proceeds on these seven globes or bodies from the first to the seventh in Seven Rounds or Seven Cycles* [p. 159].

I insert in italics the omitted words, the word *proceeds* having been put out of its place by "Ignotus". The error makes a completely new scheme, one unphilosophical and certainly not given out by the Masters. But though some may wonder why I notice such a false assumption, it is right to take it up because it must have arisen through carelessness, yet of such a sort as might perpetuate an important error. It follows from the restoration of the passage that the Globes do not "revolve around the world chain". The supposition of the correspondent is not peculiar among the many hurried ones made by superficial readers. He first assumed that the various globes of the Earth-Chain revolved, in some way which he did not stop to formulate, in seven rounds — I presume in some imaginary orbit of their own — in what he called the "world chain", and then he went on adapting the rest of the evolutionary theory to this primary assumption. By reading the *Secret Doctrine* and the former articles on this subject in the PATH, the point in question will be made clear. Evolution of the monad, which produces and underlies all other evolutions, proceeds on the seven planetary bodies of any chain of evolution. These seven places or spheres for such evolution represent different states of consciousness, and hence, as written in the *Secret Doctrine* and attempted to be shown in these articles, they

may and do interpenetrate each other with beings on each. Therefore all such words as "round", "around", "chain", and the like must be examined metaphysically and not be allowed to give the mind a false notion such as is sure to arise if they are construed in the material way and from their materialistic derivation. "To go around" the seven globes does not mean that one passes necessarily from one place to another, but indicates a change from one condition to another, just as we might say that a man "went the whole round of sensations".

As to the other questions raised, *Esoteric Buddhism* is right in saying that the monads pass *several* times around the globes as minerals and vegetables, but wisely does not make the number and order very definite. In the *Secret Doctrine* one of the Masters writes that at the second round the order of the appearance of the human kingdom alters, but the letter goes no farther on that point except to say, as is very definitely put in the *Secret Doctrine* on p. 159, para. 4;

The Life Cycle . . . arrived on our Earth at the commencement of the fourth in the present series of life-cycles. Man is the first form that appears thereon, being preceded only by the mineral and vegetable kingdoms — even the latter *having to develop and continue its further evolution through man.*

This states quite distinctly (a) that after the second round the order alters, and (b) that in the fourth round, instead of animals appearing as the first moving forms for the monads to inhabit, the human form comes first, preceded by mineral and vegetable, and followed by the brute-animal.

This change always comes on at any fourth round, or else we never could have evolutionary perfection. Other monads come originally from other spheres of evolution. In a new one such as

this the preliminary process and order of mineral, plant, animal, human must be followed. But having in two or three rounds perfected itself in the task, the monad brings out the human form at the turning point, so that man as the model, means, guide, and savior may be able to intelligently raise up not only humanity but as well every other kingdom below the human. This is all made very clear and positive by repeated statement and explanation in the *Secret Doctrine*, and it is a matter for surprise that so many Theosophists do not understand it.

For fear that the present may be misunderstood I will add. Although the order of appearance of the human form alters as stated, this does not mean that the whole number of natural kingdoms does not make the sevenfold pilgrimage. They all make it, and in every round up to and including the seventh there are present in the chain of globes elemental, mineral, vegetable, animal, and human forms constituting those kingdoms, but of course the minerals and vegetables of the seventh round and race will be a very different sort from those of the present.

But as what a Master has said hereon is far better than my weak words, I will refer to that. Thus:

Nature consciously prefers that matter should be indestructible under organic rather than inorganic forms, and works slowly but incessantly towards the realization of this object — the evolution of conscious life out of inert material.

SPIRITUALISM (1) — *William Q. Judge*

The subject of spiritualism brings us face to face with the history of the Theosophical Society and the true progress of the human soul. When Mme. Blavatsky came to this country in obedience to the orders given her by those she called her Masters and who are known to us as the Mahatmas and Adepts, it was with spiritualism here that she began. It was seen by the Masters that the new wave of inquiry had begun in those ranks but had been deflected into the channel of materialism miscalled by the high name of "spiritualism", and it was sought at first to give the spiritualists a chance to do what they might and ought for the sake of the western races. But the opportunity was not availed of at all: instead, ridicule and hate were thrown by them at H. P. B. Anyone who reads the published letters of the Masters can see the attention paid at first to this. One said that he was engaged in looking over the utterances of the mediums at their camp meetings, and H. P. B. often wrote her views as if she wanted to get into their ranks. She did wish to get there for the purpose of reform, but they would not let her in, and thus missed the greatest chance of the age. Letters were written by her to many people to have them help a new paper in Boston called the *Spiritual Scientist* as one that would give the right views about these matters, and she and Olcott wrote for the paper and gave money to it. It, however, died out soon. I knew the editor, and personally knew what H. P. B. and Olcott were then doing in that particular instance. She wanted to reform such abuses as paid and public mediums, and all the mass of wrong notion and wrong dealing with the whole subject, and especially she wished, as we do also, that things should be called by their right names, and that certain facts should not be accepted as proofs for theories

advanced by mediums, and especially by A. J. Davis, as to the state after death and the power and nature of the forces that come to and about mediums. So it may be justly said that at first she had in mind to carry a reform in spiritualism at a time when the cycle permitted vastly more phenomena than now. And a student in Theosophy will see in this her knowledge of facts and laws of which so many are ignorant to this day. For it is the fact that then more psychic power was loose in the country than there now is, and also that it was bound, as years rolled on, to fade out to some extent. This is borne out by history, for it is hard today to find many good physical mediums, while then it was very easy and they were quite common. The world thinks that the reason that they have now grown rare is because of many exposures, but the real reason is that the *force* has for the time diminished. Her desire, in fact her haste, was to take advantage of time before all was too late. And so when she found no acceptance among the spiritualists, she and Olcott began the Theosophical Society.

We are brought by the subject face to face with the problem of the nature and destiny of the human soul, because the facts of spiritualism are the facts of the soul's own life and of the various vehicles it uses for its experience of Nature. Spiritualists look at this subject in a material way and go at it blindly, endangering all who have anything to do with it. They speak of the life after death, and give details as to the facts of that life which are to the spiritually minded the grossest form of materialism, for they but deify and enlarge in the most sensuous manner the life supposed to be led after death, a life modeled entirely on this poor mean existence of ours and not at all resembling what soul-life ought to be. They have merely made the old Christian heaven a little more definite and gross.

The Theosophist must accept the facts of spiritualism or be accused of ignorance and bigotry. But his philosophy gives to

those facts an explanation which takes in the real nature of man, without sentiment, wonder, or amazement. He looks for the right meaning at all hazards. It is folly and waste of time to go day after day to a medium and hear over again that which excites wonder. And the careful Theosophist knows it is also dangerous to seek mediums; it is better to stay away and try to understand philosophy first of all. Not a single thing seen at a *seance* but can be found in smaller measure elsewhere if you but choose to look, for the world is full of wonders every day, and each one's life has in it much that gives the explanation for what the spiritualist claims as exclusively his own. If you will watch your own life in its three stages of waking, deep sleep, and dream, you will find the key to all the mysteries of mind and even to the mysteries of the whole of nature. So in considering spiritualism you must not set it in a compartment by itself, but must examine every part of the subject with reference to the living man and the philosophy of that living man's constitution. If you do not do so, but go on looking at these phenomena by themselves, you will be all the time on the wrong road and sure to come at last to wrong conclusions about the whole matter. It is hence important for us to keep clearly in mind the sevenfold constitution of man as explained in Theosophical literature. Our septenary nature must be known if we are to know all that the psychical phenomena mean, and we must also remember that what we are really considering is not the body but the action of the soul itself in the use of its various sheaths sometimes called "principles". And also it is essential, if you wish to know the truth, that you should accept, and try to understand, the impermanent nature of all that is usually called "material", and "matter", and "objective". The dense may at once become the fluid, and the objective turn into the subjective; in the same way also the subjective may, by the operation of natural laws, become the objective, and the unseen is more permanent than the seen. If this is not accepted and

realized, then there will be no hope of the enquirer's really knowing anything but the outside of all these strange phenomena. Set it down very carefully in the mind, then, that thoughts and ideas make shapes of their own which have the power under certain conditions of affecting our senses in such a way as to seem objective to our waking-cognition. This often happens in the realm of the psychic nature, and has deluded hundreds into thinking that to be spirit which was not spirit, but was of the very grossest part and essence of matter. And this brings us to the root of it all, which is that matter *in its essence* is invisible but at the same time far more gross than the matter we talk of daily. Almost to this conclusion such men as Tyndall and Huxley have been led when they tell you that it is impossible for us to really know anything of the essential or ultimate nature of matter.

In looking over spiritualism it resolves itself, so far as distinguishing it from other matters, into those phenomena called the coming back of the spirits of the dead, the materialization of forms said to be those of the dead and hence called "materialized forms", the carrying through the air of objects or the bodies of mediums, the writing of messages or the giving of them, and the precipitation of such messages in the style and handwriting of the deceased. Trance speaking, messages delivered in trance or not, speaking by inspiration, clairvoyance, and clairaudience, and all such phenomena are not distinctively the property of present-day spiritualism, as they have all been known for ages. But what I have laid aside as distinctive is quite wonderful to the ordinary lay mind, as we do not know how it may be possible for a tangible form to come out of the air, nor how a woman sitting in a trance may be able to tell many facts such as the name, the circumstances, and all such details about a dead man whom she never knew. And just here is the point of departure between the

Theosophist and the Spiritualist. The latter says this proves that the dead man's spirit is present, but the theosophist denies it and says it is all done by some or all of three agencies, excluding kama-loka entities. The *first* is the astral remainder of the dead man, devoid of his soul and the conscience; the *second* is the astral body of the living medium; and the *last* the minds and astral bodies of those present. In these three agencies is the explanation of every one of the phenomena; the elemental sprites being included in all the three, as they take part in every movement in nature and man all over the globe and around it. That is why I have not given them a separate part in the matter. Our every thought stirs up and uses these elementals, and the motion of the wind, the rays of the sun, and the fluids of the body, with the motions of the organs, all do the same thing. These elementals are the nerves of nature, and not a thing can happen or be done in any department of life that does not involve and use the sprites of the elements. By their aid, acting only under law, do our thoughts fly from place to place. They galvanize the deserted astral bodies of the dead, and thus, giving them a brief and wholly artificial life, cause them, like machines, to utter sounds, to repeat what they had been concerned in, to imitate the once active and ensouled person. This is about all the "spirit" there is in the communications from the dead. We might as well say that a lot of educated parrots left in a deserted house were the souls of the persons who had once lived there and owned the birds. Indeed, the illustration of the parrot is perfect, for a good parrot behind a screen could make you think that an intelligent man was hidden from view but speaking in a voice you hear and words you understand.

Take now the case of a "materialized form". Here you see, rising out of the floor or coming from the cabinet, an apparent human form which you can touch and feel, and which, in the very best

case, utters some words. What is this? Is it real? Is it a spirit?

It is not a spirit. It is made from the astral body of the medium, and often from astral matter sucked out of the sitters who may be present. The medium furnishes the natural chemical laboratory in which the astral particles are added to the loose physical atoms of the persons near, so as to make a dense form from the subjective that becomes for a time objective, but which cannot remain. It will fade away. A framework of magnetic and astral particles is first made, and then is condensed by adding the physical particles from the bodies of those present. Then it becomes visible. But it has no organs. It could not be dissected. And did it last long enough to be sawed in two you would find that it was solid all through, or ethereal as you please, for the dividing line between those two conditions would be constantly changing. It certainly would not be the heavenly form of your departed dead. More likely it is made up by the great force of some person of a very bad and utterly depraved nature lingering in the sphere of the earth and unable to get out of it, but constantly desiring to gratify its old lusts.

This is the ancient explanation, and the same solution has been given by one or two mediums under what they call control. Once, some years ago, a medium in Chicago reported that one Jim Nolan, long dead but said to be a very learned spook, came to her and said that materializations were just as I have told you, and added, "Why do you suppose it useful or necessary for us to make a new form for every new spirit that comes to you? We use the same old form over and over again, and we just reflect upon it from the astral light the face of those who are dead whom you wish to see." (2) He might have added that if the callers persisted in asking only for those who were still alive, the forms and faces of the living would also materialize from the cabinet. This experiment has not been tried by the spiritualists, but it would

inevitably result in proving that others than the dead would appear, and would cover with doubt the question of the dead returning. For if a spirit materialized, which after all turned out to be the *simulacrum* of a living person, what proof would one have that all the other spooks were not also alive? This is just what Theosophy says. They *are* all alive, and are one and all fraudulent representations of those whose names are taken in vain. And until this crucial experiment has been tried and well tried, the spiritualist cannot properly assert that the dead come back and make themselves visible.

The imagination of both sitters and medium is also very potent. Not in making them see what is not there, but in giving the shape or form to what does come. I have seen by the side of a medium of weak picture-making power the forms of so-called spirits that looked as if made by an amateur, as if cut out roughly from some substance. This was because the medium had no ability to draw or picture a thing to himself, and so, the elementals having to follow the natural model in the medium's mind, had perforce to produce just what shape was there. But others there are who have good picturing-power, and so with them the spook is well formed.

This brings me to the precipitation or writing of messages; and here it does not make any difference about the ability of the medium to write or draw, as the model or matrix of writing or picture is fixed in the astral light, or ether, and makes it easy for the natural forces to produce an exact imitation of the writing of those who have died. As I have seen the writing of the *living* thus imitated in precipitation, I know that this is the process, and that the matrix or model is independent of the medium.

The laws governing the production of a precipitation of matter from space on to a surface so as to become fixed and visible on

the paper or other material are the same in every case, whether done unconsciously by a medium or consciously by an Adept in the art.

The medium acts as the controlled and ignorant means; the Adept is the master, and at his own will, using the same laws, brings about the same end. The difference between the two is just that which exists in the case of the person who throws a mass of paint at a canvas and produces, by an accidental combination of color, a sunset or other scene, and the artist who with knowledge and skill deliberately paints a picture. Other illustrations will occur to you of the same kind. In the realm of psychic force, however, the laws act with greater certainty and power, thus showing results more astonishing. So we may not say that the medium uses any of the laws consciously, but we can assert that the inner body, the astral one, of the medium may use these laws and forces in a manner not understood by the waking sense of the person.

Now when the Adept makes a precipitation he constructs with the developed imagination or picture-making power of the mind an image, exact in every detail, of the words or figures to be precipitated, and then, using the force of his will, draws from the air the carbon or other matter for the color. This falls like rain, condensed from the air, and is unerringly drawn into the limits of the picture thus made by the mind. The drawing force being continued, it gradually condenses on the paper, and you have the message or the picture. Of course there are some other details I have not given, but they are not now necessary for the explanation. The medium is the means for the same action helped on by the elementals.

The cases of slate-writing are not usually precipitation, but are the actual rubbing of the pencil on the surface of the slate, and this is always done by the astral hand of the medium urged on by

the elemental forces and the vivified astral shells of the dead. The explanation of the resemblance to handwriting and so forth is as adverted to above, from the pictures in the astral light, the pictures in the aura of the sitters, and also those in the aura and mind of the medium. There is no spirit present but those enclosed in living bodies, and none of the messages will be any higher or better than the education and nature of medium and sitters and the sub-conscious impressions in the medium's astral body.

Objects have been carried through the air and even through walls in the presence of some mediums, and also sometimes the bodies of mediums have been levitated. How is this done? If you go to India you can see, by searching, the bodies of yogees levitated and objects sent flying through space. I have seen both there, as well as in the presence and by the conscious force of Mme. Blavatsky. In levitation of the human body the thing is done by altering the polarity of the body so that it is of the opposite kind of electricity to the spot of earth beneath. The distance it will levitate depends on the force and strength of the polar change. This is not contrary to gravitation, for that law is but one half of the great law which should be called attraction and repulsion, or, in other words, sympathy or its opposite. Gravitation, in the opinion of Occultism, depends entirely on electrical law, and not on weight or density.

Carrying of objects through the air by no visible means is a feat of the elementals or of the astral hand of the medium. And hence we have to know all about the astral body. One of the powers of the astral body is that of stretching out to a distance of a great many yards.

The sending of a hard object through a wall is done with small objects, and then a portion of the wall equal to the size of the object selected is disintegrated, so that the small object may pass through. It cannot be done with very large things, nor with the

human organized frame, except by the exertion of a vast amount of force not in the control of any one save a Master. I have seen H. P. B. push out her astral arm and hand for a space of over ten feet and draw into her physical hand an object at the other side of the room, and this is what she meant by "psychological frauds", as you did not perceive the arm and hand and were filled with wonder to see inanimate things move of their own accord, so far as you could tell. The medium does the same thing most of the time, and in very few cases are they aware that it is their own member that does it. But of course there are instances when the elemental sprites do it also.

Other phenomena belong to other fields. For all of them have been long before the world, and all that really distinguishes spiritualism from the rest is that it amounts to no more than the worship or following of the dead. It is not the worship of spirits at all. It is dealing with the dead shells of once living men and women. We hold that at death the soul flies to other states and leaves its coats of skin and of astral matter behind it. These should be let alone, as there is danger in them. They belong to other planes of nature, and if we wake them up, brutes and devils as they really are, we then subject ourselves to their influence and power. I say they are brutes and devils because the best of us knows that a part of our nature is not divine but is related to the earth and to brute matter, and is full too of all the passions and desires we have had in life. The soul being gone, there is no director to guide and prevent, and so we deal only with the gross dregs of man when we attend *seances* or let ourselves become mediums. In sleep we see a slight but convincing evidence of this. Then we are gone for a time, and the body, left to itself, throws itself into unbecoming attitudes, snores, throws itself about, and may strike another: I have read of cases where a man in sleep has leaned over and killed the person lying beside him. "Oh," you say,

"that was a nightmare". Precisely; it was; but it was the body of the man not controlled by his soul that did the act. It is the same with these spooks. They are devoid of soul, no matter who may have been the owner in life, and it is better to leave them alone and try on the other hand to develop and educate the living soul while it is in the body and is the real trinity, through which alone in any life real knowledge may be gained.

In a short paper it is impossible to fully treat this subject, as it brings up the whole of dynamics and science of psychic forces. But I have indicated the solution to all the problems that arise. For the present, until you have carefully studied the sevenfold constitution and the nature of mind with its powers, you may have difficulty with the matter except so far as concerns the historical and analogical arguments. These, together with the improbability deduced from absurdities of speech and action shown by the alleged spirits, should sustain the position taken so many years ago by H. P. Blavatsky and outlined above. And no one surely can doubt but that no truthful spiritual utterances — other than as to mere facts — can come out of the practice of sordid money dealings between mediums and enquirers. This is the bane of spiritualism, and should be eliminated at whatever great or painful cost. Until that is done no good can come out of that Nazareth.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Read before Aryan T. S., February 28. 1893. ([return to text](#))
2. See *Religio-Philosophical Journal* for 1877. ([return to text](#))

A VIEW OF GRECIAN MYTHOLOGY (1) — E. B. Rambo

In the study of Grecian Mythology or the religion of the ancient Greeks and Romans, we have no living professors or exponents of this belief, as is the case with most of the religions of the world. Yet as a system of religion and thought, and that one existing at the birth of the Christian religion and immediately preceding its advent, it is most important as a system. It is not only without living exponents, but it has no great bibles, vedas, shastras, or puranas as other religions have, and we must judge it by the few poems of the ancient Greeks, those of Hesiod, Homer, and the Orphic poems, and as we may find the powers and attributes of the various Gods symbolized in the statuary and gems of ancient times preserved or brought to light in these latter years, dumb yet speaking witnesses. It is an error to call the religion of our forefathers a mythology and attach to this word the meaning we usually attach to the word Myth or Fable, — that of something mythical, that is, untrue, imaginary, having little or no basis in fact, of the fancy. Quite the reverse is the truth; that there is no myth but what there is behind it and for it a true basis in fact. Myth is not of the imagination, no more than is the image or the shadow without the original producing the shadow, the image. Myths and fables in all ages have concealed the whole truth, and have been the external husk, generally made attractive, for covering and keeping the deeper truths and secrets of Nature.

In all ages it seems to have been necessary for the greater part of mankind to look upon knowledge veiled, both because he could not understand the whole of the deeper truths of Nature, and because he could not be trusted with the knowledge. If possessed, he would destroy himself and all others with the power conferred.

Myth and Allegory were the code, the cypher, in which the initiated transmitted to each other and their successors their own deep and perfect knowledge. We are told that these myths, legends, and allegories are to be read in at least seven different ways, and that as many correct readings may be had, all depending upon the key taken to unlock the hidden mysteries. According to the understanding, there is that for the plodding ignorant and for the most spiritual philosopher.

In a study of ancient Mythology we may take only one of these keys and may use it for only a very partial glimpse into the deep past. In this study we cannot take the interpretation of any one translator or student, for we see each one biased to a considerable degree by his previous thought, his education, moral and religious, and by what he desires to prove. It is only by taking many interpretations and comparing these with the silent carvings of the sculptor, observing the love and passion, the hate or tenderness expressed, dress, implements, attitude depicted by those who chiseled a religion into stone, that we may approach a correct understanding of the religion of our Grecian forefathers.

It is well to remember that Philology now proves that with few exceptions our present civilization is descended from the Aryan Race, the Fifth Race of the Fourth Round of Theosophy, and that it is well proven that the Greek and Roman people by their language were closely connected with the Aryan race and one of its direct sub-races, coming from that land of Northern India whence have traveled by slow marches many sub-races as they scattered westward from that land where the Masters keep their watch today. Why should They not live in the original home of our Race? This intimate connection shown between the Grecian and Aryan Races, we should expect to find traces of the earlier Secret Doctrine in Grecian Mythology, and as names of Gods and

heroes are shown to have a common derivation, we are warranted in using that which is known of one in explanation of the other and more obscure.

As in all other religions, we find the later expression of Grecian Mythology far removed from its earlier grandeur and simplicity. In the most ancient, we must seek the clearer and purer ideas.

The limit of time assigned to this subject this evening will only permit pointing out in a general and assertive way on one or two lines the deep and pure Theosophy to be found in the religion we are considering.

We read most of Zeus and Jupiter, of Father Jove who alone had power over all men and mortals, but Zeus was by no means the beginning of Grecian Mythology, although worshipped as the All-Father.

As in Theosophy, the first fundamental proposition is that of an Omnipotent, Eternal, Boundless, Immutable Principle on which all speculation is impossible, an Infinite and Eternal cause which cannot be described, but is the Root, the Container, and Essence of All, so we find with the Ancients, before all else, Chaos, — not Chaos in the usual sense of a heterogeneous mass, or a mixed state of matter in which manifested things exist in a disordered state, but as that state which contains all that is unmanifested, that which can only be described by negatives, and as the Absolute, holding and being itself Absolutely All. From Chaos are born all later manifestations, and as in all religions the one becomes the Trinity, or Three, so in the earliest Grecian cosmogony we find a primeval Trinity, Chaos, Gaea and Eros, answering to the Boundless All. In the unmanifested Universe, for while in later times Gaea becomes the physical earth, it originally is that aspect of the Absolute which we must think of as matter, and while Eros later becomes the brilliant winged Cupid, or

passionate love and desire, in the first awakening out of Chaos he is that propelling force, the active power which causes the One to divide and to appear on the Cosmic plane of Manifestation. From this first primeval Trinity is said to be born Erebus and Nux, or, in other words, over all is Darkness and Night, and from Darkness springs the light, or Aether, the superior light, and Hemera, the light of the terrestrial regions. With light, Heaven is made manifest, and over all is Heaven, or Ouranos. From Ouranos with his consort Gaea, or matter, are born first the Twelve Titans, six male and six female. Now these, while named, were not personages, but stand for various elementary forces in Nature, and we see their correspondences described in Theosophy as aspects of the one Fohat, the Universal force.

From Ouranos and Gaea are also born the Cyclops, three in number, — Brontes, thunder; Steropes, lightning; Arges, sheet-lightning; and three Centimanes, the Hundred Handed: Coltus, the earthquake; Briareus, the tempestuous sea; Gyes, the storm wind; other manifestations of this one same force prevailing and co-existing with Matter and Consciousness. Still, we have not come to the Gods over mortals, and we find that the earlier manifestations retire into darkness and silence, while from one pair of the Titans, Chronos (Time) and Rhea (Succession), are brought forth again six children, five of whom as they are born are swallowed by Chronos, this myth standing for the Ancients as expressing the fact that as all manifestation was in time and as all things which have a beginning also have an ending in time, Chronos may be said to devour his own offspring. The sixth child, or Zeus, is saved by the mother, Rhea, and becomes in time the slayer of his father, Chronos, taking away from him the creative power, after first compelling him to give up or reincarnate his first-born children.

We now have Zeus, the Sky Father, or Father over All; and in the name itself we have a proof of the descent of the Grecian people

from the Aryan race, carrying with them the ancient and original religion, for the Sanskrit word Dayus meaning Sky becomes the Zeus of the Greeks, as fully shown by Prof. Max Muller, and with the addition of another Sanskrit word, Pitar or Father, becomes Zeus Pater, or Jupiter of the Romans.

We cannot consider the entire Grecian pantheon, but we take up one line only, and in a rapid way will endeavor to show how the idea of Karma of Theosophy is most fully incorporated in Mythology. Zeus had at different times several wives. He is united with Themis, one of the Titans, and her statue is familiar to all of us as the figure of the noble, majestic woman with bandaged eyes, balance and sword in hand, standing for Justice and Law.

She is more than administrative law. Themis is the source of all Law as Karma is Law and action of every kind and on every plane. Themis represents the reign of law among Gods and Men, and from her union with Zeus are produced deities and gods, which are but aspects of the one Great Law, acting on different planes, cause and effect in their inter-action. First may be mentioned that group of their children called the Horae, whose office it was to promote Equity and Justice, whose stand was about the throne of Zeus, and who were as well the Seasons, representing the regular and orderly march of Nature in the changes she ever effects. While they stand for the higher workings of Universal Law, they also preside over law and order in human affairs.

A second group of the children of Zeus and Themis was the Moirai, or Parcae, by some called the Daughters of Night. The sacred Three, the Fates, dark and inexplicable powers of fate, and yet they are represented as beautiful females spinning and singing the song of the Sirens. As we have Karma, past, present, and future, so the Parcae represented these divisions of time, yet all

three are represented as seated together, connected with the one thread of Life passing through each of their hands, first Clotho spinning the thread, the action taking place, while Lachesis with parchment made the record, and Atropos with balance and shears determined and assigned the result.

While they were Fate, yet they really denote the boundary of Man's own making as well as that portion of his life which is determined by his birth, for this is but the expression of his former life or lives.

Another daughter of Zeus and Themis born of Law was Nemesis, and when we look upon that aspect of Karma which is retributive justice on this our plane, we have the idea pervading the minds of most persons of Nemesis. She was not only this, but more. Harsh, cruel only when Karma demanded it; equally she was loving, just, giving true deserts, and specially adjusting all that which was not deserved. She was the Goddess of Equality, as Karma is, watching over the equilibrium of the moral universe, seeing that happiness and misfortune are allotted to man according to merit. From this arose the idea of Nemesis as an avenging deity, visiting punishment upon the crimes of mankind. As such avenger she is shown with wings, in a chariot, with sword and whip.

Again, however, she is the just judge, a kindly, gentle Goddess who dispenses that which he is entitled to who has sown wisely, and again as a young woman of grave and thoughtful aspect, holding in her hand the cubit, the bridle, and rudder, emblems of control, as Karma calls her to act as the one who controls, for Karma rewards and controls all action and effects of action. . . .

To the student of Theosophy there seems to be but one truth underlying Grecian Mythology, and this truth is the jewel hidden in the Secret Doctrine, that Divine Wisdom which appears on every hand, in every religion, in every age.

He who would be a better occultist will study the loves and hates of the Gods and Goddesses, and underneath the chaff will be found the rich kernel of true spiritual knowledge.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Read before the San Francisco T. S., by E. B. Rambo. ([return to text](#))

The Path

RISHEES, MASTERS, AND MAHATMAS (1) — *Lakshman*

Dear Brother: — I am a Hindu, and though in essence — in my inner man — the same as your fellow workers in the West, it happens through the subtle action of karma I now have a body born of the Hindus, with Hindu blood and all the history of the Hindus behind me. I do not regard this as any more than an "accident of birth", as they say, but of course due to law and order, as we never admit any accidents in reality, and look on that word as one which designates for the time something which we cannot just for the moment explain. But being as I am it is easy for me to look at life, at man, at nature from quite another point of view than that which I see is often taken by the Western mind. And that other point of view will surely add something to the stock of general experience and knowledge.

From my stand and station it has seemed strange to me that in your West so many people have doubts of the existence of the personages who have been called by many appellations but all meaning the same. We call them Rishees, sometimes Mahatmas, sometimes Gurus, at other times Guru devas, and again Sadhus. But what of all these names: they all point to the same thing, the same end, the same law, and the same result. Looking over the old numbers of the *Theosophist* in our library here, I find now and then seeming protests from fellow-countrymen of mine against the use of the names of the Mahatmas, but never any protest contrary to declaring the existence of such beings. I remember one when the very wise and wonderful H. P. B. was at Adyar, in which the writer of it takes her severely to task for letting out any names, but all through it you can read if you wish, and as I can see plainly, the attempt to once more declare for the existence of those beings. We think it very queer the West should

doubt the existence of men who must in the order of nature be facts or nature is a lie, and we sometimes wonder why you all have so many doubts. No doubts are in our minds. Perhaps some of us may now and then doubt if such and such a Rishie or Mahatma was the Guru of so-and-so, but the general fact of their existence we do not question; they must be, and if they be, then there must be a place for them on the earth. Now I know myself of some, and have conversed in private with some of my friends who have given up the world and are what you call yogis and bramacharis, who have told me of seeing and meeting others of the same class and all telling the same story and declaring the existence of their order. So many proofs of that sort exist for any sincere observer, we have no hesitation in our belief.

Once I thought the Westerns never had any record of such beings among themselves, and I excused them, as their karma seemed hard to have crowded out such noble men and women, or rather such noble souls. But after my Guru-deva told me to read certain works and records of the Western people, I discovered you had almost as much testimony as ourselves, allowing for the awful materiality of your civilization and the paralyzing power of priestcraft. You have a Paracelsus, the Rosicrucians, Boehme, Cagliostro, St. Germain, Apollonius, Plato, Socrates, and hosts of others. Here is a vast mass of testimony to the fact of the existence of a school or schools and of persons sent out by them to work in the world of the West. Looking further I hit on the Rosicrucians, an order now extinct evidently, and imitated by those who now carry on so-called orders that might be called in fact bazaars or shops. But the real order once existed, and I am sure some one or two or more of the old companions are on the earth. They were taught by our older Masters, and carried the knowledge home from the old eastern journies of the Crusaders. If you look you will find no trace of the order before that time. It

is then another testimony to the Adepts, the Rishees, those known as Mahatmas. So karma did not leave the West without the evidence.

I have also with sorrow seen writings by men in literature who should never be guilty of the crime of falsification, wherein it was said in derision that the Mahatma is not known in India, that the word is not known, and that the name given out of one is not even Indian. All this is mere lie. The word Mahatma is well known, as well as Rishee; even the name attributed to one of the Masters of H. P. B. is known in India. I took the trouble to look it up in European sources at a time one of these scholars uttered the lie, so as to have the proof that the West had the information, and I found in an old and much used book, a dictionary of our Indian names, the name of the Mahatma. Such lies are unpardonable, and beyond doubt karma will give these men many lies to obstruct their progress in another life, for what you give you get back.

Some of us have objected to the giving out of the names of the Masters because we have a very great feeling of the sacredness of the name of such a person and do not wish to give it out to the ordinary man, just as a good man who has a good wife does not like to have her name thrown about and used by a lot of wicked or beastly men. But we never objected to the fact of the existence of the Rishees being discussed, for under that belief lies the other of the possibility of all men reaching to the same condition.

Lastly, it appears to me that the reason the West so much lays stress on the fact that the Masters do not come out to help them is, that the West is proud and personal, and thinks that any man who will not come forth and ask for their judgment and approval must by that mere fact be proven a myth or a useless and small person. But we know to the contrary, and any man can prove for

himself that our humble fakirs and yogis do not want the approval of the West and will not go to it to procure any certificate. When one does go there, it is because his powers are on the wane and he has but little good to live for.

I hope your friends will not doubt the great fact under the existence of the Masters, but will feel it and put it into action for the good of the race.

FOOTNOTE:

1. This letter is published as a contribution on the question of the existence of the "Masters" so often spoken of in the literature of the T. S. and especially by H. P. B. The writer is a reader of this magazine and doubtless also of all the others throughout the Society. — Ed. ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE FINAL CHOICE — *W. Scott Elliot*

It must necessarily be with the greatest diffidence that any one can presume to utter one thought about the final choice that awaits at infinite distance the emancipated soul.

To the writer the very fact that such a choice would have to be made came as a revelation of the most awful import, for it points to what is but vaguely hinted at in the most mystic works, but which nevertheless we feel must be the outcome of all that we know of evolution, *viz.*: that there is no final or never-ending-bliss; that the great law of duality pervading the Cosmos is effective not only in the limited period open to our view, but that the alternation of the day's activity and the night's rest has through all space and all eternity its correspondence; and thus though the periods of Nirvanic or Para-nirvanic bliss are of such stupendous duration as to merit the term eternity, that even these eternities have an end when activity again takes the place of rest.

Hints, no doubt, lie scattered through the mystic writings of all ages as to this ultimate choice, but in the *Voice of the Silence* is the fact as bearing on each of us individually stated with a definiteness that must at once attract attention. Nothing in the realm of fiction inspires the mind with a more vivid awe than the passages descriptive of the sustained warfare waged by the pilgrim who dares to attempt the passage of the "seven portals".

This warfare is waged in a field of which man as yet has but the dimmest consciousness — the infinite field of "self", bristling as it does with all the terrors of an unknown world. The world of the senses is now well explored; oft has experience tasted its pleasures and its pains; but the world within is to most of us a yet unopened book. And when the former has been experienced *ad*

nauseam, who can stay the explorer from fresh fields of knowledge and of conquest? But it is an exploration that needs the courage of a hero: "The path that leadeth on is lighted by one fire — the light of daring burning in the heart." And this expression is used with reference to the passage of the third gate only, the gate of Kshanti. When it is passed thy body is thy slave.

Now for the fourth prepare, the portal of temptations which do ensnare the inner man. "Ere thou canst reach that goal, before thine hand is lifted to upraise the fourth gate's latch, thou must have mastered all the mental changes in thyself and slain the army of the thought-sensations that, subtle and insidious, creep unasked within the soul's bright shrine. If thou would'st not be slain by them, then must thou harmless make thine own creations, the children of thy thoughts, unseen, impalpable that swarm round humankind, the progeny and heirs to man and his terrestrial spoils. Thou hast to study the voidness of the seeming full, the fulness of the seeming void. O fearless aspirant, look deep within the well of thine own heart, and answer. Knowest thou of self the powers, O thou perceiver of external shadows? If thou dost not — then art thou lost. For on Path Fourth the lightest breeze of passion or desire will stir the steady light upon the pure white walls of Soul. The smallest wave of longing or regret for Maya's gifts illusive — a thought as fleeting as the lightning flash, will make thee thy three prizes forfeit — the prizes thou hast won. For know, that the Eternal knows no change.

When such language is used with reference merely to the fourth, the "gate of balance", what unthinkable heights of Being must be revealed by the passage of the further portals! And yet at the end there lies the choice — on the one hand the well-earned reward — Nirvana — the glorious state of Absoluteness, the Bliss past

human thought; on the other the "Great Renunciation" — the "Path of Woe" through countless Kalpas; Nirvanas gained and lost from boundless pity and compassion for the world of deluded mortals. What can man think or say about a choice to be made by beings who have passed the threshold of Divinity! Contemplation stands awe-struck in amazement, and the man can but bow his head in worship before the God.

The use of such utterly inappropriate terms as selfish and unselfish with reference to the choice seems to be a blot on the otherwise faultless expression of this marvelous little volume, for it must be recognized that a renunciation and a selflessness such as is absolutely inconceivable by ordinary men has already been attained by the aspirant, whatever may be his final choice.

Nevertheless it is very apparent which is the greater and the nobler choice. The Bodhisattva who has won the battle, who holds the prize within his palm, yet says in his divine compassion. "For others' sake this great reward I yield", accomplishes the greater Renunciation. A Saviour of the world is he.

What terrible possibilities too for Humanity are hinted at in the following description of what the self-immolation implies for one who chooses the Path of Woe.

Self-doomed to live through future Kalpas, unthanked and unperceived by man; wedged as a stone with countless other stones which form the "Guardian Wall" — such is thy future if the seventh gate thou passest. Built by the hand of many Masters of Compassion, raised by their tortures, by their blood cemented, it shields mankind, since man is man, protecting it from further and far greater misery and sorrow.

A similar passage in *Light on the Path* points to the same awful

possibility.

Give your aid to the few strong hands who hold back the powers of darkness from obtaining complete victory.

The thought at once arises, What are these powers of darkness? Nothing, we may be sure, that exists outside our own Karma, nothing that has not been created by our own thoughts or acts, that is, by the thoughts and acts of Humanity since its evolution, for we cannot separate ourselves from the race. To the unthinking this explanation may seem to — though it does not by one iota — detract from the awfulness of the situation. Creations of humanity though they are, how terrible must they be in their semi-conscious hostility, and whatever elemental forms they may assume, it is doubtless such as they who act as guardians of the entrance of the path of knowledge.

Stress has recently been laid in some Theosophic writings on the awful nature of this journey whose stages we have been considering and which by some is called Occultism, compared with which the mere acceptance of the Theosophic teachings is an easy thing — including, though it may, the strenuous endeavor to make the life correspond with the teachings. It has been stated as an axiom that — "we may all become Theosophists, not one in ten thousand can become an Occultist". In some respects this is quite true, and it is very desirable in an address to the general public that stress should be laid upon the great gulf that separates Occultism from Theosophy. Nevertheless from another standpoint the two merge into one, and the path of Occultism is but a continuation of the Ethics of Theosophy. The former does not necessarily need a gateway of external ceremony or initiation. These will come in due time when the neophyte is ready. Even now, though he may be quite unconscious of it, the hand of a Master may be upon him, guiding him through the

anguish his own Karma has merited and educating him for a higher service. And however terrible may appear to us the stages of that awful journey, there are some to whom no other path is open, for when it is felt that every phase of the ordinary life of man has been realized, until no mystery is left to probe, the unsatisfying and impermanent character of all earthly bliss is itself the finger of destiny pointing to the great attempt.

A thorough transformation of character in one life-time is doubtless a rare and a difficult achievement, but when the one central desire that alone gave life any color or meaning has been completely abandoned, the transformation may at least be said to have begun. With heart rending and in absolute despair is destiny's decree accepted — that is the first step of renunciation, and the second is like unto it save that the anguish is tempered by a subtle sense of exaltation. But when the whole nature can with the equanimity of entire dispassion and in the calm of matured conviction repudiate all desire for earthly union, may not the desire be then considered dead?

Assuredly it is a great achievement. The growing knowledge of Soul has wiped out another of the Sense-illusions, and the peace of serenity has taken the place of the vague unrest. Union — the real union — is still, as ever, the lode-star of our effort and desire, but the false and the fleeting is now replaced by the real and the abiding, for how should any earthly bridal still satisfy our longing when the heavenly bride — the soul — has once begun to lift the veil concealing her divine perfections?

By unexpected means too may the result above described be reached. Words can scarcely convey to those who have not yet passed through the battle, the awful tempest of emotion in which the first two stages are achieved, but the final one may be the result of an apparently intellectual conviction. It is, in fact, the

attainment of knowledge. And this is but another illustration of that great truth so often dwelt on by the old Greek sages, — that ignorance is the prime curse on man, and that only with the attainment of wisdom will his sin and misery depart.

A great achievement it undoubtedly is, even this first little fight with the hydra-headed monster of desire, for it implies a conscious increase of strength. Concentration is strength, and when the restless diffusion of energy caused by desire is replaced by the serene survey over the fields of life, a step at least is made towards that perfect concentration which is the key to all real power.

A glorious achievement truly, if only we could be sure that the snake was slain beyond reanimation, for, as it is written, "the enemies he slew in the last battle shall not return to life in the next birth that shall be his". But remember, O Lanoo, this also is written, "Kill out desire, but if thou killest it take heed lest from the dead it should arise again". To further emphasize the terrible possibility of falling back even from the threshold, a very mystical passage, pregnant with deep meaning, may here be quoted from the *Secret Doctrine*. It is about the "Nameless One", also called the "Great Sacrifice", who holds spiritual sway over the initiated Adepts throughout the whole world.

For sitting at the threshold of Light, he looks into it from within the circle of Darkness, which he will not cross; nor will he quit his post till the last day of this life-cycle. Why does the solitary Watcher remain at his self-chosen post? Why does he sit by the fountain of primeval Wisdom, of which he drinks no longer, as he has naught to learn which he does not know — aye, neither on this earth, nor in its heaven? Because the lonely, sore-footed pilgrims on their way back to their home are never sure to the last moment

of not losing their way in this limitless desert of illusion and matter called earth-life. Because he would fain show the way to that region of freedom and light, from which he is a voluntary exile himself, to every prisoner who has succeeded in liberating himself from the bonds of flesh and illusion. Because, in short, he has sacrificed himself for the sake of mankind, though but a few elect may profit by the Great Sacrifice.

To the great majority of men the life of action and sensation must necessarily appear to cover the field of reality; their consciousness of an inner life at all is but occasionally galvanized into spasmodic activity. To such the use of realistic language about the subjective life of thought and emotion must inevitably convey a feeling of reality. It is no doubt a far-off day when humanity generally will have transferred its energy to the field of the deeper consciousness, but there are some to whom the inner life is daily becoming the more real of the two, and to whom therefore this attempt to describe "the fierce fight between the living and the dead", culminating in the final choice, may not be without meaning.

When dealing with the higher ethics it seems impossible to state the whole question except in paradox. According to the teachings, renunciation is the watchword all up the line, but for us mortals to whom renunciation is unmixed pain there must be another side of the shield, and surely that can best be formulated by stating that nothing that we can dream of bliss but will be more than realized on the "great journey". The stages of that journey may, indeed, bring "terrible toil and profound sadness, but also a great and ever-increasing delight", and the delight to the aspirant must surely outweigh the toil and the sadness. To think otherwise seems a stultification of all evolution.

True, the thought that now has hold of us is the impossibility of our ever soaring to such heights of self-sacrificing devotion as to choose the path of woe. But there are correspondences on all the planes of nature, and very valuable inferences may be drawn from such correspondences. Most of us must look forward with some sort of satisfaction to the blissful rest that follows the strife of earth, and few would be ready at once again to begin the weary round. Nevertheless there are some who feel that they are prepared to forego the bliss of heaven and to accept immediate reincarnation for the sake of shortening the journey, though, as is well known, this is a possibility outside the ordinary course of evolution and only realizable by those who have progressed so far as to be under the direct guidance of a Master.

To choose the pathway of the great renunciation may indeed be impossible for thee now. Nevertheless hope still — what is beyond thee today may be within thy reach tomorrow. Many life-times must elapse ere the final choice has to be made. Meantime content thee to prepare for the great journey, and though every attainment of knowledge may only seem to make the mystery of thy own being a little harder to ravel, remember that the light that can illumine comes only to the bosom passionless. To reach that light the "higher carelessness" of the Sage must have been practised, the serenity of the Sage must be attained. And here is his picture from the *Mahabharata*.

"For richest, greatest, that one is
Whose soul, indifferent to bliss
Or misery, to joy or pain,
To past or future, loss or gain —
Sees with calm eyes all fates befall
And, needing nought, possesseth all."

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY — *William Q. Judge*

AS RELATED TO BRAHMANISM AND BUDDHISM

The subjoined circular has been sent by me to as many Brahmins as I could reach. I have purposely used the words "Brahmins of India" in the title because I hold to the view of the *Vedas* and the ancient laws that the Brahmin is not merely he who is born of a Brahmin father. In America lack of accurate knowledge respecting Indian religions causes a good deal of misapprehension about Brahmanism and Buddhism, as very many think Buddhism to be India's religion, whereas in fact it is not, but, on the contrary, the prevailing form of belief in India is Brahmanism. This necessary distinction should be remembered and false notions upon the subject dissipated as much as possible. Buddhism does not prevail in India, but in countries outside it, such as Burma, Japan, Ceylon, and others. The misconception by so many Americans about the true home of Buddhism if not corrected may tend to cause the Brahmins to suppose that the T. S. here spreads abroad the wrong notion; and no form of religion should be preferred in the T. S. above another. — W. Q. J.

TO THE BRAHMINS OF INDIA.

144 Madison Ave, New York, *April 5, 1893,*

MY FRIENDS: —

In the English Theosophical magazine, *Lucifer*, for the month of February, 1893, is an admirable article by Rai B. K. Laheri of Ludhiana, Punjab, in which he asks his fellow Theosophists to remember that no religious form of belief should be prominently

brought forward or disparaged by members of the Theosophical Society, and his words appeared at the very time I was contemplating a fraternal letter to you to show you that that Society is not engaged in any attempt to bring forward the Buddhist religion. I was the pupil and intimate friend of H. P. Blavatsky who founded the Theosophical Society; I took part with her in its first organization; I was conversant with her sleepless devotion and untiring zeal in the work she wanted that Society to do, which was to follow out the plan laid down for it by some of your own Indian Rishies, the Mahatmas who were her Gurus; I was told by her in the very beginning of that work that her object as directed by her Guru was to bring to the attention of the West the great truths of philosophy contained in the old books and thought of India; I know that her first friends in the work in your country, even before she left this one, were Indians, Brahmins, sons of Aryavarta: hence my sensitiveness to any misapprehension by you of its purposes or of its supporters can be easily understood by you. I am not a Christian nor a member of any religious body; as I was born out of India in this incarnation I could not be a Brahmin under your present laws; but if I am anything I am a follower of and believer in the *Vedas*; I have therefore a peculiarly deep interest in the philosophic and religious literature of the Indian Aryans, am in strong sympathy with its convictions and spiritual quality, and have in all ways, but especially for the last seven years in my own magazine, the *Path*, labored constantly to bring its treasures to the attention of students in this Western World.

Having, then, this triple devotion, — to the teaching of Indian sages, the ideals of the Messenger of your own Rishies, and the welfare of the Theosophical Society, it will be evident to you why the evil so strongly felt by my honored Brahmin co-worker, Bro. Laheri, and by myself should lead me, as an individual and as

Vice-President of the T. S., to address as many of you as these words can reach. The evil is this: that a suspicion is spreading through the Brahmin community that the Theosophical Society is losing its impartial character as the equal friend to all religions and is becoming distinctly Buddhistic in its sympathies and affiliations. And the evil is not a mere mistake as to fact: it is evolving the practical consequences that interest in the Society diminishes among its natural friends in Brahminism, that they hesitate to enter its membership or cooperate in its work, and that they withhold the aid without which the priceless treasures of their literature, so indispensable to the efforts we Theosophists are making to throw light upon the great problems of existence now agitating the Western mind, and thus unite East and West, cannot be used in the spiritual mission the ancient Rishis have approved. In brief, Brahmins will not sustain the Theosophical Society if they believe it a Buddhistic propaganda; nor can they be expected to. No more could Christians, Mahomedans, or Parsees.

Although, as I am unreservedly convinced, this evil is due to misapprehension, it must none the less have had some cause to originate it. I believe this cause to have been threefold. First, the name *Esoteric Buddhism* given to one of our books. This book, as many of you know, was the first important attempt to bring the truths of real Indian spiritual philosophy to the knowledge of Europe and America. But it was not Buddhism. It was first named *Fragments of Occult Truth*, and might just as properly have been published with the title *Esoteric Brahmanism*. Its enormous circulation and influence, both on a constant increase, show the readiness of the Western mind for just this teaching. But its title, adopted from lack of a more accurate term at the time, has naturally led many to suppose it an exposition of mere Buddhism, although its author, Mr. Sinnett, has been at pains to explain the

contrary and Madame Blavatsky has also pointed out the mistake.

Second, the well-known membership in the Buddhist Church of Col. Olcott, President of the Theosophical Society, and his earnest efforts to unite the two schools of Buddhism, as well as to popularize their teaching and to restore the temple at Buddha-Gaya. And yet you must remember that Col. Olcott was himself invested by Brahmin authorities with the Brahminical thread, the highest possible evidence of confidence in his character, and that he has recently lectured with enthusiasm on the essential unity of the inner teachings of Buddha with your own religion. Nor should any of us forget that any personal predilections for his own faith are as much the right of the President as of any private member of the Society; and that the very Constitution of that Society, the Constitution he himself was active in shaping, forbids the identification of the Society by any officer or member with his personal beliefs in either politics or religion. Those of you who know Col. Olcott must be aware how utterly he would repudiate any wish, or even willingness, to thus abuse his official station.

Third, the incautious remarks of Buddhist members of the Society. No doubt such have at times been made, and in the warmth of personal zeal or in momentary forgetfulness of the scrupulous impartiality a true Theosophist owes to all other lovers of truth, our Buddhist friends have occasionally used comparisons which were unwise. Yet even here we need remembrance that absolute fidelity to the highest ideal, ceaseless prudence in speech and pen, total faultlessness as to tact and wisdom, are not vouchsafed to any body of religionists or to any individual of them: In this, as in other departments of human conduct, there will be lapses of discretion, and it would be unfair to refuse to an inconsistent F. T. S. the allowance we concede to an inconsistent citizen or an inconsistent moralist. Certainly it would be unfair to antagonize the Society because some of its

members proved defective in its spirit.

It is my conviction, then, that the suspicion which has thus interfered with the Society's work and impaired your own interest in it has no real basis. And I think you will share it if you recall such additional facts as these: — the explicit statements of the Society in its Constitution; the absolutely unsectarian spirit and proclamations of its great Head, Madame Blavatsky; the total freedom from sectarian affiliation exhibited in the actual conduct of the Society; the whole-souled devotion to its mission of many, both in East and West, who are not Buddhists in belief; the eager effort by many after all the light and truth your invaluable literature contains; the unqualified welcome given by Western Theosophists to such of your co-believers as they have been privileged to meet in their own lands. And possibly you may give weight to the unreserved assurance from myself, who have been close to Madame Blavatsky from the first and in constant conference and cooperation with her, an active worker in the Society and familiar with its history and genius, that it has not been, is not, and is most unlikely to become the organ of any sect or faith, the thing essential to its operations, nay, even to its existence, being the most absolute catholicity of thought and sympathy and respect. And I may go further, assuring you also that no one would more immediately, sternly, uncompromisingly, ceaselessly resist the contrary policy than would I. I use these words in their fullest significance.

And so the purpose of this letter is to invite a revival of your confidence in the Theosophical Society. In many of you it has never declined. Where it has done so I would restore it. In my own country and in Europe the interest in the work of the Theosophical Society and in Indian philosophy and thought has had an expansion in the last few years which is simply amazing. I can hardly give you adequate idea of the change in the press, in

public sentiment, in private study. The Society itself is growing steadily. In America we have seventy-three Branches and shall have seventy-five before this reaches you. Only one is really moribund. This means an increasing zeal for Oriental truth. More expositions of Eastern philosophy are demanded. The three editions I myself published of the *Bhagavad-Gita* have been exhausted, and a fourth is just coming out. Ancient Aryan ideas and views of life are permeating the land and moulding the convictions of its people. We need help to increase and fix them. Much of this can come only from yourselves and others in India. By your own identification with the Society you can strengthen it for its local work, aiding it to dissolve the barriers between religions and sects and to enliven fraternal feeling through all, assisting in the attempt to uplift higher ideals among your countrymen. And if you cannot join the Society, you can help it by countenancing its work. On our behalf you can transmit those valued treatises which throw light on the great problems of destiny which concern us and you alike, and can thus take part in the truly philanthropic work of giving truth to those who need and ask it. We who are, with you, fellow-seekers after light and aspirants after progress know the joy of sharing our treasures with the sincere, and we invite you to give us more towards such sharing. Like you we are workers in the Rishees' cause, and we seek the most efficient aids in that work. If you do not give this aid or if you continue to rest under the wrong impression I have spoken of above, you will interfere with a work that is for the direct benefit of India and of your religion. For our work is meant also to bring the attention of the West to the philosophical and religious truths of the Sacred Books of India, to the end that India may be helped to lift itself up once more to spiritual heights of power and thus in its turn benefit the whole race of man. It is only by teaching the West the soul-satisfying philosophy of the ancient Aryans that we can lead them on as parts of the human

family, and as, indeed, perhaps the very nations where some of you may be drawn by Karma to incarnation in some future life. By having a wrong impression of the work of the Society you will be led to speak against it and to throw your powerful influence in the scale opposite to it, and thus very materially hold it back.

I invite you to communicate freely with me in answer to this letter, and to give the letter itself the widest circulation possible among Brahmins. I shall arrange for its translation into a native tongue. And so with respect and sympathy and fraternal spirit, and with the hope that these words may avail to correct an error which has distressed and alarmed me, I am

Your friend, however distant,

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

The Path

MASTERS, ADEPTS, TEACHERS, AND DISCIPLES — *William Q. Judge*

This article is meant for members of the T. S., and chiefly for those who keep H. P. B. much in mind, whether out of respect and love or from fear and envy. Those members who believe that such beings as the Masters may exist must come to one of two conclusions in regard to H. P. B.: either that she invented her Masters, who therefore have no real existence, or that she did not invent them but spoke in the names and by the orders of such beings. If we say she invented the Mahatmas, then, of course, as so often was said by her, all that she has taught and written is the product of her own brain, from which we would be bound to conclude that her position on the roll of great and powerful persons must be higher than people have been willing to place her. But I take it most of us believe in the truth of her statement that she had those teachers whom she called Masters and that they are more perfect beings than ordinary men.

The case I wish to briefly deal with, then, is this: H. P. B. and her relations to the Masters and to us; her books and teachings; the general question of disciples or chelas with their grades, and whether a high chela would appear as almost a Master in comparison to us, including every member from the President down to the most recent applicant.

The last point in the inquiry is extremely important, and has been much overlooked by members in my observation, which has extended over the larger part of the T. S. An idea has become quite general that chelas and disciples are all of one grade, and that therefore one chela is the same as another in knowledge and wisdom. The contrary, however, is the case. Chelas and disciples

are of many grades, and some of the Adepts are themselves the chelas of higher Adepts. There is therefore the greatest difference between the classes of chelas, since among them has to be counted the very humblest and most ignorant person who has devoted himself or herself to the service of mankind and the pursuit of the knowledge of the Self. On the other hand, there are those chelas high in grade, actual pupils of the Masters themselves, and these latter have so much knowledge and power as to seem to us to be adepts. Indeed, they are such when one compares them with oneself as a mere product of the nineteenth century. They have gained through knowledge and discipline those powers over mind, matter, space, and time which to us are the glittering prizes of the future. But yet these persons are not the Masters spoken of by H. P. B. So much being laid down, we may next ask how we are to look at H. P. B.

In the first place, every one has the right to place her if he pleases for himself on the highest plane, because he may not be able to formulate the qualities and nature of those who are higher than she was. But taking her own sayings, she was a chela or disciple of the Masters, and therefore stood in relation to them as one who might be chided or corrected or reproved. She called them her Masters, and asseverated a devotion to their behests and a respect and confidence in and for their utterances which the chela has always for one who is high enough to be his Master. But looking at her powers exhibited to the world, and as to which one of her Masters wrote that they had puzzled and astonished the brightest minds of the age, we see that compared with ourselves she was an Adept. In private as in public she spoke of her Masters much in the same way as did Subba Row to the writer when he declared in 1884, "The Mahatmas are in fact some of the great Rishees and Sages of the past, and people have been too much in the habit of lowering them to the petty standard of this age". But with this

reverence for her teachers she had for them at the same time a love and friendship not often found on earth. All this indicates her chelaship to Them, but in no way lowers her to us or warrants us in deciding that we are right in a hurried or modern judgment of her.

Now some Theosophists ask if there are other letters extant from her Masters in which she is called to account, is called their chela, and is chided now and then, besides those published. Perhaps yes. And what of it? Let them be published by all means, and let us have the full and complete record of all letters sent during her life; those put forward as dated after her death will count for naught in respect to any judgment passed on her, since the Masters do not indulge in any criticisms on the disciples who have gone from earth. As she has herself published letters and parts of letters from the Masters to her in which she is called a chela and is chided, it certainly cannot matter if we know of others of the same sort. For over against all such we have common sense, and also the declarations of her Masters that she was the sole instrument possible for the work to be done, that They sent her to do it, and that They approved in general all she did. And she was the first direct channel to and from the Lodge, and the only one up to date through which came the objective presence of the Adepts. We cannot ignore the messenger, take the message, and laugh at or give scorn to the one who brought it to us. There is nothing new in the idea that letters are still unpublished wherein the Masters put her below them, and there is no cause for any apprehension. But it certainly is true that not a single such letter has anything in it putting her below us; she must ever remain the greatest of the chelas.

There only remains, then, the position taken by some and without a knowledge of the rules governing these matters, that chelas sometimes write messages claimed to be from the Masters when

they are not. This is an artificial position not supportable by law or rule. It is due to ignorance of what is and is not chelaship, and also to confusion between grades in discipleship. It has been used as to H. P. B. The false conclusion has first been made that an accepted chela of high grade may become accustomed to dictation given by the Master and then may fall into the false pretense of giving something from himself and pretending it is from the Master. It is impossible. The bond in her case was not of such a character to be dealt with thus. One instance of it would destroy the possibility of any more communication from the teacher. It may be quite true that probationers now and then have imagined themselves as ordered to say so and so, but that is not the case of an accepted and high chela who is irrevocably pledged, nor anything like it. This idea, then, ought to be abandoned; it is absurd, contrary to law, to rule, and to what must be the case when such relations are established as existed between H. P. B. and her Masters.

The Path

OCCULT VIBRATIONS — *William Q. Judge*

A FRAGMENT OF CONVERSATION WITH H. P. B. IN 1888

The following was written by me at the dictation of H. P. B. in 1888 with the purpose of printing it at that time. But it was not used then, and as I brought it home with me it is now of interest. — W. Q. J.

Ques — It has struck me while thinking over the difference between ordinary people and an adept or even a partly developed student, that the rate of vibration of the brain molecules, as well as the coordination of those with the vibrations of the higher brain, may lie at the bottom of the difference and also might explain many other problems.

H. P. B. — So they do. They make differences and also cause many curious phenomena; and the differences among all persons are greatly due to vibrations of all kinds.

Q. — In reading the article in the *PATH* of April, 1886, this idea was again suggested. I open at p. 6, vol. I. "The Divine Resonance spoken of above is not the Divine Light itself. The Resonance is only the outbreathing of the first sound of the entire Aum. ... It manifests itself not only as the power which stirs up and animates the particles of the universe, but also in the evolution and dissolution of man, of the animal and mineral kingdoms, and the Solar system. Among the Aryans it was represented by the planet Mercury, who has always been said to govern the intellectual faculties and to be the universal stimulator." What of this?

H. P. B. — Mercury was always known as the god of secret wisdom. He is Hermes as well as Budha the son of Soma. Speaking

of matters on the lower plane, I would call the "Divine Resonance" you read of in the PATH "vibrations" and the originator, or that which gives the impulse to every kind of phenomena in the astral plane.

Q. — The differences found in human brains and natures must, then, have their root in differences of vibration?

H. P. B. — Most assuredly so.

Q. — Speaking of mankind as a whole, is it true that all have one key or rate of vibration to which they respond?

H. P. B. — Human beings in general are like so many keys on the piano, each having its own sound, and the combination of which produces other sounds in endless variety. Like inanimate nature they have a key-note from which all the varieties of character and constitution proceed by endless changes. Remember what was said in *Isis Unveiled* at p. 16, vol. I, "The Universe is the combination of a thousand elements, and yet the expression of a single spirit, — a chaos to the sense (physical), a cosmos to the reason" (manas).

Q. — So far this applies generally to nature. Does it explain the difference between the adept and ordinary people?

H. P. B. — Yes. This difference is that an adept may be compared to that one key which contains all the keys in the great harmony of nature. He has the synthesis of all keys in his thoughts, whereas ordinary man has the same key as a basis, but only acts and thinks on one or a few changes of this great key, producing with his brain only a few chords out of the whole great possible harmony.

Q. — Has this something to do with the fact that a disciple may hear the voice of his master through the astral spaces, while

another man cannot hear or communicate with the adepts?

H. P. B. — This is because the brain of a chela is attuned by training to the brain of the Master. His vibrations synchronize with those of the Adept, and the untrained brain is not so attuned. So the chela's brain is abnormal, looking at it from the standpoint of ordinary life, while that of the ordinary man is normal for worldly purposes. The latter person may be compared to those who are color-blind.

Q. — How am I to understand this?

H. P. B. — What is considered normal from the view of the physician is considered abnormal from the view of occultism, and *vice versa*. The difference between a color-blind signal man who mistakes the lamps and the adept who sees is that the one takes one color for another, while the adept sees all the colors in every color and yet does not confuse them together.

Q. — Has the adept, then, raised his vibrations so as to have them the same as those of nature as a whole?

H. P. B. — Yes; the highest adepts. But there are other adepts who, while vastly in advance of all men, are still unable to vibrate to such a degree.

Q. — Can the adept produce at his will a vibration which will change one color to another?

H. P. B. — He can produce a sound which will alter a color. It is the sound which produces the color, and not the other or opposite. By correlating the vibrations of a sound in the proper way a new color is made.

Q. — Is it true that on the astral plane every sound always produces a color?

H. P. B. — Yes; but these are invisible because not yet correlated by the human brain so as to become visible on the earth plane. Read Galton, who gives experiments with colors and sounds as seen by psychics and sensitives, showing that many sensitive people always see a color for every sound. The colorblind man has coming to him the same vibrations as will show red, but not being able to sense these he alters the amount, so to say, and then sees a color corresponding to the vibrations he can perceive out of the whole quantity. His astral senses may see the true color, but the physical eye has its own vibrations, and these, being on the outer plane, overcome the others for the time, and the astral man is compelled to report to the brain that it saw correctly. For in each case the outer stimulus is sent to the inner man, who then is forced, as it were, to accept the message and to confirm it for the time so far as it goes. But there are cases where the inner man is able to even then overcome the outer defect and to make the brain see the difference. In many cases of lunacy the confusion among the vibrations of all kinds is so enormous that there is not correlation between the inner and the outer man, and we have then a case of aberration. But even in some of these unfortunate cases the person inside is all the time aware that he is not insane but cannot make himself be understood. Thus often persons are driven really insane by wrong treatment.

Q. — By what manner of vibrations do the elementals make colors and lights of variety?

H. P. B. — That is a question I cannot reply to though it is well known to me. Did I not tell you that secrets might be revealed too soon?

MARS AND MERCURY — *William Q. Judge*

In the June *PATH* there was printed a review of a pamphlet issued by the London Lodge T. S., and this magazine may perhaps be construed as committed to an approval of everything contained in the pamphlet, although the private initials of the reviewer were annexed to the remarks. The pamphlet referred to brings up an old dispute which we had thought was settled by what is found in *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, running from page 162 to 168.

"Gratification of curiosity is the end of knowledge for some men", wrote H. P. B.'s teacher, and this curiosity led to a question being put some years ago to the Adepts, who furnished the main body of *Esoteric Buddhism* and all the important matter in *The Secret Doctrine*, in respect to other visible globes. The author of *Esoteric Buddhism* then construed the reply to mean that Mars and Mercury are two of the seven planets of the earth-chain of globes. H. P. B., the only person in actual and constant communication with the Masters, corrected the mistake made by Mr. Sinnett in the pages of *The Secret Doctrine* to which I have referred, saying on page 164: "But neither Mars nor Mercury belongs to our chain; they are, along with the other planets, septenary units in the great host of 'chains', and all are as visible as their upper globes are invisible". Her correction of the misconception was made upon the written authority of the same Masters who sent through her the letters on which *Esoteric Buddhism* was written.

On the ground of authority in respect to this question, about which none of the Theosophical writers have any information independent of what the Masters have written, we must conclude that the statement in *The Secret Doctrine* is final. If no other point were involved, there would be no necessity for going further with the matter, but as the consistency of the entire philosophy is

involved, it is necessary to advert again to this subject.

The two Masters who had to do with *Esoteric Buddhism* and *The Secret Doctrine* have distinctly said: — *first*, that none of the other globes of the earth-chain are visible from its surface; *second*, that various planets are visible in the sky to us because they are in their turn fourth-plane planets, representing to our sight their own septenary chains; *third*, that the six companion globes of the earth are united with it in one mass, but differ from it as to class of substance; *fourth*, that Mr. Sinnett misunderstood them when he thought they meant to say that Mars and Mercury were two of the six fellow globes of the earth, — and this correction they make most positively in *The Secret Doctrine*; *lastly*, they have said that the entire philosophy is one of correspondences, and must be so viewed in every part. We do not understand that Mr. Sinnett has said that H. P. B. was not reporting the Masters when she wrote the above in *The Secret Doctrine*, or that the Masters have denied that they hold the above views.

If we admit that Mars and Mercury are two visible planets of the seven-fold chain belonging to the earth, then the consistency of the philosophy is destroyed, for as it is with planets, so it is with man. Every planet, considered for the moment as an individual, is to be analysed in the same way as a single human being, subject to the same laws in the same way. Hence, if two of the principles of the earth are visible, that is, Mars and Mercury, then why is it that two of man's seven principles are not visible, in addition to his body? In his seven-fold constitution his body represents the earth in her septenary chain, but he cannot see objectively any other of his principles. The philosophy must be consistent throughout. If it is inconsistent at one point it fails at every other. The same Masters who have communicated through H. P. B. with Mr. Sinnett for the purpose of having *Esoteric Buddhism* written, have over and over again positively stated that the law of

correspondence rules throughout in this philosophy.

The earth is a fourth-plane planet. The beings upon it are now in the fourth stage, and for that reason cannot see objectively any planet that is not on the same plane of development, and every planet which they see is for that reason a fourth-plane planet. If this be correct, then Mars and Mercury must be fourth-plane planets, and hence not in the earth's chain of globes.

If we assume with the writer of the pamphlet referred to that Mars and Mercury are two out of the whole seven of which the earth is a third, then the question arises, To what principle do these two planets correspond?, for they must correspond to either *prana*, *kama*, astral body, *Manas*, *Buddhi*, or *Atman*. Any attempt at an answer to this question will show the confusion in the assumption; for it is admitted that Mars is in obscurity, and the natural question then would be, Which of the earth's principles is correspondingly in obscurity? In attempting to answer this from the assumption started with, we have the statement that Mars is the planet we have last been in, hence it must represent a disused faculty or principle, and not one which we are about to develop. As *Manas* is the next principle to be fully developed, it would follow that Mars does not represent it, and hence the whole matter falls into confusion, because the first four principles have been already developed and are not in disuse. Following this on the false assumption, then Mars would represent an eighth principle.

Mars is in a state of obscurity at the present time, as stated by the Masters and H. P. B. This is because, in that chain of development, the Egos have finished their fourth round, or because the fourth round has not yet commenced, except in respect to the planet itself as a place of habitation, the Egos having passed on to the next globe of that chain, quite as invisible

from the surface of Mars as our next globe in order is invisible from our surface. The same may be said for Mercury, except in respect to obscurity, since the information vouchsafed about it declares that it is beginning to get out of the obscurity caused by the absence of Egos.

A reference to the pages of the *Secret Doctrine* referred to above will be found helpful on this point. It is also stated on page 163 of that book, Vol. I, on the authority of the Masters, that "No companion planet, that is, no upper globes of any chain in the solar system, can be seen." I may say that the relation borne by Mars and Mercury to the earth will not be spoken of or explained by the Masters. Furthermore, one of the Masters wrote to the author of *Esoteric Buddhism* in respect to this matter, stating, "You are putting me questions pertaining to the highest initiation. I can give you only a general view, but I dare not, nor will I, enter upon details."

It is not necessary for us to know the relation between Mars, Mercury, and the Earth, especially, nor to know whether Mars and Mercury are in any particular state; all that is necessary is to know, do they or not belong to our chain? And that they do not has been distinctly stated, both from the position of authority and upon the ground of consistent philosophy. Upon authority, because in no other way can we solve this riddle; upon philosophy to show the reasonableness of the authoritative statement. All such difficulties can be solved by remembering and working upon the law that, as it is in respect to man and his principles or vehicles, so it is in respect to any planet whatever.

REGARDING ISLAMISM — *Hadji Erinn*

The conversion to the religion of the Prophet Mohammed of Alexander Russell Webb, F. T. S., and his establishing in New York a paper devoted to Islamism, together with his lectures on the subject, have caused a great deal of attention to be given to Mohammedanism. Bro. Webb is still a member of the Society, with an interest in its progress, and this is another illustration of the broadness of our platform. But he says that it has surprised him to find the members in general paying slight regard to the life of the Prophet, his sayings and his religion, as one of our objects calls for the study of all religions. In India he found many followers of the Prophet in our Branches, and among them much knowledge of formerly so-called esoteric doctrines, which are common to all religions. That such would be the case must have long ago been evident to those who have read the admirable articles which were printed some years ago in the *PATH* upon Sufi poetry, as the Sufis really preserve the inner doctrines of Islam. But it is natural that the religion of Mohammed has not received from Western people very great consideration. They judge it in the mass, and not from some of its teachings. The West has developed its social system and its religious belief on its own lines, and having seen that many of the followers of the Prophet are polygamists, which is contrary to Western notions, the entire Islamic system has been condemned on that ground, both in a social and religious sense.

The best Mohammedans say that the Prophet did not teach polygamy, but only permitted it in case a man could treat many wives in exactly the same way in every respect that he could one. Although over against this the Prophet himself had but one wife, and was in fact a celibate, it was quite natural that his followers

should liberally construe what he said on the subject and take unto themselves as many wives as their means permitted. This is human nature, and would probably be the result today in the West if our people placed reliance on the words of a Teacher who had made a similar statement.

The words of the Koran upon the subject of polygamy, as given by Mr. Webb, are:

"And if ye are apprehensive that ye shall not deal fairly with orphans, then of other women who seem good in your eyes, marry but two, or three, or four; if ye still fear that ye shall not act equitably, then one only. — *Koran, Sura IV, verse 3.*"

The next prominent conception held by Western people about the Mohammedans is that they have forced an acceptance of their doctrines. We have such stories as that they carried sword in one hand and the Koran in the other, compelling people to accept the book under threat of the sword; that they burned books containing matter other than that in the Koran, on the ground that if it was in the Koran the books were unnecessary, and if it was not in the Koran the books were wrong and should be burned. But the disciples of the Prophet assert that he never taught any such thing, and point to much learning on the part of the Mohammedans in the past. Doubtless these disciples are right, but we know that many Mohammedans tried to coerce people, and that there is some foundation for the story in respect to destruction of that which was not found in the Koran. For these reasons the West has been opposed to Islamism without really knowing much about it. The religion has been judged by the proceedings of its followers. Similar charges might be made against Christian peoples, who notoriously both individually and as nations are in the habit of going directly contrary to the commands of their Founder.

A student of these subjects, then, comes to consider lastly the claims of Islamism on philosophical and religious grounds, and naturally asks the question whether it has any better philosophy than any other religion, and if its religion is supported by a correct philosophy. If it be found that the truths given out by the Prophet were known and written down before his time, then why should the Western student turn to the later religion, the product of a more or less undeveloped people, when he may go to the original from which it undoubtedly came. And if in that original we can find broader and more definite expositions of cosmogenesis and anthropogenesis, we may very properly use Islamism to illustrate the Theosophic truism that one single truth is the basis upon which all religions stand, but we are not necessarily obliged to adopt it to the exclusion of anything else.

Islamism seems to many to exact a belief in *a* God and the conception of *a* God demands that that being shall be separate from those who believe in him. This view does not appeal to many Western Theosophists, because they assert that there can be no God different or separate from man. In the *Rig Veda* of the Brahmans there are as grand, and some think grander, conceptions of God and nature, as can be found in any Islamic book. If the two are equal in this regard, then the *Rig Veda*, being admittedly the elder, must have the first place by reason of age; but if the *Rig Veda* and the philosophy growing out of it are broader and grander than the other, then for that reason it must be more acceptable.

The five fundamental precepts of Islam are given in the *encyclopaedia Britannica*, as follows:

First, Confession of the Unity of God; *second*, stated prayer; *third*, almsgiving; *fourth*, the fast of Ramadan; *fifth*, observance of the festival of Mecca.

In the latest English publication on the subject, Mr. Webb says:

Orthodox Mohammedanism may be divided into six heads: *First*, faith in God, the one God, the creator of all things, who always was and ever will be, the single, immutable, omniscient, omnipotent, all-merciful, eternal God; *second*, faith in angels, ethereal beings perfect in form and radiant in beauty, without sex, free from all gross or sensual passion and the appetites and infirmities of all frail humanity; *third*, belief in the Koran as a book of Divine revelation, given at various times to Mohammed by God or through the Angel Gabriel; *fourth*, belief in God's prophets, the most preeminent of whom were Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed; *fifth*, belief in the resurrection and final judgment, when all mankind shall appear before God, who will reward or punish them according to the deeds they have done on earth; *sixth*, belief in predestination, or the inability of man to avoid, by any act of his own, the destiny irrevocably predetermined by God and written down in the eternal book previous to the creation of the world.

The religion of the Prophet contains, in common with all other religions, a secret doctrine which is the same as that found in those differently named. As referred to above, the Sufis taught a very high kind of mysticism, but not any higher than that of the Hindus, nor any different from the mysticism of the Christians, both of early and later times. They taught union with God; so do the Hindu and the Christian. They spoke of their wife and their mistress and their concubines or houris; so do mediaeval alchemists, and many of the Indian Yogis speak in a similar strain; so that in whatever direction we turn it is found that there is no substantial difference between Islamism and any other religion except in respect to age, and it is really the youngest of

all, excepting perhaps the later Christian development found among the Mormons of America or Latter-day Saints. In fact, some Western Theosophists have said that it would be just as well to accept Mormonism as Islamism, since the teachings are identical and the practices are also. The Mormons say that polygamy is not taught, but they practice it; they have their mysticism, their prophecy, their various kinds of frenzy, and among them are many extraordinary examples of prevision, notably with Brigham Young, the second prophet.

Americans might be inclined, if they were about to make a change, to accept their own natural product in preference to an Arabian one. Certainly in regard to morality, honesty, thrift, temperance, and such virtues, the Mormons stand as well as the followers of the Prophet Mohammed. But as we know little about true Islamism, a careful consideration of it will no doubt add to our knowledge and broaden our conceptions, since it must end in our seeing once more that none of the religions of the day are true ones, but that a single body of truth underlying them all must be the religion of the future.

The Path

RIG-VEDA ON GAMBLING

The following excellent remarks are probably the oldest in the world upon the vice of gambling. They are found in *Rig Veda*, x, 34. It is admitted that these Vedic hymns are anterior to the time of Homer and Hesiod. The Hindus claim an antiquity for them which carries us back thousands upon thousands of years prior to the oldest date allowed by European Orientalists. Those who have a theosophical acquaintance with the *Vedas* will incline to the estimate of the Hindus, inasmuch as European opinion is constantly altering on the subject, and besides has not had quite a century of experience in which to form itself. Muir says these hymns were composed certainly 1,000 years before our era, but that is too ridiculously low an estimate and will have ere long to be revised upon further proofs and discoveries. The present hymn is given as showing what was then thought of gambling.

The tumbling airborne products (1) of the great Vibhidaka tree delight me as they continue to roll upon the dice-board. The exciting dice seem to me like a draught of the soma-plant growing on Mount Miyavat. My wife never quarrelled with me nor despised me; she was kind to me and to my friends. But I for the sake of the partial dice have spurned my devoted spouse. My mother-in-law detests me, my wife rejects me. In my need I find no comforter.

I cannot discover what is the enjoyment of the gambler any more than I can perceive what is the happiness of a worn-out hack horse. Others pay court to the wife of the man whose wealth, is coveted by the impetuous dice. His father, mother, brothers cry out, "We know nothing of him; take him away bound!"

When I resolve not to be tormented by them because I am abandoned by my friends who withdraw from me, yet as soon as the brown dice, when they are thrown, make a rattling sound I hasten to their rendezvous like a woman to her paramour. The gamester comes to the assembly glowing in body, asking himself "Shall I win?" The dice inflame his desire by making over his winnings to his opponent. Hooking, piercing, deceitful, vexatious, delighting to torment, the dice dispense transient gifts and again ruin the winner; they appear to the gambler covered with honey. Their troop of fifty-three disports itself, itself disposing men's destinies like the God Savatri whose ordinances never fail. They bow not before the wrath of the fiercest. The king himself makes obeisance to them. They roll downward, they bound upward. Having no hands they overcome him who has. These celestial coals when thrown on the dice-board scorch the heart though cold themselves.

The destitute wife of the gamester is distressed, and so too is the mother of a son who goes she knows not whither. In debt and seeking after money the gambler approaches with trepidation the houses of other people at night. It vexes the gamester to see his own wife and then to observe the wives and happy homes of others. In the morning he yokes the brown horses — the dice; by the time when the fire goes out he has sunk into a degraded wretch. He who is the general of your board, the first king of your troop, to him I stretch forth my ten fingers to the east in reverence. I do not reject wealth, but I declare that which is right when I say:

Never play with dice; practice husbandry; rejoice in thy prosperity, esteeming it sufficient. Be satisfied with thy

cattle and thy wife, the god advises.

O dice, be friendly to us and no more bewitch us powerfully with your influence. Let your wrath and hostility abate: let others than we be subject to the fetters of the brown ones, the dice.

FOOTNOTE:

1. The seeds of the tree used for dice. ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE ADEPTS AND MODERN SCIENCE — *William Q. Judge*

Modern science is a bugbear for many a good Theosophist, causing him to hide his real opinions for fear they should conflict with science. But the latter is an unstable quantity, always shifting its ground, although never devoid of an overbearing assurance, even when it takes back what it had previously asserted. The views of scientific men have frequently been brought forward as a strong objection to the possibility of the existence of Adepts, Masters, Mahatmas, perfected men who have a complete knowledge of all that modern science is endeavoring to discover. Many trembling members of the Society, who do not doubt the Masters and their powers, would fain have those beings make their peace with science, so that the views of nature and man put forward by the Mahatmas might coincide with the ideas of modern investigators. It will be profitable to try to discover what is the attitude of the Adepts towards modern science. The question was raised quite early in the history of the Society in the correspondence which Mr. Sinnett had with the Adept K. H. in India, and there is in the answers published by Mr. Sinnett in the *Occult World* enough to indicate clearly what is the attitude of such beings to modern science. That book will often have to be referred to in future years, because the letters given in its pages are valuable in more senses than has been thought: they ought to be studied by every member of the Society, and the ideas contained therein made a part of our mental furniture.

It is evident from the remarks made in the *Occult World* that the persons to whom the letters were written had a high respect for modern science; that they would have liked to see science convinced of the machinery of the occult Cosmos, with all that that implies; that they thought if modern scientific men could be

convinced by extraordinary phenomena or otherwise about the Masters and Theosophy, very beneficial results to the Society would follow. There can be no doubt that if such a convincing were possible the results would have followed, but the hope of convincing our scientists seemed vain, because no way exists to alter the attitude of materialistic modern science except by a complete reform in its methods and theories. This would be a bringing back of ancient thought, and not agreeable to modern men. To pander in any way to science would be impossible to the Masters. They hold the position that if the rules and conclusions of nineteenth century science differ from those of the Lodge of the Brothers, then so much the worse for modern conclusions, as they must all be revised in the future. The radical difference between occult and modern materialistic science is that the former has philanthropy as its basis, whereas the latter has no such basis. Let us now see what can be discovered from the letters written by K. H. to Mr. Sinnett and another.

Mr. Sinnett writes, "The idea I had especially in my mind when I wrote the letter above referred to was that, of all tests of phenomena one could wish for, the best would be the production in our presence in India of a copy of the London *Times* of that day's date. With such a piece of evidence in my hand, I argued, I would undertake to convert everybody in Simla who was capable of linking two ideas together, to a belief in the possibility of obtaining by occult agency physical results which were beyond the control of modern science". To this he received a reply from K. H., who said: "Precisely because the test of the London newspaper would close the mouths of the sceptics it is inadmissible. See it in what light you will, the world is yet in its first stage of disenfranchisement, hence unprepared. . . . But as on the one hand science would find itself unable in its present state to account for the wonders given in its name, and on the other the ignorant

masses would still be left to view the phenomenon in the light of a miracle, every one who would be thus made a witness to the occurrence would be thrown off his balance and the result would be deplorable." In this is the first indication of the philanthropic basis, although later it is definitely stated. For here we see that the Adepts would not do that which might result in the mental confusion of so many persons as are included in "ignorant masses". He then goes on to say: "Were we to accede to your desires, know you really what consequence would follow in the trail of success? The inexorable shadow which follows all human innovations moves on, yet few are they who are ever conscious of its approach and dangers. What are they then to expect who would offer to the world an innovation which, owing to human ignorance, if believed in will surely be attributed to those dark agencies that two-thirds of humanity believe in and dread as yet?"

Here again we see that Adepts will not do that which, however agreeable to science, extraordinary and interesting in itself, might result in causing the masses once more to consider that they had proof of the agency of devils or other dreaded unseen beings. The object of the Adepts being to increase the knowledge of the greater number and to destroy dogmatism with superstition, they will not do that which would in any way tend to defeat what they have in view. In the letter quoted from, the Adept then goes on to show that the number of persons free from ignorant prejudice and religious bigotry is still very small. It is very true that such an extraordinary thing as the production of the *Times* in India across several thousand miles of ocean might convince even hundreds of scientific men of the possibility of this being done by a knowledge of law, but their belief would have but little effect on the immense masses of uneducated persons in the West who are still bound up in religious bigotry and prejudice. The Adept hints that

"the inexorable shadow that follows all human innovations" would be a sudden blazing forth again of ignorant superstition among the masses, which, gaining force, and sweeping all other men along in the immense current thus generated, the very purpose of the phenomenon would then be negated. On this the Adept writes a little further on, "As for human nature in general, it is the same now as it was a million years ago, prejudice based upon selfishness, a general unwillingness to give up an established order of things for new modes of life and thought — and occult study requires all that and much more — proud and stubborn resistance to truth if it but upsets the previous notion of things: such are the characteristics of the age". "However successful, the danger would be growing proportionately with success", that is, the danger would grow in proportion to the success of the phenomenon produced. "No choice would soon remain but to go on, ever crescendo, or to fall, in this endless struggle with prejudice and ignorance, killed by your own weapons. Test after test would be required and would have to be furnished; every subsequent phenomenon expected to be more marvelous than the preceding one. Your daily remark is that one cannot be expected to believe unless he becomes an eye-witness. Would the lifetime of a man suffice to satisfy the whole-world of sceptics? ... In common with many you blame us for our great secrecy. Yet we know something of human nature, for the experience of long centuries, aye of ages, has taught us. And we know that so long as science has anything to learn, and a shadow of religious dogmatism lingers in the hearts of the multitudes, the world's prejudices have to be conquered step by step, not at a rush." These simple remarks are philosophical, historically accurate, and perfectly true. All spiritualistic mediums know that their visitors require test after test. Even the dabbler in psychic matters is aware that his audience or his friends require a constant increase of phenomena and results, and every earnest

student of occultism is aware of the fact that in his own circle, there are fifty unbelievers to one believer, and that the believers require that they shall see the same thing over again that others report.

Proceeding with this matter to another letter, the Adept says. "We will be at cross purposes in our correspondence until it has been made entirely plain that occult science has its own methods of research as fixed and arbitrary as the methods of its antithesis, physical science, are in their way. If the latter has its *dicta*, so also has the former." He then goes on to show that the person desiring to know their science must abide by their rules, and taking his correspondent as an illustration, he says: "You seek all this, and yet, as you say yourself, hitherto you have not found sufficient reasons to even give up your modes of life, directly hostile to such communication". This means of course that scientific men as well as other inquirers must conform to the rules of occult science if they wish to know it, and must themselves change their modes of thought and action. He then goes on to analyze the motives of his correspondent, and these motives would be the same as those impelling science to investigate. They are described to be the desire to have positive proofs of forces in nature unknown to science, the hope to appropriate them, the wish to demonstrate their existence to some others in the West, the ability to contemplate future life as an objective reality built upon knowledge and not faith, and to learn the truth about the Lodge and the Brothers. These motives, he says, are selfish from the standpoint of the Adepts, and this again emphasizes the philanthropy behind occult science. The motives are selfish because, as he says, "The highest aspirations for the welfare of humanity become tainted with selfishness if in the mind of the philanthropist there lurks a shadow of a desire for self-benefit, or a tendency to do injustice, even where these exist unconsciously

to himself. Yet you have ever discussed but to put down the idea of a universal brotherhood, questioned its usefulness, and advised to remodel the Theosophical Society on the principle of a college for the special study of occultism".

The Adept makes it very clear that such a proposition could not be entertained, showing once more that the Brotherhood, and not the study of secret laws of nature, is the real object the inner Lodge has in view. Brotherhood as an object is the highest philanthropy, and especially so when connected with science.

In another letter, written after consultation with much higher Adepts, who have never been mentioned and who are utterly unknown even to Theosophists, being too high to be encountered, he takes up the same subject, saying, "In conformity with exact science you define but one cosmic energy, and see no difference between the energy expended by the traveller who pushes aside the bush that obstructs his path and the scientific experimenter who expends an equal amount of energy in setting the pendulum in motion. We do; for we know there is a world of difference between the two. The one uselessly dissipates and scatters force; the other concentrates and stores it; and here please understand that I do not refer to the relative utility of the two, as one might imagine, but only to the fact that in the one case there is brute force flung out without any transmutation of that brute energy into the higher potential form of spiritual dynamics, and in the other there is just that. . . . Now for us poor unknown philanthropists no fact of either of these sciences is interesting except in the degree of its potentiality for moral results, and in the ratio of its usefulness to mankind. And what, in its proud isolation, can be more utterly indifferent to every one and everything, or more bound to nothing but the selfish requisites for its advancement, than this materialistic science of fact? May I ask, then, what have the laws of Faraday, Tyndall, or others to do

with philanthropy in their abstract relations with humanity, viewed as an intelligent whole? What care they for man as an isolated atom of this great and harmonious whole, even though they may be sometimes of practical use to him? Cosmic energy is something eternal and incessant: matter is indestructible: and there stand the scientific facts. Doubt them and you are an ignoramus; deny them, a dangerous lunatic, a bigot: pretend to improve upon the theories, an impertinent charlatan. And yet even these scientific facts never suggested any proof to the world of experimenters that nature consciously prefers that matter should be indestructible under organic rather than inorganic forms, and that she works slowly but incessantly towards the realization of this object — the evolution of conscious life out of unconscious material. . . . Still less does exact science perceive that while the building ant, the busy bee, the nidifacient bird, accumulates each in its own humble way as much cosmic energy in its potential form as a Hayden, a Plato, or a ploughman turning his furrow. . . . The hunter who kills game for his pleasure or profit, the positivist who applies his intellect to proving that *plus* multiplied by *plus* equals *minus*, are wasting and scattering energy no less than the tiger which springs upon its prey. They all rob nature instead of enriching her, and will all in the degree of their intelligence find themselves accountable. . . . Exact experimental science has nothing to do with morality, virtue, philanthropy — therefore can make no claim upon our help until it blends itself with metaphysics. Being a cold classification of facts outside of man, and existing before and after him, her domain of usefulness ceases for us at the outer boundary of these facts; and whatever the inferences and results for humanity from the materials acquired by her method, she little cares. Therefore as our sphere lies entirely outside of hers, — as far as the path of Uranus is outside the earth's, — we distinctly refuse to be broken on any wheel of her construction. . . . The truths and mysteries of

Occultism constitute, indeed, a body of the highest spiritual importance, at once profound and practical for the world at-large, yet it is not as an addition to the tangled mass of theory or speculation that they are being given to you, but for their practical bearing on the interests of mankind."

We have in these extracts a clear outline of the exact position of the Adepts towards modern science, together with the statement of the reasons why they do not come forth by astounding phenomena to convince the world of their existence. The reason for the refusal is that the world is not ready, but is in such a condition that the end would be obstructed and damage be the result. Their attitude to modern science is that they accept the facts of science wherever they prove the truths of Occultism, but they consider modern science to be materialistic and also devoid of philanthropy. This we must admit to be the case, and as the student who has had experience in these matters knows for himself that the Adepts have the truth and possess a knowledge of nature's laws, he approves of their refusing to come down to science and of their demand that science must rise to them. He also knows that in the course of the cycles the mass of men will have been educated and developed to such a position that a new school, at once religious and scientific, will have possession of the earth and rule among all men who possess civilization.

The Path

AN INCIDENT WITH MADAME BLAVATSKY — *Marian B. Lull*

I had not the felicity of knowing Madame Blavatsky so intimately and familiarly as I would have liked, nevertheless I beg to add my tribute to the memory of that illustrious woman.

In 1878 or 1879 I called at the rooms occupied by Madame Blavatsky in West Forty-Seventh Street. She was holding an informal reception, many people being present. I was received with that charming cordiality which won every fair-minded and disinterested individual who approached this wonderfully gifted woman. We chatted for a few moments when she greeted me, and then walked slowly to one of the windows, lingering there together for a moment or two, when she left me to give her attention to other guests.

I remained alone in this window for perhaps fifteen minutes. I was fully conscious of the assembly, conscious of the hum of conversation, the sound of gentle mirth fell upon my ears, the coming and going of the people were plainly perceptible to my senses, all the incidents of time, place, and circumstances were palpably apparent, real, and in every respect in conformity with the receptions held by any hostess who dispenses hospitality; all the routine of life in the thoroughfares without passed before my eyes in the usual manner, and yet — I knew that "I" stood upon the margin of a stream that flowed freely past where I stood; the ripple of the waters was continuous, soothing, and placid; grasses waved in unison with the murmur of the river: the under-current of insect life mingled with the sighing of the wind: birds twittered and fluttered in the luxuriant foliage; all the voices of nature blended in a harmonious melody that seemed the very soul of silence breathing through a musical cadence that was attuned to

sacred themes. All appeared familiar to "myself", and I enjoyed the sensations produced precisely as any individual enjoys any naturally pleasurable sensation. How long my consciousness of this "Soul Sense" continued I know not, possibly fifteen minutes.

Madame returned, smiling, to my side, and I greeted her with "What is it?" She simply replied, in the most matter of fact manner, "That is sacred music. You are on the banks of the Ganges."

While I am of Anglo-Indian origin, my grandmother having been a Hindu, Madame Blavatsky had not been advised of that fact, and I am fully convinced that I was not hypnotized. I attribute the circumstance to her intuitive knowledge of those with whom she came in contact, although I do not doubt that the Indian blood in my composition made me more *en rapport* with her than I might otherwise have been.

We had a short, pleasant conversation, and she told me, among other things, that I would return to my own. I have become a member of the Theosophical Society, and have indeed returned to my own, as Madame Blavatsky predicted I would; for no sooner had I read the philosophy of the Theosophical doctrine than I recognized that it was what I had believed all my conscious life.

Whenever I visited New York City I sought Madame Blavatsky and found a new charm in each visit. I could not fail to see and appreciate the extraordinary character which she possessed and I believe her to have been thoroughly in earnest, thoroughly honest, unwaveringly truthful, single-minded, clean of heart, high souled, and of spotless purity.

ASTRAL BODIES AND ASTRAL VOYAGINGS: I — *Jerome A. Anderson*

The term "astral body" is very loosely used by the ordinary writer upon occult subjects, and sometimes Theosophists who ought to be better informed in the same manner. Astral body is indifferently applied to the Linga Sarira, or the model upon which the physical body is constructed; to the "thought forms" in which the Adept makes his journeys when he prefers not to use the physical; to the kamic "shells" formed after death from the wreckage, so to speak, of the dead personality; and to all the many varieties of dream-forms, "wraiths", or apparitions. A brief study of these different bodies, such as will be attempted in this paper, will not only serve to urge a more accurate use of their distinguishing names, but will also assist to a better comprehension of the septenary nature of man in some of its aspects.

A good starting-point for analysis will be to remember the theosophic postulate that Consciousness is One, and that the appearance of separate states which it manifests in Nature is caused by the lucidity or density, as it were, of the matter with which it is associated as its vehicle, just as a ray of white light will be colored, or rendered more or less dim, by the color, transparency, or opaqueness of the medium through which it is transmitted.

The Ego of man may be said to represent a unit of consciousness, a vortical or atomic center in the Logos, or Thinking Principle of the Universe, which has evolved to Self-consciousness. This is the result of long and varied experiences in many material bases, which have enabled it at length to realize that its present state

differs from past ones, as well as from the consciousness of other entities by which it is environed in Nature. In other words, it has acquired consciousness of consciousness — which constitutes self-consciousness. But in the processes of the evolution of this self-consciousness it has long since passed the point or possibility of directly functioning in the molecular matter of this material plane, because self-consciousness is not possible in a vehicle so dense. Consciousness is too deeply buried in matter to exhibit self-consciousness; therefore this remains a potentiality only, a dim future possibility, to be only fully realized when the Ego, the Pilgrim through the Cycle of Necessity, reaches the Manasic plane with its appropriate substance. This our (Higher) Egos or real Centers of Consciousness have done, and it is for the reason that they are unable to relate themselves directly to matter upon this earth that fleshly bodies and a reflection of themselves, or the Lower Manas, are interposed.

The Higher Ego, the Thinker, the real "I am I", is, then, entirely unrelated to and unable to function upon the Material Plane except through and by means of its reflection in the physical brain, the Lower Manas. But being thus related, it is not only capable of creating for its use a body on the physical plane of matter, but bodies as well upon any of the several planes through which it must pass to reach the physical. This it does by virtue of the creative or constructive force it possesses because of its emanation from the Monadic Source of all creative construction upon any plane of Nature. It is not, therefore, limited to its material form, but can and does create finer, more subtle or ethereal, ones on any of the planes between the physical and that upon which it has its own proper habitation. And it is, then, these various bodies created by it which we have to classify and study in this paper.

The lowest of these, and standing next to the physical in point of

grossness or heterogeneity, is the Linga Sarira. or astral double of the body. This is nothing more than a senseless counterpart of the latter which serves as a model in and upon which the physical molecules are aggregated. It can hardly be said that the Higher Ego consciously constructs the Linga Sarira. Its attraction to and brooding presence, under the law of karmic affinities, over the parents at the moment of conception, calls into activity the "lower Builders", or those forces in Nature whose consciousness does not rise to the self-conscious plane. These construct the astral body known as the Linga Sarira, and build within it the physical one under the play of two opposing influences. First there is that of the Higher Ego again seeking incarnation, and bringing with it in the form of "skandhas", or kinetic psychic energy, tendencies to construct a body calculated to best give them expression. But these are met by another karmic stream of purely physical and lower psychic tendencies or impressions derived from the parents under the law of physical heredity. This force unmodified would exactly repeat the form of the parents, as is done so accurately and constantly in the kingdoms below man, and would be hard indeed to overcome were it not already divided against itself by the impossibility of exactly repeating the form of both parents because of their dissimilarities. So a compromise must be the outcome; the form desired by the Higher Ego being modified by the physical line of evolutionary forces, and *vice versa*.

The Linga Sarira, thus constructed then, is as senseless as far as any higher consciousness is concerned as are the molecules of the physical body when the Lower Manas retires from its active supervision either in sleep or death. During the life of the body it acts as a medium between this and the Life Principle upon one hand, and the Kamic Principle upon the other. For the Universal Life Principle, like the Thinking Principle, is much too subtle to act directly upon physical matter. It first encounters the Linga

Sarira and is reflected by this medium into the coarser matter of this plane, being changed by this very reflection and dissociation from the Universal JIVA into the terrestrial Prana, the Vitality or Life upon the material plane. In like manner is the purely spiritual, or direct, or intuitional perception of the Higher Ego changed by its reflection through the Linga Sarira to the physical plane into Sensation, or perception by means of the physical senses. At death its functions of course become nil, and it fades out as the physical body decays. It is the "wraith" often seen in graveyards, for it may exude out of the body either in life or after death. In the latter case it is utterly senseless; no more than a shadowy wisp of vapor; in the former, which often occurs at so-called "spirit" seances, it may become the vehicle for a sort of intelligence reflected into it by the medium from whom it has exuded, or from some of the "sitter" present. In either case it cannot go very far from the body, owing in life to its so largely depriving this of its vitality — of which, as we have noted, it is the vehicle — and in death, to the attraction still exerted by the decaying form.

So intimate is its connection with the body that an injury inflicted upon it is often "repercussed" upon the person from whom it has exuded, thus explaining a seemingly mysterious phenomenon of spiritualism. It is also the agent in another large class of these so-called "spirit" manifestations, such as table-tipping, slate-writing, object-moving, etc. Under the stress of the intense desire for these things, the "medium" will extrude his own Linga Sarira and do them all without the faintest suspicion that it is himself and not some denison of the spirit world anxious to make his presence known. This, of course, is only possible in those natures who, by cultivating their astral faculties at the expense of both the physical and the truly spiritual, have so loosened the attachments between this and the physical body that such separations, in

whole or in part, become quite easy of performance. But in the case of the ordinary medium this is done entirely upon the sub-conscious planes of his being, under the stress of his will, and so, being quite unaware of their source, he jumps at the conclusion that the "spirits" are the agents in their production. He is confirmed in his opinion because science refuses to recognize any super-physical intelligences or forces, and answers his demands for an explanation of those which he knows are veritable facts by pooh-poohing their existence, while intimating to the unfortunate but thoroughly honest "medium" that he is a knave, a fool, or a promising candidate for a lunatic asylum. Theosophy alone offers a reasonable and logical explanation for these phenomena, more of which will be reached and accounted for when we take up a class of higher "astral" bodies. The Linga Sarira is universal in nature; everything, whether "organic" or inorganic, has its astral counterpart — its medium for relating it more or less closely with Prana.

The next astral man with which, taking them in an ascending scale, we have to deal has been termed the Kama Rupa, or Body of Desire. Unlike the Linga Sarira, it is only formed after death, and arises in the following manner. The reincarnation of man's spiritual Triad in a new, purely animal body sets up in the latter a distinct Thinking Principle, possessing potentially all the powers, creative and constructive, appertaining to the True Thinker, the Higher Manas. This, known in Theosophical literature as the Lower Manas, becomes united to Kama, or the lower sensual desires, in its efforts to elevate these to its own plane, for the whole scheme of evolution is viewed by Theosophy as elevating to their own plane of the consciousness of entities "crucified" in matter below them by Hierarchies consciously and intelligently acting from above. It is the direct outcome of an Infinite, Intelligent, and Divine Compassion, and not the result of blind

force seeking unconsciously the lines of least resistance, as modern science would fain have us believe. This imparting of its own qualities to Kama enables the latter to create for itself an astral body of greater or lesser vitality and durability according to the degree to which it has received and *conquered* the Manasic Essence. For, if Manas have conquered in its association with the sensuous desires of Kama, the latter is so weakened by the consequent elevation and transmuting of its essence to Manasic planes that the Kama Rupa will be but a faint, short-lived will-o'-the-wisp; but if Kama conquer, then does the Manasic essence become degraded or "fallen" from its plane, and the Rupa will be proportionately vigorous. But, although possessing enough borrowed or stolen force to construct subconsciously a body, this Rupa has no Thinking Principle, or "I am I" center of consciousness, within it, and at once sinks to the animal condition of consciousness, even below the higher animals. It drifts helplessly about on the astral plane, drawn hither and thither by currents of desires generated by men. Hence it is a constant element at spiritual seances, and a most dangerous one. For it is but a vile, conscienceless bundle of desires and unsatisfied passions, unconsciously seeking expression upon the material plane, the only one capable of affording this. Drawn to a "circle", it may have a spurious semblance of self-consciousness reflected upon it by the minds of those present, just as a physical corpse may for a time be galvanized into a semblance of life by electricity. Or, perhaps, its condition is more like that of a hypnotized person whose consciousness is also deprived of its synthesizing center by the force of the hypnotizer's will, and who therefore simply reflects whatever is projected into his mind as though it had originated there.

It will at once be apparent how undesirable is traffic with these Kama Rupas in seance rooms. Nothing pure, unselfish, or aspiring

can come from such a source, while it is quite possible for a person, and especially so weakly an organized one as a "medium" must be, to have one or more of such entities attach themselves permanently to him. Especially is this to be feared when there is a strong bond of magnetic attraction between the "spook" and the kamic nature of the personality to which it has been thus attracted by similar impure desires.

(To be concluded)

The Path

SOME LOST CHORDS: OR ESOTERIC CHRISTIANITY — H. W. Cragin

The Prince of Peace was said to have come to bring peace on earth and good-will to men; but since he toiled in agony centuries ago up the steeps of Calvary hill (or rose to the Higher Self) it has been, in the main, one long tragedy. Something the future will greatly mourn and wonder at. In the name of Christ thousands upon thousands have been slaughtered or terrorized, countless treasure has been expended in wars or proselyting, the human family has been full of enmities, and the mind of man dragged in the dust behind the chariot of ignorance and superstition.

Hence today a civilization exists in which the precepts of Christ cannot be fully carried out, as even the church admits; and all this has resulted because the letter and not the spirit of his teachings has been followed: or, in other words, because esoteric Christianity has not been comprehended or practiced. The early Christians had been fully warned, for Paul says, *II Corinthians*, ch. iii, v. 5-6:

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to account anything as from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God; who also made us sufficient as ministers of a *new covenant*; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the *letter killeth*, but the *spirit giveth life*.

And beginning at the twelfth verse of the same chapter, he contrasts the teaching of Moses thus:

Having therefore such a hope, we use great boldness of speech, and are not as Moses, who put a *veil* upon his face, that the children of Israel should not look steadfastly on

the end of that which was passing away; but their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remaineth unlifted; which veil is done away in Christ. But unto this day whensoever Moses is read, a veil lieth upon their heart. But whensoever it [man, or manas] shall turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is *liberty*.

In ch. iv, v. 3. he says:

But and if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled in them that are perishing: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that the light [illumination] of the gospel of the Glory of *Christ*, who is the *image of God*, should not dawn upon them.

Again in *II Timothy*, ch. vi, v. 3-4, he says:

For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables.

No Christos, whether Buddha or Jesus, ever committed his teachings to writing. This may have been done by certain of his followers, but their works are valuable only in proportion to their spiritual advancement. The disciples of Jesus, with the exception of Paul, were admittedly ignorant men, having a mixture of the carnal and the spiritual, and Paul himself confessed that he did not have the full knowledge. It therefore follows that the books of the *New Testament*, even if written by the persons to whom they are ascribed, must contain imperfections and call forth the attack of scientific, historical, and literary criticism. A few of the books are fragmentary and unworthy of serious notice, but the others

contain a mixture of exoteric and esoteric teaching. The former is of no value to us as Theosophists, and, if we have no comprehension of the latter, or esoteric teaching, the whole is a stumbling-block, and we can understand why so many cast aside the *New Testament* as of no value. A man may have a great intellect, yet be as a child so far as intuition is concerned. To him certain books are sealed up.

I do not purpose here to discuss an historical Christ, or the authenticity of the *New Testament*, but will briefly consider a few of teachings therein as laid down in the books as they now are.

Jesus was born of a holy virgin, Mary, or matter; went into Egypt (the allurements of the physical body); and, having put them under his feet, returned as *Christ* — "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord through the prophet, saying 'out of Egypt (the body) did I call my Son.'" Being now free from the passions and disturbances of the carnal body and the lower mind, he taught from Jerusalem and round about. His teachings, stripped of the forgeries and conceits of men, were few and simple. He declared, mystically, that he was the Son of God, and that all men were or could become so. He taught in the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere the doctrine of meekness, purity, and altruism to its fullest extent. The Sermon on the Mount was not delivered until he had fasted and been tempted by the Devil (or lower mind). During this temptation he refused at the promptings of the Devil to show phenomena for unworthy purposes, or lest he should seemingly gratify his own vanity, nor did he later ever show phenomena for the mere love of them. He openly said the people could not understand esoteric truths, so he veiled many of them in parable. To his disciples he said (*Mark*, iv, v. 11):

Unto you is given the mystery of the kingdom of God; but unto them that are without all things are done in parables.

It did not, however, follow that the disciples always grasped the esoteric meaning, for we find them asking him to explain the parable of the tares of the field (*Matthew* xiii, v. 36). I conclude from the text that the Sermon on the Mount was given both to the disciples and the multitude. The latter could understand the simple teachings set forth, but they were astonished and could not carry them out, any more than modern society can. The admonition, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast your pearls before swine", etc., was obviously for the ears of the disciples, and referred to arcane truths. Paul affirms this in *I Corinthians*, ii:

But we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, even the wisdom that hath been hidden. . . . But unto us God revealed them through the spirit. . . . For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the things of God none knoweth save the Spirit of God. . . . Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged.

And in the next chapter he continues:

I fed you with milk, not with meat, for ye were not yet able to bear it: nay, not even now are ye able.

And in chapter vii, v. 7, he asserts that all men are not on the same plane, thus:

Yet I would that all men were even as I myself. Howbeit each man hath his own gift from God, one after this manner and another after that.

When Christ stood before the Pharisees and was questioned by an intelligent man, a crafty lawyer, as to the great commandment, he condensed his teaching into a few words.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang the whole law and the prophets.

Paul says, *Romans*, xiii, 9:

And if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

And in *Galatians*, v, 14:

For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

If the two commandments of Christ are exoterically and esoterically followed, they will be found to comprehend and lead to all things.

Of God Christ says there is one God, a Spiritual God, whom no man (the physical senses) hath seen. Paul in *I Timothy*, vi, 16, speaks of a God "who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable; whom no man hath seen, nor can see". Neither Christ nor His disciples anywhere speak in favor of the anthropomorphic God of the *Old Testament*.

Where is God? In His kingdom. Where is His kingdom? "The kingdom of God is within you", says Christ (*Luke*, xvii, 21). In *Romans*, x, 8, Paul says:

But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that is, the word of faith, which we preach.

And in *I Corinthians*, iii, 16-17, he says:

For we are God's fellow-workers; ye are God's husbandry, God's building. . . . Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

Reading again Christ's answer to the lawyer, we shall see that he meant that we should love the Lord within us, or aspire to our seventh principle, Atma, and practice altruism, or regard all men as brothers, in our relations with our fellows. The worship of an anthropomorphic God is limiting and illogical, and the worship of an impersonal power, on the other hand, is something the mind cannot grasp.

As to prayer, Christ did not condemn it, but he enjoined, *Matthew*, vi:

When thou prayest, enter into thine *inner chamber*, and having shut the door [to the external senses] pray to thy Father which is in *secret*, and the Father which is in secret shall recompense thee.

In the *Key to Theosophy* it is fully shown that He meant by prayer an aspiration or desire unto the highest principle in man, the spiritual spark, the Atma. The passage quoted has been misconstrued by the orthodox for centuries, for they have built costly palaces to pray in, and even pray on the street corners, just as the hypocrites and Gentiles did in the time of Christ.

Christ taught reincarnation in the case of the man born blind and in his reference to John. Paul taught Karma in *I Corinthians*, iii, 8:

Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one; but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor.

And in *Colossians*, iii, 25, where he says:

For he that doeth wrong shall receive again for the wrong that he hath done, and there is no respect of persons.

See also *Galatians*, v, 7:

For whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.

Nothing has been so much adduced to the world at large to show the divinity of Christ as the alleged fact that he performed miracles, or contravened the laws of nature. That he did so Theosophists will respectfully deny, and assert that anyone who has become a Christos has such powers, entirely within the laws of nature, as to perform acts which seem to the ordinary eye wonderful or miraculous. Things which years ago would have been called a miracle, or sorcery, are today commonplace: for instance, our great power over the forces of nature, which is as nothing to what will be. The border-line of the mysterious is being daily passed and its field becoming more and more limited, and today the scientific or metaphysical mind pays no attention to the word "miracle" in a literal sense. For one, I believe that the so-called miracles of Christ have a spiritual explanation, if the events took place. He never boasted of them, and said of those alleged to be dead that they were not dead. In all ages miracles have been declared, and are said today to be performed at the shrines of Roman Catholic saints, etc. The miracles of Apollonius of Tyana, in a gross sense, are as well, if not better proven than those of Christ; and wonderful things are done by Indian Yogis and by Adepts, but they are all within the law of nature. If Christ performed miracles, others did in his day. (See *Mark*, ix, 38.)

John said unto him, "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and we forbade him, because he followed not us." But Jesus said, "Forbid him not: for there is no man

which shall do a mighty work [or better, who has a mighty power] in my name, and be able to quickly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is for us."

The same circumstance is repeated in *Luke*, ix, 49-50, and the answer is the same. Now just before this Jesus was said to have cast out an evil spirit from a child; and his reply above was not only an admission that those on his plane could do like things, but also a plea for toleration. In *Acts*, viii, we find Simon Magus performing wonders in Samaria, but as to him read the able articles of Mr. Mead in *Lucifer*, our London magazine.

If you ask why the church has so largely departed from the esoteric doctrine, I answer, Because the Church was founded on Peter. Christ foretold that he would betray him. He did betray him before the crucifixion, and afterwards, for he understood not the inner teaching and taught largely the exoteric doctrine. He sowed dissension among the congregations, and Paul preached against him and Barnabas boldly, but the words of Paul were not understood by the many, and were gradually forgotten. The only reason why Paul stands preeminent among the Apostles is because he knew and taught esoteric Christianity.

The Path

ASTRAL BODIES AND ASTRAL VOYAGINGS: II — *Jerome A. Anderson*

(Concluded)

The third Astral form with which we have to deal in studying these productions arising out of the composite nature of man, is the most terrible of all. It is at once apparent that when, in speaking of the persistence or impermanency of the Kama Rupa, it was pointed out that this depended upon the extent to which the Manasic essence succeeded in transmuting the kamic or permitted itself to become tainted with the desires of Kama, that there was a possibility of the whole of the reflected Lower Manas being dragged down to the kamic plane. That this is a real danger to every human being is a true and terrifying fact in nature. When it unfortunately occurs, the astral body of such an entity, though differing in degree only from the Kama Rupa proper, has enough distinguishing characteristics to entitle it to a separate place. It belongs to a distinct genus in this; that it has dropped out of the evolutionary impulse altogether, has no part in the general advance upon the human plane, and constitutes truly a "lost soul". It retains all of that reflected feeling of "I am I" which, though an illusion, is yet at the base of our earthly personalities. Consequently this entity has a feeling of personality as strong as while living; can think, act, and generate karma; can even reincarnate as a human monster, and is the source of many of those cases of true obsession which so largely help to fill that flower of our modern "intellectual" civilization — the insane asylum. It can and sometimes does relate occurrences of its past earth-life quite accurately, although its love of evil is so great that it nearly always resorts to falsehood, even in this particular. No one can have attended many spiritualistic seances without

noticing how largely suicides and accidental deaths preponderate when genuine communications are had. For there are no accidents in nature, and those who are cut off in their prime, while not all by any means lost souls, are so cut off because of causes they themselves have generated, and with such there is, on account of the large amount of vitality suddenly transferred from the physical to their astral form (not to the Linga Sarira, but to the Kama Rupa), an intense desire to resume their earthly habits and occupations, and which only very slowly fades out. Such, together with really "lost souls", become "guides" to their poor mediums — in reality obsessing vampires, destroying both moral tone and physical vitality in their unfortunate victims. The "guide" of such an one, with whom the writer was at one time familiar, admitted to his intimates that he had been a pirate, although on ordinary occasions he was wont to parade as an ex-minister! In discussing his probable nature with a friend in the privacy of his office, the writer characterized the "guide" as a vampire, which fact was promptly reported to him at the next time he saw the medium; thus showing that these evil entities are entities, and not phantoms of the imagination, as materialists would fain classify them.

In taking up the next class of astral forms we have at length reached a more agreeable portion of our subject, where we no longer deal with the denizens of the lowest astral realms. For there the creative work of Manas was at best a blind, sub-conscious groping, so far below its own state had its essence become buried, even before reaching the physical plane. But now we come to a series of Thought Forms, ranging from those still subconsciously constructed, as in dream, to the Mayavi Rupa of the Adept, which he consciously creates, endows it with the necessary qualities, and transports it wheresoever he wills with the rapidity of thought. Perhaps the very faintest, most fleeting, of

these forms are those creations by means of which we dramatize our thoughts in ordinary dream. For, when not viewing actual scenes in the Astral Light, which can only happen when the consciousness is partially or wholly awake on this plane, one only sees his own creations. It is true these creations are "subjective", so-called, but modern philosophy is fast beginning to realize that the subjective to the perceiver is a great deal more real than the objective. These dream creations of ours are actual entities, capable of functioning so long as our will holds them in existence, just as an universe objectivises itself so long as the great Cosmic will falters not nor wearies in its manvantaric projection. A step higher than these are those forms — true Mayavi Rupas — which the soul creates for itself when it abandons the body during sleep. For clothed in one of these, it can travel immense distances from the physical form without the danger to this which would result, should the Linga Sarira be attempted to be used. As the consciousness begins to awaken in these forms and upon these planes, there is often the memory of persons and places brought back and impressed upon the physical brain with sufficient distinctness to be remembered and recognised when awake. Thus the father of the writer dreamed that he was travelling along a familiar road until he came to and passed far beyond any point he had ever reached when awake. While exploring this to him new territory, he came to an object he had never before seen — a *corduroy* bridge. This novelty so impressed him that he vividly remembered the supposed dream. It chanced that sometime thereafter he removed from that State, and by the road he had taken when dreaming. At the point at which he dreamed he had seen the strange structure he found the bridge, exactly as he had seen it while dreaming.

To these semi-conscious dream forms we have to relegate those "wraiths" of the dying which appear so often to a distant person

at the moment of death. For the consciousness of all of these dream forms is derived from the lower Manas, which has to win self-consciousness upon any plane before its consciousness upon it is anything more than a confused, uncertain dream. This self-consciousness has been partly gained in the case of clairvoyants, who actually visit other places clothed in these thought forms, when their physical descriptions are really accurate. Of course ordinary clairvoyance is simply seeing upon the astral plane by those who have evolved the power to transfer their self-consciousness to their astral organs, but there is a kind of clairvoyance which uses these forms, and which approaches somewhat the true Mayavi Rupa of the Adept.

This, the Mayavi Rupa or illusion body of the Adept, or of those who have won the right and attained the power to consciously create and inhabit it, is the next we have to consider. About it we ordinary mortals know very little. But it is evident that it is but a natural power to which the whole human race will attain in the course of its evolution, and which these advanced Ones have anticipated by the supreme efforts of an unselfish and purified will. That they can transport these bodies to any place, however distant, with the rapidity of thought, and make them both invisible to the ordinary eye, or apparently as solid and real as flesh and blood, has been well attested by the most competent witnesses. Not only did a Master do this, in a visit to Col. Olcott in New York while his physical body was in India, but he actually left behind him an article of his apparel when he disappeared, and which the Colonel still possesses. It will be claimed that such an event is only evidence to those who witness it, but this can hardly be so classified when we consider the really vast mass of testimony which shows that this projection of astral forms is only a natural power of every soul, and which we at present exercise feebly and unconsciously, while Adepts but do the same thing

consciously.

Higher still than the Mayavi Rupa is the Nirmanakaya body, the form woven by those who have conquered every illusion of matter, who have won the right to Nirvana, but who refuse their reward in order to still toil, unseen and unfelt by those for whom they have sacrificed so much. It is from such high and holy Beings, clothed in their Nirmanakaya vestments, that genuine inspiration from spiritual sources comes. It is their duty and their delight to daily and hourly contend with the enemies of humanity by such help and inspiration, given in the hour of need. Yet by this is not meant a "communication" such as comes from "Summerland" by any means. For the inspiration in this case but obeys the universal law that all true power proceeds from within outwards, and so these always seem to come from the recesses of our own being, and are utterly indistinguishable from those which really do proceed from our own Higher Ego. So, unnoticed, except by the Adept clairvoyant, uncredited, un-thanked, do these highest and holiest of Earth-evolved beings proceed with their compassionate tasks.

There are higher forms yet, but they can hardly be classified as Astral. Such are the Augoeides, the Radiant Forms of our Divine Fathers in Heaven, spoken of by Bulwer Lytton; the Dharmakaya vestments of those Buddhas of spiritual selfishness how but gain Nirvana to "disappear forever from the hearts and memories of mankind", instead of donning the humble Astral robe of the Nirmanakaya. There is, too, that undescribed mysterious vestment which clothes us in our devachanic rest. But enough have been classified to show their common origin, their different uses and functions, and to enable the student to satisfactorily assign each to its proper place and plane of consciousness. Thus, in the case of table-tipping, slate-writing, etc., he will instantly know that the astral organ of some living and present person is

the actual factor in the phenomenon; the intelligence, if any, being reflected from the minds of those present. If there be forms materialized, he may be sure that one or more Linga Sariras of those present have exuded and attracted to them enough of molecular matter and vitality to form a transient Rupa for a Kamic entity, or, perhaps, a lost soul to regain for a few moments those earth sensations and experiences for which it longs. Let a sensitive person observe the startling depression of vitality, as well as the horrible charnel-house smell remaining in the room after a genuine "materialization", and he will be at no loss to account for the source of the power or of the "conditions" necessary to accomplish the result. He may seek in vain among the paradoxes and platitudes of the so-called "communications" for evidence of any high or really spiritual entity, for Nirmanakayas do not seek the atmosphere of the seance room any more than does the ordinary man or woman the horrors of the morgue or dissecting rooms of our colleges, which are their nearest physical counterparts. And if there does come uncalled into his mind a suggestion to labor altruistically for humanity, a longing to live upon a higher, holier plane than that which he realizes he now occupies, he will not disturb or flatter himself by the thought that perhaps a Nirmanakaya is endeavoring to impress him, for he will realize that the plane of a Nirmanakaya, which is that of his own Higher Ego, is too near the Divine for any feeling of selfish proprietorship, of "this is mine and not thine", to mar the Unity of thought and purpose towards which we now feebly strive in our endeavors to "form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood". And if in his sub-conscious construction of these lower, transient entities, he finds a promise and prophecy of a time when he shall consciously and joyously take part in the creation or construction of such worlds as he now inhabits, then will his study of even these lowly, unscientific "astral forms" not have been in vain.

The Path

ESOTERIC TEACHING — *A. P. Sinnett*

Some recent references in the *PATH* to portions of the original esoteric teachings embodied by me in *Esoteric Buddhism* seem to call for remarks on my part in reply. The line of criticism in question has culminated in an article which appears in the *PATH* for July, entitled "Mars and Mercury".

The point at issue is this: — In the original teaching which I received from the Masters I was definitely informed that the planets Mars and Mercury formed part of the septenary chain to which our own world belongs. The question is one which, on its own merits, will only be of interest within the area of serious Theosophic study; but the controversy that has now arisen really involves some of the deepest questions affecting the future well-being of the Theosophical Society and the progress of the movement. It is for this reason that I now feel bound to take it up.

For a long time after the publication of *Esoteric Buddhism* the statement concerning Mars and Mercury remained unchallenged. It scarcely seemed possible that any one imbued with respect for the Masters' teaching could challenge it, because, as has been publicly stated, after the publication of *Esoteric Buddhism* the great Adept who gave me the information wrote to me declaring explicitly that it constituted a correct exposition of his teaching. His words were: — "Be certain that with the few undetectable mistakes and omissions notwithstanding, your *Esoteric Buddhism* is the only right exposition, however incomplete, of our occult doctrines. You have made no cardinal, fundamental mistakes, and whatever may be given to you hereafter will not clash with a single sentence in your book, but, on the contrary, will explain away any seeming contradiction." In later years when the *Secret*

Doctrine was published by Madame Blavatsky, I found to my great surprise that she had asserted a new view of the planetary chain, altogether at variance with that previously given out, and had represented the seven planets of that chain as seven different states of this earth, making out Mars and Mercury to be in no way associated with the evolution of our human family, but simply to be themselves the objective planets, corresponding to the earth, of other chains. On the basis of this declaration some Theosophical students have felt bound by their loyalty to Madame Blavatsky to put aside the earlier teachings of the Masters conveyed through myself, and to argue that I misunderstood my instructions. This view is emphasized with great vigor in the *PATH*, — in the article above referred to, signed by Mr. Judge, — and the really important point developed by the controversy has to do with the question, What was Madame Blavatsky's position really in the occult world, and what kind of authority should be attached to the writings she has left behind her?

I hope no one will take the explanation I am now forced to give as implying any abandonment by me of the position respecting Madame Blavatsky I have always maintained. I showed in the fragmentary biography I put together at her own wish, with the assistance of herself and members of her family, under the title *Incidents in the Life of Madame Blavatsky*, that she was truly in close relations with the great Masters of esoteric wisdom. That she was one of their partially initiated disciples was also unquestionable for anyone who has been in independent touch with the realities of the occult world. She was what she always called herself, a *chela*, or pupil of the Masters, generally described by them by the term *upasika*, well-known in the East as signifying a female *chela*; and when the teaching first came to me in preparation for the book which I ultimately wrote, Madame Blavatsky eagerly perused the letters I received in reply to my

elaborate questions, assuring me constantly that the information they contained was almost as new to her as it was to me, except in so far as a part of it was vaguely present to her mind without having ever been formulated with precision. Through her it was in the first instance undoubtedly that I came into communication with the Masters, and in many ways for many years, during some of which she had few other friends, I endeavored to show my appreciation of the debt of gratitude, in this respect, I owed her. But the matter we have now to deal with has nothing to do with personal relationships. I have to defend the teaching of which I was made the exponent, and now that the subject has been forced so prominently to the front, I cannot leave Theosophists to suppose I acquiesce in the claims that have been made to correct my faithful exposition of the occult doctrine.

It is not my business here to offer hypotheses to account for the strange misapprehensions into which Madame Blavatsky fell when writing the *Secret Doctrine*, not merely as regards these questions of Mars and Mercury, but also in regard to some other points which have not yet attracted attention. That Madame Blavatsky was capable of making mistakes when endeavoring to amplify and expand the occult teaching of the Masters is the all-important conclusion to which I think all unbiased minds in the Theosophical Society must be brought by a consideration of the matter under discussion. In endeavoring to show, on p. 163, vol. 1 of the *Secret Doctrine*, that I misunderstood the teaching in reference to Mars and Mercury, Madame Blavatsky quotes a question which I put to the Master, K.H., and his reply. Here I must add a few words of explanation of the circumstances under which the correspondence in question came to be available for quotation. When I returned to England in 1883 and published *Esoteric Buddhism* — long before Madame Blavatsky ever thought of returning to this country — the most earnest Theosophists of

that day were exceedingly eager to see the original papers on the basis of which that volume had been written. I used to read portions of the correspondence at meetings of the Society, and many members pressed me eagerly for permission to take copies of them. I referred the matter to the Master himself, and in the first instance he distinctly expressed disapproval of the idea. The letters, as he pointed out, were written to me, to inform my own mind, in order that I might in turn put out their substance in a suitable literary shape. They would not be intelligible to others unfamiliar with the course of the correspondence on both sides, and so on. The urgent desire, however, of certain Theosophists made me feel as though I were selfishly withholding from them documents which we all revered very sincerely, and at a later date — to my lasting regret — I was induced to apply a second time to the Master for leave to have some of these letters copied. He gave me that leave then, enjoining me to take a solemn pledge from persons to whom I gave the copies that they would never be made use of in any way without my permission. Under these conditions the great bulk of my correspondence with the Mahatmas, in so far as it related to Theosophical teaching, was copied and treasured for a time by the persons to whom I gave it. Several years later, when Madame Blavatsky was living in this country, she naturally acquired overwhelming influence over a great many members of the Society. She desired one of these to give up to her the copies that had been received from me. The member in question conceived her orders to over-ride the original pledge, and gave them up. They have since been scattered about the world, so that I have seen extracts from them in the PATH and elsewhere, and for want of the interpretation that would have been suggested if the original letters of enquiry from me had also been printed, provoking misapprehensions on the part of those who only in this way read half the correspondence. Now, the original question relating to Mars was as follows: —

"What planets of those known to ordinary science, besides Mercury, belong to our system of worlds?" The question took that form because information concerning the association of Mercury with our chain of worlds as the next planet on which this body of humanity was destined to evolve, had been given to me previously. The answer was: — "Mars and four other planets, of which astronomy knows nothing. Neither A, B, nor Y, Z are known, nor can they be seen through physical means, however perfected." The answer is incorrectly quoted in the *Secret Doctrine*, and is made to run, — "Mars, *etc.*, and four other planets . . ." The interpolation of this "etc." lends color to the view Madame Blavatsky was at the time maintaining, viz., that while I had intended to ask a question concerning *our chain*, the Master thought I meant to ask a question about the *solar system* at large. This idea is a strange one for an occultist to have accepted. An Adept dealing with his pupil could not make such a mistake about his meaning. But internal evidence makes it obvious that no such mistake was made. If the question had related to the solar system, it would have been absurd. "What planets besides Mercury belong to the solar system?" The question would have been ridiculous in that form — the answer almost more so, — "Mars and four others . . ." invisible to telescopes. What about Jupiter and Saturn, and all the invisible planets of the other world systems? Madame Blavatsky, as all who knew her intimately are well aware, was capable of making any imaginable mistake in matters relating to physical science. Her mind was out of tune with all such matters. But how the friends who helped her with the proofs of the *Secret Doctrine*, even without having their eyes opened by knowing that the "etc" was an interpolation, could have let this passage pass, is very surprising. Finally, be it observed that "A, B, and Y, Z," were the names assigned by agreement at that period of my correspondence with the Master

to the first, second, sixth, and seventh globes of our chain. The notion that there could be airy ambiguity about my question or the answer, in the circumstances, is an insult to common sense, — not to speak of Adept wisdom. I am entitled to add that at a very recent date, within the last few months since this subject has been under discussion, the Master himself in communication with me made the following comment on the situation: — "If I had been capable of paltering with the truth, and playing with words in the way which has been attributed to me, not one line of all the manuscript of mine in your possession would have been worth the paper it is written on".

Few persons in touch with the principles of occultism will be surprised to hear me quoting recent words addressed to me by the Master. Relations like those which were established between my humble self and Him in days gone by are of a kind that do not come to an end except through the misconduct or faithlessness of the pupil. During Madame Blavatsky's lifetime my privileges of communication with the Master through channels of which she knew nothing were private and personal, and I was precluded from speaking of them. That prohibition has since been removed. Madame Blavatsky disliked anything that savored of interference with her rights as founder of the Theosophical Society, and while she lived no one else would have been allowed to speak on behalf of the Masters to the Society at large. But it will be obvious on reflection that unless the whole design of occult teaching is a delusion also, fresh neophytes as time goes on must come within the scope of the personal teaching of the Masters. In this respect we are moving forward now in a new era. I should be the last person to claim any monopoly — such as Madame Blavatsky in a certain sense enjoyed while she lived — of the honor of conveying teaching from the Masters. No one now left in the Society, I should think, could be so unwise as to make claims of that nature.

But as it has been my duty in the past to put the teaching of the Mahatmas before the world, so it looks probable that such tasks will present themselves again, and on this account it is that I am bound at the present crisis to speak rather more plainly than inclination in other circumstances would have prompted. For many Theosophists, I know, Madame Blavatsky represented the whole movement, but, great as she was, the movement is something much greater. For many such persons Madame Blavatsky may have been the only teacher from whom they received occult enlightenment. Immense as my respect is for her attainments, for her industry and devotion to the work she undertook, it is, nevertheless, a fact that I myself did not receive my Theosophic teaching directly from her, but in the way described; and long before her death my relations with the Master were carried on through the intermediation of one of his *chelas*, quite outside the range of Madame Blavatsky's connexions. It ought to be for all earnest workers in the Theosophical movement a matter of great satisfaction that this is so, because in this way an entirely independent line of confirmation is provided for much that Madame Blavatsky has taught, for the *bona fides* of her position in its broadest aspects, and for the much-discussed existence of the Masters.

Following the quotation from my letter given in the *Secret Doctrine* as above described, comes a letter as printed in that volume with many passages omitted, in which Madame Blavatsky seems to give a correction, derived by her from the Master himself, confirming her view of the planetary chain. Here, again, minute comment upon the entangled situation is very difficult. I can only say that the omitted passages would materially alter the interpretation the letter seems to bear, and that some words obviously put in by Madame Blavatsky in parentheses must not be understood to have existed in the original.

Of course it matters very little for most people in this country first awakening to the significance of Theosophic teaching, whether Mars and Mercury are connected with this earth in the manner described or not; but what is of immense importance — in order that the movement, carried on loyally and rationally, shall always continue a healthy living organization, in touch with higher wisdom — is that all persons interested in its progress should shun the disastrous mistake of stereotyping the utterances of Madame Blavatsky — or of anyone else outside of the Masters — as the final word of esoteric teaching, and an infallible testimony to constitute a new body of dogmatic scripture and lead the human understanding once more into the quagmires of bigotry and sectarianism.

A few words must be given in conclusion to some points in Mr. Judge's recent article. When he says the two Masters who have had to do with *Esoteric Buddhism* and the *Secret Doctrine* have decided distinctly, first, that no other globes of the earth chain are visible from its surface, etc., etc., and that "Mr. Sinnett misunderstood them when he thought they meant to say Mars and Mercury were two of the six fellow-globes of the earth", I can only affirm for the guidance of those who may be able to feel that I speak with some claim to be listened to in such a matter, that I am quite sure Mr. Judge entirely mistakes, and that the Masters in question never said anything of the sort. The argument which endeavors to draw a correspondence between the organization of the septenary chain and the seven principles of man is one which rests on an entirely false analogy. It would be as reasonable to attempt to trace an analogy between the seven principles of man and the seven days of the week. There is an analogy between the principles of man and the principles *of the earth* — or of any other individual planet, visible or invisible, — but seven is a terrible stumbling-block for Theosophical students who know

there is something in it without knowing very much more.

Finally, in quoting from one of the letters to me by the Master which were got at under the circumstances I have described above, Mr. Judge represents him as saying, "You are putting me questions pertaining to the highest initiation. I can give a general view, but I cannot and dare not enter upon details." It was scarcely fair of Mr. Judge to bring in the passage quoted, as though it bore on the matter in hand. It related to enquiries which had nothing to do with Mars and Mercury, but to a totally different question.

The Path

HOW TO SQUARE THE TEACHINGS — *William Q. Judge*

Place has been given to Mr. Sinnett's admirably written article "Esoteric Teaching" for two good reasons: *first*, because he requested its publication, and *second*, because the theme is excellent and the time propitious. But by its appearance the PATH is not bound to the conclusions of the learned author.

Roughly summarizing the history of the recrudescence of the teaching of the Lodge for this century, we find H. P. B. publicly beginning it, though guardedly, in *Isis Unveiled* as herself the messenger of the real Teachers behind. At that time (1875) she gave private teachings (1) in America to certain persons. Then in India in the *Theosophist*, with H. P. B. as editor, it proceeds to further unfolding in articles entitled "Fragments of Occult Truth". It is a pity this name was not preserved and used for the book which the "Fragments" afterwards became — *Esoteric Buddhism*. Later the *Occult World* came out in 1884, and also *Esoteric Buddhism*. During all this time H. P. B. was doing her own work with others, explaining the same philosophy as was given to Mr. Sinnett, and contributed to literature the *Key to Theosophy* and the *Secret Doctrine*. The fact — not denied by Mr. Sinnett or anyone — is that the letters from the Masters from which the matter for *Esoteric Buddhism* was taken came in the main through H. P. B., for although it is true she "showed surprise" to Mr. Sinnett on seeing certain things communicated to him in letters from the Masters, the surprise was not at teachings which were new to her, but surprise that they were divulged at all, for she knew the teaching, inasmuch as she taught it under pledge as far back as from 1875 to 1878 in America.

In her *Secret Doctrine*, availing herself of the same teachers to

whom she introduced Mr. Sinnett, she corrected two errors into which she said he had fallen, *i.e.*, respecting Devachan and our companion planets. It is a perfectly unthinkable proposition to say that she was not advised by the Masters when writing the *Secret Doctrine*. I who saw many of the Masters' letters in 1888 in reference to the *Secret Doctrine* certainly cannot give up the evidence of my inner and outer senses. I know as surely as I know any fact that the same teachers were giving her in 1887 and 1888, as before, information for that book, in black upon white, and I am certain they dictated the corrections given in *Secret Doctrine* upon the points now before us. Evidence, eye-sight, and tradition confirm it, for in 1876 to 1878 I was given by her the same theories and the clue to the misunderstanding which a desire for consistency as to mere words has now aroused.

Even in 1888 it was *not the time* to make the point precisely clear to the public. Times have rule in occult teaching more than most readers — or writers — of theosophical books suspect. But the clue was given, a broad hint was thrown out. It is *now the time* when what I was told in 1876 and 1878 by the Masters through H. P. B. may be told, since the prohibition put personally upon me has been withdrawn.

The questions repeating Mars and Mercury — and I might add those which might have been but were not put about Venus — did touch upon other questions on the outskirts of higher initiations and which never are and never will be answered *before the right time*. The statement in the Master's letter to Mr. Sinnett that the questions put by the latter approached too near to secrets of higher initiations did not, it is true, refer directly to these questions about Mars and Mercury, but that does not alter the fact that all the questions then propounded on this planetary subject touched the delicate area; and whether Mr. Sinnett or anyone else liked it or not, attention had to be drawn off even at

the risk of creating a temporary confusion on the topic. But in 1888 time had rolled on further, and now it is 1893 and nearer and nearer to another cycle. The clue may now be given. It may be noticed, if readers will observe, that the many questions raised in reference to Mars and Mercury served the additional purpose of so distracting the attention of questioners that hardly any queries were raised about the subject of "Cycles" on which the Masters had the completest information but about which the Lodge is more careful to remain silent than in respect to other points — yet the cycles are more important and have more bearing on life than Mars and Mercury. Mars, Mercury, and Venus have a special and direct relation to this earth and its invisible companions. Those three visible spheres have to do with certain cosmic principles and lines of influence in and on the earth, while the remaining visible planets of the Solar System have not the same relation. Read it thus, as taught before Mr. Sinnett was in the T. S., and as repeated in the *Secret Doctrine*:

The unseen companions of your earth are united with it in mass, though different as to quality of substance. The visible planets of your Solar System which have a relation special and peculiar to Earth are Mars, Mercury, and Venus. But what that peculiar — nay wonderful — relation is do not ask, for we will not tell you. If while the current is open you persist in the question, you will arouse in yourselves a perplexity which the answer obtained will not relieve. Is there not a spirit of irritation, of rage, and another of wisdom and active judgment in man and Nature which may relate to visible planets which are not an actual part of earth's own special family? This is as far as we will now go.

The whole misunderstanding hinges on the word "relation". It was a word which led up to many things. The presence of Mars

and Mercury in the sky presents a *relation* to the earth, yet they have another *relation* to it which Saturn, Jupiter, and so on have not, while the latter bear the same relation to us of proximity as do the first. Admit the proposed construction above given, and at once there is complete concordance between *Esoteric Buddhism* and *Secret Doctrine* as to esoteric divulgements. But continue the controversy to try and show that *Esoteric Buddhism* had not a single blunder, and perplexities of all sorts impossible to relieve will spring up on every hand. The Masters have commended the book, and well so, as it is made up from their letters. But that does not prevent one making slight mistakes, as, for instance, the one that all men stay in devachan for 1500 years. This is not the fact, nor is it according to reason. And I make bold to say that it is not 1500 years since I was last in devachan, but much less; and this assertion is made on personal knowledge supported by confirmatory statement from the same Masters. But it is true that the general run of the human race stays in devachan for the average time of 1500 years of mortal time.

Mars, Mercury, Venus, then, are a part of our system in the sense of having an extremely important relation and influence with the human race and its planets, and having that in mind it was quite permissible for the teacher to reply that Mars and Mercury belong to our system.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Moreover, a considerable part of the philosophy expounded by Mr. Sinnett was taught in America before *Isis Unveiled* was published to two Europeans and to my colleague, Col. Olcott. — *Secret Doctrine*, vol. I, p. xix. ([return to text](#))

ON THE FUNCTIONS OF A DOORMAT — *Katharine Hillard*

As I paused on the threshold of Headquarters one day, I found myself sympathetically regarding the doormat at my feet. What position could be lowlier than it held? Not even permitted to enter the house, but having the humble duty assigned it of cleaning the feet of those more favored ones who were admitted to the sanctum. It did not utter a word of complaint; I think no one ever knew it to remonstrate; and as to thinking that it was shamefully neglected, and that it had as good a right as the stair-carpet to climb to the innermost offices of the PATH, and even to repose beneath the Editor's desk, — I doubt if such a notion ever occurred to it.

Instead of complaining, of bewailing its unfortunate destiny, of accusing the powers that be of favoritism, or of trying to blazon its own virtues to the world, it remains with a divine patience where it was put, and does what it can to make the ways of others pleasant. It preserves the halls and stairways from the dust and mud of the street, and it lies there to be trampled upon, day after day and month after month, by the busy feet of those who never give a thought to the patient service it renders them. Talk about recognition! it never has any, it would not know the meaning of the word, much less does it claim the reward of gratitude for what it has done, a gratitude expressed in smiles and pleasant words, as a circus horse expects lumps of sugar after he has gone through his tricks. Once in a while it suffers a furious beating, for no fault of its own, but simply to free it from the impurities heaped upon it by others, and this too it undergoes in silence and without even a murmur. To remonstrate never occurs to it, much less to rise up in rebellion and oppose the hand that strikes it or the heel that grinds it into the dust.

So perfect is its humility, so absolute its patience, that I set myself to learn the lessons that it taught; and what higher ones could be studied by a scholar than those of trust, submission, humility, and patience? It is hard sometimes to be content with a place upon the threshold, where we feel ourself trodden under the feet of those who "go up higher", but if we can help those feet, we too have part and lot in their advancement. And if we have really learned the lesson of trust, we know that the place assigned us is the place where we belong, and where we can do the most good, if we will only consent to work with our own tools and not grasp at another's. What says the *Gita*? "It is better to do one's own duty, even though it be devoid of excellence, than to perform another's duty well." But one of the most insidious forms of that ambition against which we are so strenuously warned, is what we call emulation, the desire to distinguish ourselves as we have seen others distinguish themselves, the feeling that, given the chance, we could do great things. But the greatest thing is to use the chance we have, for "to him who hath shall be given", and to learn the lesson of trust in those great Powers that have set us in our places and know better than we can what we are fitted to do.

This lesson of trust springs out of humility, for it is only when we recognize our own feebleness that we learn to confide in the strength and wisdom of others. In *Letters that have Helped Me* we are told, "The Karma of your present life is *the higher patience*", and this is explained by the compiler to mean "the fine line between pride and humility". The doormat does not fling itself into the gutter in a foolish fit of self-abasement, but it remains at the top of the steps, in a place of its own, which is "the place neither too high nor too low", on which Krishna told Arjuna to sit.

Submission does not imply grovelling, or even self-depreciation, but only the consent to do a lower duty that someone else may the

better perform a higher, for which he has a better equipment than ourselves. A private holds as honorable a position as a captain, and without privates there could be no captains. In the army of the Lodge promotion never goes by favor or by seniority, and when we are fit to be captains we shall find ourselves marching at the head of our regiments. Till then, let us trust in our commanding officer and obey his orders as we would like to have our own obeyed.

The doormat was never known to complain that it was not appreciated, nor even to be despondent because it had to lie there alone with no one to help it, even to recognize its efforts. And when we have learned this lesson of silent devotion, we shall learn to know all that the Masters meant when they wrote, "Ingratitude is not one of our failings. The humblest worker is seen and helped".

The crowning grace of service is joy, and verily this is its own reward.

The Path

OUR CONVICTIONS — *William Q. Judge*

SHALL WE ASSERT THEM?

To THE PATH: — Please resolve a doubt. Are members of the T.S. required to become flabby in character upon entering the Society, and to give up their convictions for fear of a vague future dogmatism? I ask this because in some of our magazines I have seen objections raised to a free promulgation of one's ideas on such subjects, for instance, as the Adepts or Masters, Reincarnation, Karma, and so on. If we are so required, then I would ask why we have a free platform in the T.S., and when were the statements made in the President's inaugural address of 1875 withdrawn?

Fraternally,

S. F. HECHT. Admitted to the T.S. May 5, 1892.

This question seems easy to answer. It is presumed that the correspondent refers to an objection to my plainly stating either in our journals or in any other way my own personal beliefs. It is evident that S.F.H. is thinking of the objection made in the *Theosophist* by N. D.K. to my plainly saying I believe in the existence of the Masters of whom so often H. P. B. spoke. N.D. K., taking up a letter of mine, quoted this sentence; "And when we come to examine the work and the foundation of the T.S. and its policy, I find it perfectly proper for me to assert, as I do in accordance with my own knowledge and belief, that our true progress lies in our fidelity to Masters as ideals and facts". S.F.H. is perplexed because N.D.K. seemed to object to that, but the perplexity need not exist nor need we become flabby in our convictions.

For, as will be seen by reading, and not straining, the sentence quoted, the "policy" of the T.S. referred to by me therein is that of leaving everyone quite free to express his views on all these points. Although N.D.K. would appear to think I meant that the T.S. policy was for it to make these declarations, it is easy to see by consulting the constitution that its policy is the opposite. The policy is freedom to members and perfect neutrality on the part of the T.S. To have any other, or to say that merely because one is in a society such as ours, or is an officer, he cannot give his own opinions so long as he accords the same privilege to another, would be a monstrous thing, contrary to our constitution and quite against a long history in which, from H. P. B. and Col. Olcott down, all members have had perfect freedom of expression. So S.F.H. need have no fear; our policy of freedom is not altered; all have a right to their convictions; and it is certain that if anyone is becoming flabby the oldest members of the T.S. will at once adjure him to strengthen his sincere convictions and not hesitate to give them expression, always allowing to every one else the same liberty of thought and speech. And to aid our correspondent we will give some further light if possible.

Let us take first H. P. Blavatsky. She began in the T.S., with its free platform, immediately to preach and promulgate her own personal view that the Masters were facts, and facts of very great magnitude, and this she did and continued against the most violent opposition and the fiercest ridicule. She also proclaimed unequivocally, as Cagliostro did many years before in Paris, a belief in the occult machinery of the Cosmos with all that that implies. Moreover, in the name of the Master she did very wonderful phenomena, which one of the same Masters has said, as published by Mr. Sinnett, have puzzled men for a good part of a century. And while thus freely expressing her own views she allowed the same freedom to all others, and was herself the agent

for the taking into the T.S. of many who did not believe as she did but who often scouted at her convictions. Then, further, she proclaimed a system of philosophy with all her ardor just as she had a right to do, and merely laid it before the world within the pale of a free Society, which is not compelled to accept but whose members fortunately do in great part. And in saying they are thus fortunate I am now giving expression to my own views.

Next consider the career of Col. H. S. Olcott since he began the work of the T. S., President then as he now is, as and we hope he will remain. He is our highest officer. Yet he has not failed to assert his undying belief in the Adepts and Masters universal and particular. It is a good example for those who have the same belief. It was done in the T.S., not as officer but as man, as individual member, and it would be a poor sort of constitution that would have prevented him. Long ago he said they existed and tried to prove it. He worked with the Psychological Research Society of London to prove to them the existence of the Masters and the truth of the doctrines given out by them as to occult phenomena. That may have appeared to be disastrous, but it was done with good intent and still under the constitution, for if against the constitution why was he not charged and put out? Because it was within his right. And in various places since then he has made the same assertions. At the Convention of the European Section in 1891 he publicly said on the platform that the Masters existed and that he had seen them himself, and spoke also of more than the two most spoken of in the T.S. and its literature. Then last, and now, he repeats it all with greater detail and particularity in his own series of Diary Leaves in his own magazine which has always been called the only organ the T.S. has. For, mark you, the *PATH* and *Lucifer* have never been made the organs of the T. S.; nor, indeed, should they be.

Mr. Sinnett stands out in high relief among those who have in

public and private, within the T. S., asserted with all his strength his belief in the Masters' existence and tried his very best to prove his assertion. His books, his pamphlets, his speeches in public and private, all show this. Was he wrong, was he not fully justified under the constitution? And has he not gone even further and taken up the cudgels in battle for his views?

It very clearly appears, then, that under the Constitution we all have the fullest right to proclaim our views, not once but as often as we see fit, so long as we give others the same right and do not say that the T.S. as a body is responsible, for it is not. This is the beauty of our law. We are free just as the United States constitution is free and proclaims for no creed and no sort of god but leaves all men to say what they please, if they do not interfere with the liberty of others.

Entry into our ranks in no way infers a becoming flabby, by which it is supposed the querent means a fear of saying what and in what each individual believes, because this is a brotherhood free from dogmatism. Earnestness and sincerity are not dogmatism at all, and it is undeniable that a reform in philosophy and thought such as ours could never prosper if our members were to grow flabby in this or in any other particular. Then again, if some of us have found that for us the Masters exist, it is our human universal duty to tell others, so that they may find out also or be able to show by good substantial proof that we are wrong. When they shall have proved this to our satisfaction it will be time for us to disband, for then will have fallen the theory of the possible spiritual evolution of man, and we can then leave the field to the scientific materialists who not long ago declared the possibility of that high evolution. But as this is a *reductio ad absurdum* we may all continue our preachments of views, some for and some against man's great inheritance. The PATH will continue to say its editor believes in humanity and in the great

Masters of Wisdom.

The Path

OCCULT ARTS: I — *William Q. Judge*

No. 1. PRECIPITATION

The word "precipitation" means to throw upon or within. This term is used in chemistry to describe the fact of a substance, held or suspended in fluid, being made to disengage itself from the intimate union with the fluid and to fall upon the bottom of the receptacle in which it is held; in the use of applied electricity it may be used to describe the throwing upon a metal or other plate, of particles of another metal held in suspension in the fluid of the electric bath. These two things are done every day in nearly all the cities of the world, and are so common as to be ordinary. In photography the same effect is described by the word "develop", which is the appearing on the surface of the sensitized gelatine plate of the image caught by the camera. In chemical precipitation the atoms fall together and become visible as a separate substance in the fluid; in photography the image made by an alteration of the atoms composing the whole surface appears in the mass of the sensitized plate.

In both cases we have the coming forth into visibility of that which before was invisible. In the case of precipitation of a substance in the form of a powder at the bottom of the receptacle containing the fluid, there is distinctly, (*a*) before the operation an invisibility of a mass of powder, (*b*) upon applying the simple means for precipitation the sudden coming into sight of that which was before unseen.

And precisely as the powder may be precipitated in the fluid, so also from the air there can be drawn and precipitated the various metals and substances suspended therein. This has been so often done by chemists and others that no proofs are needed.

The ancients and all the occultists of past and present have always asserted that all metals, substances, pigments, and materials exist in the air held in suspension, and this has been admitted by modern science. Gold, silver, iron and other metals may be volatilized by heat so as to float unseen in the air, and this is also brought about every day in various mines and factories of the world. It may therefore be regarded as established beyond controversy that as a physical fact precipitation of substances, whether as merely carbon or metal, is possible and is done every day. We can then take another step with the subject.

Is it possible to precipitate by will-power and use of occult laws upon a surface of wood, paper, metal, stone, or glass a mass of substance in lines or letters or other combinations so as to produce an intelligible picture or a legible message? For modern science this is not possible yet; for the Adept it is possible, has been done, and will be still performed. It has also been done unintelligently and as mere passive agents or channels, among mediums in the ranks of European and American spiritualists. But in this latter case it has the value, and no more than that, of the operations of nature upon and with natural objects, to be imitated by conscious and intelligently-acting man when he has learned how, by what means, and when. The medium is only a passive controlled agent or channel who is ignorant of the laws and forces employed, as well as not knowing what is the intelligence at work, nor whether that intelligence is outside or a part of the medium.

The Adept, on the other hand, knows how such a precipitation can be done, what materials may be used, where those materials are obtainable, how they can be drawn out of the air, and what general and special laws must be taken into account. That this operation can be performed I know of my own knowledge; I have

seen it done, watching the process as it proceeded, and have seen the effect produced without a failure. One of these instances I will give later on.

Precipitation of words or messages from Adepts has been much spoken of in the Theosophical Society's work, and the generality of persons have come to some wrong conclusions as to what they must be like, as well as how they are done and what materials may be and are used. Most suppose as follows:

1. That the precipitated messages are on rice paper;
2. That they are invariably in one or two colors of some sort of chalk or carbon;
3. That in every case they are incorporated into the fibre of the paper so as to be ineradicable;
4. That in each case when finished they came from Tibet or some other distant place invisibly through the air.
5. That all of them are done by the hand of the Adept and are in his handwriting as commonly used by him or them.

While it is true in fact that each of the above particulars may have been present in some of the cases and that every one of the above is possible, it is not correct that the above are right as settled facts and conclusions. For the way, means, methods, conditions, and results of precipitation are as varied and numerous as any other operation of nature. The following is laid down by some of the masters of this art as proper to be kept in mind.

(a), A precipitated picture or message may be on any sort of paper.

(b), It may be in black or any other pigment.

(c), It may be in carbon, chalk, ink, paint, or other fluid or

substance.

(d), It may be on any sort of surface or any kind of material.

(e), It may be incorporated in the fibre of the paper and be thus ineffacable, or lie upon the surface and be easily eradicated.

(f), It may come through the air as a finished message on paper or otherwise, or it may be precipitated at once at the place of reception on any kind of substance and in any sort of place.

(g), It is not necessarily in the handwriting of the Adept, and may be in the hand comprehended by the recipient and a language foreign to the Adept, or it may be in the actual hand of the Adept, or lastly in a cipher known to a few and not decipherable by any one without its key.

(h), As matter of fact the majority of the messages precipitated or sent by the Adepts in the history of the Theosophical Society have been in certain forms of English writing not the usual writing of those Adepts, but adopted for use in the Theosophical movement because of a fore-knowledge that the principal language of that movement would for some time be the English.

Some messages have been written and precipitated in Hindi or Urdu, some in Hindustani, and some in a cipher perfectly unintelligible to all but a few persons. These assertions I make upon personal knowledge founded on observation, on confirmation through an inspection of messages, and on logical deduction made from facts and philosophical propositions. In the first place, the Adepts referred to — and not including silent ones of European birth — are Asiatics whose languages are two different Indian ones: hence their usual handwriting is not English and not Roman in the letters. *Secondly*, it is a fact long suspected and to many well known both in and out of the Theosophical Society that the Fraternity of Adepts has a cipher

which they employ for many of their communications: that, being universal, is not their handwriting. *Thirdly*, in order to send any one a precipitated message in English it is not necessary for the Adept to know that language; if you know it, that is enough; for, putting the thought in your brain, he sees it there as your language in your brain, and using that model causes the message to appear. But if he is acquainted with the language you use, it is all the easier for the Adept to give you the message exactly as he forms it in his brain at first. The same law applies to all cases of precipitation by an alleged spirit through a medium who does not know at all how it is done: in such a case it is all done by natural and chiefly irresponsible agents who can only imitate what is in the brains concerned in the matter.

These points being considered, the questions remain, How is it all done, what is the process, what are the standards of judgment, of criticism, and of proof to the outer sense, is imposition possible, and, if so, how may it be prevented?

As to the last, the element of faith or confidence can never be omitted until one has gotten to a stage where within oneself the true standard and power of judging are developed. Just as forgery may be done on this physical plane, so also may it be done on the other and unseen planes and its results shown on this. Ill-disposed souls may work spiritual wickedness, and ignorant living persons may furnish idle, insincere, and lying models for not only ill-disposed souls that are out of the body, but also for mere sprites that are forces in nature of considerable power but devoid of conscience and mind. Mind is not needed in them, for they use the mind of man, and merely with this aid work the hidden laws of matter. But this furnishes some protection illustrated in the history of spiritualism, where so many messages are received that on their face are nonsense and evidently but the work of elementals who simply copy what the medium or the

sitter is vainly holding in mind. In those cases some good things have come, but they are never beyond the best thought of the persons who, living, thus attempt to speak with the dead.

Any form of writing once written on earth is imprinted in the astral light and remains there as model. And if it has been used much, it is all the more deeply imprinted. Hence the fact that H. P. Blavatsky, who once was the means for messages coming from the living Adepts, is dead and gone is not a reason why the same writing should not be used again. It was used so much in letters to Mr. Sinnett from which *Esoteric Buddhism* was written and in many other letters from the same source that its model or matrix is deeply cut in the astral light. For it would be folly and waste of time for the Adepts to make new models every time any one died. They would naturally use the old model. There is no special sanctity in the particular model used by them, and any good clairvoyant can find that matrix in the astral light. Hence from this, if true, two things follow: (a), that new communications need not be in a new style of writing, and (b), there is a danger that persons who seek either clairvoyants or mesmerized *lucides* may be imposed on and made to think they have messages from the Adepts, when in fact they have only imitations. The safeguard therein is that, if these new messages are not in concordance with old ones known to be from their first appointed channel, they are not genuine in their source, however phenomenally made. Of course for the person who has the power inside to see for himself, the safeguard is different and more certain. This position accords with occult philosophy, it has been stated by the Adepts themselves, it is supported by the facts of psychic investigation inside the ranks of Spiritualism, of Theosophy, of human life.

It is well known that mediums have precipitated messages on slates, on paper, and on even the human skin, which in form and manner exactly copied the hand of one dead and gone, and also

of the living. The model for the writing was in the aura of the enquirer, as most mediums are not trained enough to be able independently to seek out and copy astral models not connected with some one present. I exclude all cases where the physical or astral hand of the medium wrote the message, for the first is fraud and the second a psychological trick. In the last case, the medium gazing into the astral light sees the copy or model there and merely makes a *facsimile* of what is thus seen, but which is invisible to the sitter. There is no exemption from law in favor of the Adepts, and the images they make or cause to be made in astral ether remain as the property of the race; indeed in their case, as they have a sharp and vivid power of engraving, so to say, in the astral light, all the images made there by them are deeper and more lasting than those cut by the ordinary and weak thoughts and acts of our undeveloped humanity.

The best rule for those who happen to think they are in communication with Adepts through written messages is to avoid those that contradict what the Adepts have said before; that give the lie to their system of philosophy; that, as has happened, pretend that H. P. B. was mistaken in her life for what she said and is now sorry. All such, whether done with intention or without it, are merely *bombinans in vacuo*, sound that has no significance, a confusion between words and knowledge delusive and vain altogether. And as we know that the Adepts have written that they have no concern with the progress of selfish science, it must be true that messages which go on merely to the end of establishing some scientific proposition or that are not for the furtherance especially of Brotherhood cannot be from them, but are the product of other minds, a mere extension through occult natural law of theories of weak men. This leads to the proposition that:

Precipitation of a message is not *per se* evidence that it is from

one of our White Adepts of the Great Lodge.

(To be continued.)

The Path

TO A THEOSOPHIST — *A. E. Lancaster*

We do not know that we have lived before;
We can but hope that we shall live again,
Unless the grief that stings though it be o'er
Subdue submission's fain but faint amen.
So dark the chance of life, the chance of death
To darker issue still may lead the way,
Like some black angel with a torch whose breath
Crimsons a night more dread than dreadest day.
But yet, if it be well we should have been,
It will be well should we not cease to be
Until, through deathful life, we enter in
Where life and death are tuned to ecstasy.
Ah, friend, in that long birthday may we meet,
To bless the bitterness that ended sweet.

— ALBERT EDMUND LANCASTER

THAT EVERLASTING PERSONAL EQUATION — *J. D. Buck*

The personal equation begins with the descent of the monad into matter. It lies brooding in the rocks: it glares or beams in the beauty of plant and flower: it snarls and devours in the animal: and it struts in pride, envy, and conceit, while criticising and condemning others in man. It vanishes only at the supreme moment of renunciation, when man loses self and relinquishes all for humanity. The Individual having then completely absorbed the Personal, Higher Manas becomes a center of Power in which the lower self has no share.

Now we may not all have reached that point; certainly the present writer has not; but may not one of fair intelligence grasp at least the philosophy, see the truth of it, and work toward it?

In the ordinary affairs of life this personal bias works in two ways, viz; in self-seeking directly, as in lust and greed, and in detraction and spoliation of others. The latter form is often the more objectionable and dangerous because subtle and concealed. People often indulge in harsh or unkind criticism of others, unconscious that their motive is simply to bring their own unchallenged virtues into greater prominence, when, in fact, they are themselves open to criticism on the same points. Hence it follows that we have no end of talk about charity, brotherhood, etc., etc., but when it comes to the daily test amid the petty trials and annoyances of every-day life, where real charity and *consideration for the weaknesses and ignorance of others are the test of character*, we are found wanting. This was a trait specially marked in H.P.B. If we are really wise we shall not expect of others that which we know, or ought to know, they are incapable of performing. What folly is all our talk and writing regarding

occultism compared with that of the *Secret Doctrine*, and yet how careful was its author to encourage and help each and all in their attempts to understand and to explain, correcting only when glaringly false to principles or misapprehending truths.

But perhaps the most insidious and seductive form of the personal equation is that which distorts intelligent appreciation and open loyalty to teachers and earnest workers into hero-worship, and which seeks under the cry of "No Popery" to belittle and detract. Consciously or unconsciously the effort is thus made to shame to silence all appreciation and loyalty to the real workers for the world's progress. "Oh you are a hero-worshiper, and blinded by zeal or personal regard." Independence! Liberty! Equality! These are the real virtues! Have not these dwelt on the lips of red-handed murder also? Such a position is the very apotheosis of Egotism. It seeks to hide a knock-kneed allegiance and a flabby zeal under the bluster of personal liberty, and would reduce the world to a mediocrity of indifference. He who most highly appreciates loyalty and self-sacrifice is he who best knows what they cost in self-denial and eternal vigilance, and instead of being blind to the weaknesses and foibles that may co-exist with these virtues, he is the very one who sees them most clearly, because he is also conscious of them in himself. If he really desires to see the truth triumph, he will welcome every service and honor all who serve it, and not count to the last poor scruple every little weakness till the service of truth and the truth served are buried out of sight.

It hence occurs that the very worst form of the personal equation is this everlasting harping on personalities; and the surest road to Popery is the cry of No Popery! This is one of those "paradoxes of the highest science", as Eliphas Levy would put it. Those who are really independent and able to stand alone, are not everlastingly prating about liberty. They just do as they please, and please to do

right and say nothing about it, but it never occurs to any one that such a person can be enslaved. There is a silent conviction that that would be a useless if not a hazardous experiment. How, then, is confidence to be inspired in others? I answer, *by deserving it*, and not by prating about it. When it has been thus earned by conflict, neither an army of detractors nor the "hosts of hell" can destroy it; least of all, those weak-kneed, timid souls who are afraid of their personal freedom. We might as well remember that while Brotherhood is universal there is a kinship of souls and cycles and circles in all human associations and relations. Each is drawn to his own circle by Karmic law; the tyrant and the sycophant each obey the law. Those who are earnest and at heart loyal will not bother about trifles, but go ahead with the work in hand. They are not blind even to trifles, but they assign them their true value instead of dwelling on them and magnifying. We have had all these issues in the past, and they will come again and again. They do not affect the Cause or the workers materially, though they may *seem* to do so for a time. Look at the efforts to kill the T. S. movement. Some through design, some through hatred and revenge, some inspired by blind conceit or hairbrained folly. "What did they accomplish? They harmed only their originators and sympathisers, simply because there were always some at the head who took the Masters as facts and ideals, and had devoted themselves to them and their work *without any reservation whatever*. Did they insist that others should agree with them or come to their conclusions? Never! They just worked, and WORKED, and WORKED! ready to help any and all, patient and pains-taking with all; and individually they would stand to the work if every one else deserted it.

How many such does it take to constitute an invincible guard with Truth and Masters back of them? Very few, for they are few, and yet without these few the poor old T. S. would long ago have

gained the limbo of other centuries.

The question no longer regards failure, at least here in America. The question is, how many are ready to work without detraction of other workers? How many will stick to ideals, aims, facts, and — WORK? Those who cannot or will not are not to be anathematized, neither will they guide the work or measure it. They will simply become camp-followers first and deserters later on. Left in the rear they can wrestle with their own Karma. I hold the Masters to be facts, determined by the sequence of all evolution, by history, by direct testimony of H. P. B. and many other witnesses. He who calls this belief or candid statement dogmatic or blindly credulous, simply convicts himself of ignorance of principles, and even of the meaning of words. He can accept or reject my conclusions as he pleases, and I have no war with him till he misconceives or misrepresents my position as being other than it is. Dogmatism builds idols, but it never conceives Ideals. Ideals are the moving fiery chariots of the Gods: the Crown Jewels of the Hierarchies: the themes of the heavenly symphonies: the *ultima thule* of human evolution: something to strive for, work for, die for if need be, and every royal servant of Truth embodies and gives life to an Ideal such as are the MASTERS.

The Path

OCCULT ARTS: II — *William Q. Judge*

No. I

(CONCLUDED)

PRECIPITATION

The outer senses cannot give a safe final judgment upon a precipitated message, they can only settle such physical questions as how it came, through whom, the credibility of the person, and whether any deception on the objective plane has been practiced. The inner senses, including the great combining faculty or power of intuition, are the final judges. The outer have to do solely with the phenomenal part, the inner deal with the causes and the real actors and powers.

As precipitations have been phenomenally made through "controlled" mediums who are themselves ignorant of the laws and forces at work, these are but strange phenomena proving the existence of a power in Nature either related to human mind or wholly unrelated to it. These are not the exercise of Occult Arts, but simply the operation of natural law, however recondite and obscure. They are like the burning of a flame, the falling of water, or the rush of the lightning, whereas when the Adept causes a flame to appear where there is no wick, or a sound to come where there is no vibrating visible surface, occult art is using the same laws and forces which with the medium are automatically and unconsciously operated by subtle parts of the medium's nature and "nature spirits", as well as what we know as *kama-lokic* human entities, in combination. And here the outer senses deal solely with the outer phenomena, being unable to touch in the least on the unseen workings behind. So they can only decide

whether a physical fraud has been practiced; they can note the day, the hour, the surrounding circumstances, but no more.

But if one hitherto supposed to be in communication with the White Adepts comes to us and says "Here is a message from one of Those", then if we have not independent power in ourselves of deciding the question on inner knowledge, the next step is either to believe the report or disbelieve it. In the case of H.P. B., in whose presence and through whom messages were said to come from the White Adepts, it was all the time, at the final analysis, a matter of faith in those who confessedly had and have no independent personal power to know by the use of their own inner senses. But there intuition, one of the inner powers, decided for the genuineness of the report and the authentication of the messages. She herself put it tersely in this way: "If you think no Mahatma wrote the theories I have given of man and nature and if you do not believe my report, then you have to conclude that I did it all". The latter conclusion would lead to the position that her acts, phenomena, and writings put her in the position usually accorded by us to a Mahatma. As to the letters or messages of a personal nature, each one had and has to decide for himself whether or not to follow the advice given.

Another class of cases is where a message is found in a closed letter, on the margin or elsewhere on the sheet. The outer senses decide whether the writer of the letter inserted the supposed message or had some one else do it, and that must be decided on what is known of the character of the person. If you decide that the correspondent did not write it nor have anyone else do so, but that it was injected phenomenally, then the inner senses must be used. If they are untrained, certainly the matter becomes one of faith entirely, unless intuition is strong enough to decide correctly that a wise as well as powerful person caused the writing to appear there. Many such messages have been received in the

history of the T. S. Some came in one way, some in another; one might be in a letter from a member of the Society, another in a letter from a outsider wholly ignorant of these matters. In every case, unless the recipient had independent powers developed within, no judgment on mere outer phenomena would be safe.

It is very difficult to find cases such as the above, because *first*, they are extremely rare, and *second*, the persons involved do not wish to relate them, since the matter transmitted had a purely personal bearing. A fancy may exist that in America or England or London such messages, generally considered bogus by enemies and outsiders, are being constantly sent and received, and that persons in various quarters are influenced to this or that course of action by them, but this is pure fancy, without basis in fact so far as the knowledge and experience of the writer extend. While precipitations phenomenally by the use of occult power and in a way unknown to science are possible and have occurred, that is not the means employed by the White Adepts in communicating with those thus favored. They have disciples with whom communication is already established and carried on, most generally through the inner ear and eye, but sometimes through the prosaic mail. In these cases no one else is involved and no one else has the right to put questions. The disciple reserves his communications for the guidance of his own action, unless he or she is directed to tell another. To spread broad-cast a mass of written communications among those who are willing to accept them without knowing how to judge would be the sheerest folly, only productive of superstition and blind credulity. This is not the aim of the Adepts nor the method they pursue. And this digression will be excused, it being necessary because the subject of precipitation as a fact has been brought up very prominently. I may further digress to say that no amount of precipitations, however clear of doubt and fraud as to time, place, and outward

method, would have the slightest effect on my mind or action unless my own intuition and inner senses confirmed them and showed them to be from a source which should call for my attention and concurrence.

How, then, is this precipitation done, and what is the process? This question brings up the whole of the philosophy offered in the Secret Doctrine. For if the postulate of the metaphysical character of the Cosmos is denied, if the supreme power of the disciplined mind is not admitted, if the actual existence of an inner and real world is negatived, if the necessity and power of the image-making faculty are disallowed, then such precipitation is an impossibility, always was, and always will be. Power over mind, matter, space, and time depends on several things and positions. Needed for this are: Imagination raised to its highest limit, desire combined with will that wavers not, and a knowledge of the occult chemistry of Nature. All must be present or there will be no result.

Imagination is the power to make in the ether an image. This faculty is limited by any want of the training of mind and increased by good mental development. In ordinary persons imagination is only a vain and fleeting fancy which makes but a small impression comparatively in the ether. This power, when well-trained, makes a matrix in ether wherein each line, word, letter, sentence, color, or other mark is firmly and definitely made. Will, well-trained, must then be used to draw from the ether the matter to be deposited, and then, according to the laws of such an operation, the depositing matter collects in masses within the limits of the matrix and becomes from its accumulation visible on the surface selected. The will, still at work, has then to cut off the mass of matter from its attraction to that from whence it came. This is the whole operation, and who then is the wiser? Those learned in the schools laugh, and well

they may, for there is not in science anything to correspond, and many of the positions laid down are contrary to several received opinions. But in Nature there are vast numbers of natural effects produced by ways wholly unknown to science, and Nature does not mind the laughter, nor should any disciple.

But how is it possible to inject such a precipitation into a closed letter? The ether is all-pervading, and the envelope or any other material bar is no bar to it. In it is carried the matter to be deposited, and as the whole operation is done on the other side of visible nature up to the actual appearance of the deposit, physical obstructions do not make the slightest difference.

It is necessary to return for a moment to the case of precipitations through mediums. Here the matrix needs no trained imagination to make it nor trained will to hold it. In the astral light the impressions are cut and remain immovable; these are used by the elementals and other forces at work, and no disturbing will of sitter being able to interfere — simply from blind ignorance — there is no disturbance of the automatic unconscious work. In the sitter's aura are thousands of impressions which remain unmoved because all attention has been long ago withdrawn. And the older or simpler they are the more firmly do they exist. These constitute also a matrix through which the nature spirits work.

I can properly finish this with the incident mentioned at the beginning. It was with H.P. B. I was sitting in her room beside her, the distance between us being some four feet. In my hand I held a book she never had had in her possession and that I had just taken from the mail. It was clear of all marks, its title page was fresh and clean, no one had touched it since it left the bookseller. I examined its pages and began to read. In about five minutes a very powerful current of what felt like electricity ran up and down my side on the skin, and I looked up at her. She was looking

at me and said "What do you read?" I had forgotten the title, as it was one I had never seen before, and so I turned back to the title page. There at the top on the margin where it had not been before was a sentence of two lines of writing in ink, and the ink was wet, and the writing was that of H.P. B. who sat before me. She had not touched the book, but by her knowledge of occult law, occult chemistry, and occult will, she had projected out of the ink-bottle before her the ink to make the sentence, and of course it was in her own handwriting, as that was the easiest way to do it. Hence my own physical system was used to do the work, and the instant of its doing was when I felt the shock on the skin. This is to be explained in the way I have outlined, or it is to be all brushed aside as a lie or as a delusion of mine. But those last I can not accept, for I know to the contrary, and further I know that the advice, for such it was, in that sentence was good. I followed it, and the result was good. Several other times also have I seen her precipitate on different surfaces, and she always said it was no proof of anything whatever save the power to do the thing, admitting that black and white magicians could do the same thing, and saying that the only safety for any one in the range of such forces was to be pure in motive, in thought, and in act.

The Path

CAN WE COMMUNICATE WITH THE DEAD? — *Katharine Hillard*

SOME REASONS AGAINST IT

In the course of last Tuesday night's discussion upon this subject, there was one point that might possibly bear further amplification, and that was the question of the means of such communication. The first question that would be asked about any distinguished Brahmin proposing to visit us would be, "Does he speak our language?" Otherwise he is to us a sealed book.

To carry this analogy a little further, I would ask you to consider the case of a man who should go to see the great actor Salvini in his drama called *Civil Death*. The playgoer comes home enraptured with the performance, wrought to enthusiasm by the unselfish character of the hero of the tragedy, a loving father who breaks his heart rather than interfere with the welfare of his child. The spectator, thrilled with the splendor of the man's sacrifice, feels that of all men he is the noblest, and he demands of the manager an introduction to the being who has so uplifted him. "But, my dear sir," replies the manager, "that hero you so much admire is the creature of a night; he is not a reality, but an illusion. The real man is Salvini, who plays this and many other parts, and I would present you to him with pleasure, only you do not speak his language, nor he yours, nor have we an interpreter capable of giving you any satisfaction." "But it is not Salvini, it is the man I saw on the stage last night that I want to talk with," says our friend. "And I tell you again," says the manager, "that that man was an illusion, and ceased to be when the actor who created him laid aside his costume and left the theatre."

Such a desire and such an attempt as this would seem to us very childish and very futile, but, after all, is it not precisely analogous

to the behavior of those who try to communicate with the dead?

"All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players.
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts."

But that "one man" is not the being we know, whose heroism attracts us or whose cowardice repels, but is the immortal entity we call the individual consciousness, the real Ego who, indeed, "in his time plays many parts." The man who has left us, and whom we so long to meet again, is but one of those "many parts" played by the Ego, who, when it leaves the body that we love, lays aside its costume and quits the theatre of life. That *personality* exists no longer; the Ego, the Mind that created and informed it, "home has gone, and ta'en its wages," to quote our greatest poet once more. It has thrown off the body, its more ethereal counterpart, the astral double, and the still more ethereal framework of its desires, its idiosyncracies, its passions; it is a pure Intelligence, it belongs to another state of consciousness than ours. Can we expect to communicate with it when we do not know a syllable of its celestial language? Even if we could be shown its astral double, that filmy counterpart of the outer body, and could that form be made to utter a few of the unmeaning platitudes that such forms have been heard to speak, could that give any satisfaction to the friend who knows that the mind is not there? Is there any consolation in looking at a dummy made up of our friend's old clothes?

If we accept and learn by heart the theosophic doctrine of the seven-fold nature of man, of what earthly use is that knowledge unless we make it part of our life, a lamp unto our feet? When Captain Cuttle consulted his oracle, Jack Bunsby, that astute old mariner always wound up his Orphic utterances with the remark,

"The bearin's o' this observation lies in the application of it."
Unless we apply what we have learned, what good is it to us? If we *know* that the personality is an illusion, like all the things of this world, that it is made up of the body, the astral double, the body of desire, and the principle of vitality, and that all these are necessarily impermanent and must pass away at death, what is there left to communicate with in this four-fold division which we are accustomed to call the lower quarternary? And if we know likewise that the Higher Triad, or the *individuality*, persists, we know that this eternal being consists of the three immortal parts called Spirit, Soul, and Mind, in ordinary parlance, and that all three form that Ego whose condition is so far above this plane of illusions that there can be between us no medium of communication, no common language in which we may converse. So Tennyson says:

"My old affection of the tomb,
A past of stillness yearns to speak:
Arise, and get thee forth and seek
A friendship for the years to come.

I watch thee from the quiet shore;
Thy spirit up to mine can reach;
But in dear words of human speech
We two communicate no more."

And here the poet, with a poet's intuition, has struck the same law that we have been told governs the "Kingdom of the Gods," or Devachan. That is, that under certain conditions a pure and lofty nature may pass into Devachan during life, and be drawn into communion with the disembodied spirit that can never descend to it. "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me," said David of his child, and it is true of all.

But here we must beware of allowing ourselves to think of

disembodied existence in our terms of space and time. To the freed spirit there is no place, but only *condition*, and there is no reason why our loved ones who have passed from our sight should not be still near us, still loving us, and through the power of that love influencing our lives for good. "We are with those whom we have lost in material form," says the *Key*, "and far, far nearer to them now than when they were alive. . . . For pure divine love is not merely the blossom of a human heart, but has its roots in eternity. . . . And love beyond the grave has a magic and divine potency which reacts on the living."

The lesson of the theosophic teaching as to communication with the dead is, then, briefly this. That with their fleeting and illusionary personality it were a futile thing to seek such intercourse; but that to bring about the highest form of communion with those pure Intelligences who dwell now on another plane than ours, we must so elevate and purify our own lives and our own souls that while yet upon this earth we may be caught up into heaven and hear unspeakable words. It is Tennyson again who has expressed this so beautifully that you can bear to hear it once more, for none but a poet can say it half so well.

"How pure at heart and sound in head,
With what divine affections bold,
Should be the man whose thought would hold
An hour's communion with the dead.

In vain shalt thou, or any, call
The spirits from their golden day,
Except, like them, thou too canst say
My spirit is at peace with all.

They haunt the silence of the breast,
Imaginations calm and fair,

The memory like a cloudless air,
The conscience as a sea at rest:

But when the heart is full of din,
And doubt beside the portal waits,
They can but listen at the gates,
And hear the household jar within."

The Path

IMPOLITIC REFERENCE — "H. P. B." — *Alexander Fullerton*

Theosophy is rapidly pushing its way through journalistic and other channels, and is cropping out in regions and hamlets the most unexpected. Its expansion during the last few years has astonished even those who best know its merits, and every day brings new indications that it is soon to be in the forefront of the questions of the age and the interest of the religious world. For, in truth, it supplies the very desiderata for which earnest men have vainly sought, and finds welcome in exact proportion as those meeting it are intelligent, open-minded, and devout. A system which insists on including every fact which research can grasp, which harmonizes each fact and each department of its vast philosophy, which solves the piteous puzzles in every human life and lot, which nerves to the most patient endurance and the most hopeful endeavor, is one which cannot be indifferent to those who think and feel and aspire.

Theosophy is not only exhaustive in its inclusions, it is most ingenuous in its methods. It waives aside all cajolery or special pleading, and asks no one to give his assent to its statements unless his reason is thoroughly convinced. Any other adhesion would be half-hearted, insincere, superficial: none such is congenial to a system which cares only for truth, and for perception of truth, and for honest avowal of the perception. Unless a man finds its teachings upheld by his judgment and his moral sense, it frankly tells him that he cannot rightfully accept them.

But in order for the judgment to act, Theosophy furnishes copiously the material. The philosophy may be divided into two parts, — the facts and laws wholly beyond the reach of us

ordinary mortals, the facts and laws measurably within our reach but needing elucidation by the former class. These it expounds with fulness, fortifying itself with the discoveries of science and the best exercise of reason. Those it presents as upon the evidence of extraordinary mortals, men whose larger acquisitions of faculty enable them to transcend our limits and explore vast realms beyond. Then it connects the two and exhibits a consistent scheme explanatory of all life seen and unseen, and by the beautiful harmony and relation of all parts depicts a whole which is worthy of its Divine Author.

As knowledge of matters outside our ken can only be communicated to us through one of ourselves, Theosophy avows that certain individuals have from time to time been used as channels of these higher truths, the sources being above them, known to be such, avowed to be such. Sometimes in sacred writings recognized as "Scriptures", sometimes in scientific expositions of advanced grade, sometimes in moral or spiritual disquisitions, sometimes in the translation of inaccessible or non-understood works, truth appertaining to loftier planes is made to percolate down for the benefit and refreshment of dwellers upon the plains. In such cases the channel was valued for its accuracy and its service; it did not authenticate the truth, it transmitted it; it was not the authority but the witness. The truth, even, did not rest upon the medium; its certitude was in the responsiveness of the auditor, and its sanction in the validity of its source.

Thus it is that Theosophy approaches all hearers of this or any other age, — large-minded, open-handed, frank, inviting every critical research, discountenancing all sham or partiality, pointing to proofs, citing evidence when accessible and furnishing testimony when not, appealing only to reason and insight and perception. Its most conspicuous Apostles most exhibit this spirit, and beg their pupils to look not *to* them but

through them for the Truth which is to make free. They disclaim names as finalities, and will not consent that texts are to be fetters to the soul or any book weigh down a struggling mind. A disciple may reverence his teacher, but not truly so by repetition of phrases or by any other course than that which has convinced and qualified the teacher himself.

These facts have important bearing in the era to which Theosophy has now arrived. It has passed beyond the stage of mere novelty, and its philosophy has larger coherence as well as wider popular attention. Advance is being made into broader regions of thought, principles are receiving fuller application, legitimate criticism is testing the soundness of doctrine. The Theosophical Society finds a hearing in many quarters formerly barred to it, and its expounders have audiences neither unfriendly nor unfair. To be distinct they have to be explicit, and to be explicit they have to be precise. But this often seems to be dogmatic, to be laying down fact as if incontestable, to be proclamatory of truth as assured. It is by no means necessarily so, for the genuine expounder disclaims more than commendation to reason and will not allow any coercive intention. It is his to suggest, to vindicate, to impress; never to insist, demand, or extort. If there is appearance of dogmatism, it is contrary to his purpose and spirit, utterly contrary to the Society he represents.

Even though there may be no real dogmatic character in Theosophy, the Society, or its expounders, there may yet be an impolicy of reference which impairs the course of the message. The revival in the West of the ancient Wisdom Religion came about through Madame H. P. Blavatsky, herself an Initiate and a direct messenger from the Masters behind. The services she gave to the Cause, the self-sacrificing devotion to her mission which marked every day of her career, the contributions she made to Theosophical literature and learning, no pen can fully compute.

Theosophists feel for her a gratitude and veneration which they may well feel for one who was the means of throwing open to them a new and boundless spiritual life, and in her works they find an exhaustless treasure of scientific, moral, and spiritual truth. Not unnaturally but still mistakenly, many of them extend this attitude from their private studies to their public discussions, and forget that a reverence which is personal cannot validate a proposition which is impersonal. To non-Theosophic hearers a doctrine stands or falls by its conformity to reason and the moral sense, not by the repetition of a name or a quotation from a book. Take Karma, for instance. If it is to become influential as a motive in life, its existence and operations have to be shown by argument, analogy, and illustration. All quarters can be drawn upon, and the larger the basis the surer the construction. Demonstrated thus, it makes its way to the judgment and the heart. But treat it as a dictum of *Isis Unveiled*, *The Key to Theosophy*, and *The Secret Doctrine*, consider it as proved because H. P. B. said so, dispose airily of questions as worthless because they have no sanction in H. P. B.'s works or words, and it becomes merely a shibboleth of adherence to a side, not at all an ethical law to be verified by conviction.

And certainly the most devoted Theosophists — who are usually also the most devoted disciples of the Teacher — are often willing to admit that this mistake has been made in public exposition. It is a mistake in judgment, for the public are to be won through the merits of a doctrine and not through appeals to an authority. It is a mistake in perception, for they who perpetrate it forget that their own conversion to Theosophy was by conviction of reason, reverence being a later experience. And it is a mistake in policy, for the free mind resents an attempt to coerce it by a name instead of an attempt to influence it by a fact. So irritation is aroused, and a truth which might be winsome is transformed into

a dogma which must be repellent, the spirit waxing impatient at the supposition that it can be over-awed by a quotation or silenced by a term. Undoubtedly many a warming interest has been chilled by supposition that Theosophy is expressed and bounded by H. P. B.'s published works, that it has no other support than can be found from her, that all propositions are to be tested by their conformity to the *Secret Doctrine*, that Theosophists think only as she allowed and believe only as they are sure she would approve. And if an inquirer conceives that the choice is between a free range of thought which shall carry him, unfettered, through every sphere and bring him before every truth, and a circumscribed round which shall tether him to a name and a book, he cannot be blamed if he thinks harsh things, says harsh words, and abjures Theosophy, H. P. B., and the Society.

Now free-thought and insistence on reason as the vindication of doctrine are no disloyalty to our great Leader. Rather are they homage to her, since she so battled for them. No one who knew her or who is familiar with her works found her exacting of subservience to her views. On the contrary, she held and taught and enjoined that submission without conviction was not only worthless but unmanly, and her appeal was ever to argument and proof. We shall not improve upon her by reversing her policy, and we shall not further the Cause she loved by methods she disapproved. Loving reverence may express itself in loving imitation, the truest homage in an extension of her own spirit. In commending Theosophy and its priceless benefits to men, the genuine disciple of H. P. B. can refrain from phrases which she abjured and references which she discountenanced, and can uphold the philosophy and its contents and its conclusions with the richest of arguments and illustrations and verifications. As they affect the public mind and swell the number of the enlightened and the aspiring, he will become ever more conscious

of the broad spirit of his mission, and, while not pushing the name and words of H. P. B. to the forefront of his discourse, will know that behind it they are a source of strength and inspiration and motive, flowing through his every thought and impulse, even though rarely voiced in the hearing of the multitude.

[NOTE. The above article has my unqualified approval. It is easy to prove that the Theosophical Society is not dogmatic and has no creed and no personal authority in matters of doctrine or belief; but the wise Theosophist should see to it that undue attention is not given to a line of proof that may arouse a needless opposition. — W. Q. J.]

The Path

OCCULT ARTS: III — *William Q. Judge*

No. III. DISINTEGRATION — REINTEGRATION

Just as we have seen that precipitation is known to material science in electroplating and other arts, so also is it true that in most departments of applied science disintegration is understood, and that here and there reintegration of such substances as diamonds has been successfully accomplished. But these are all by mechanical or chemical processes. The question here is, whether — as in respect to precipitation — the occult powers of man and nature can bring about the results. Has any one ever reduced a solid object to impalpable powder and then at a distant place restored the object to its former state? And, if so, how is it done? As to the first, I can only say that I have seen this done, and that many testimonies have been offered by others at various times for the same thing. In the records of Spiritualism there are a great many witnesses to this effect, and accepting all cases in that field which are free from fraud the same remarks as were made about precipitation apply. With mediums it is unconsciously done; the laws governing the entire thing are unexplained by the medium or the alleged spirits; the whole matter is involved in obscurity so far as that cult is concerned, and certainly the returning spooks will give no answer until they find it in the brain of some living person. But the fact remains that among powerful physical mediums the operation has been performed by some unknown force acting under hidden guidance, itself as obscure.

This feat is not the same as apportionment, the carrying or projecting of an object through space, whether it be a human form or any other thing. Buddhist and Hindu stories alike teem with such

apportations; it is alleged of Apollonius the Greek, of Tyana; Christian saints are said to have been levitated and carried. In the Buddhist stories many of the immediate disciples of Buddha, both during his life and after his death, are said to have flown through the air from place to place; and in the history of Rama, some ascetics and Hanuman an the monkey god are credited with having so levitated themselves.

So many metals and minerals may be volatilized that we may take it as a general rule that all — until an exception is met with — are volatile under the proper conditions. Gold is slow in this respect, some observers having kept it heated for two months with no loss of weight, and others found a small loss after exposing it to violent heat; a charge of electricity will dissipate it. Silver volatilizes at red heat, and iron can also be similarly affected. But when we come to wood or softer vegetable matter, the separation of its atoms from each other is more easily accomplished. The process of disintegrating by the use of occult forces and powers is akin to what we can do on the material plane. The result is the same, however the means employed may vary; that is, the molecules are pressed apart from each other and kept so. If by mechanical, chemical, and electrical processes man can bring about this result, there is no reason, save in an asserted unproved denial, why it may not be done by the use of the mind and will. Rarity or unusualness proves nothing; when the telegraph was new its rarity proved nothing against its actuality; and it is every day becoming more the fashion to admit than it is to deny the possibility of anything in the realm opened up by our knowledge of electricity, while the probability is left merely to suspended judgment.

Passing from material science to the medical researches into hypnotism, we find there the stepping-stone between the purely mechanical physical processes and the higher subtler realm of

the mind, the will, and the imagination. Here we see that the powerful forces wielded by the mind are able to bring about effects on bone, flesh, blood, and skin equal in measure to many processes of disintegration or volatilization. But in every-day life we have similar suggestive facts. In the blush and the cold chill which come instantaneously over the whole frame, spreading in a second from the mental source, are effects upon matter made directly from mind. Even a recollection of an event can easily bring on this physical effect. In hypnotic experiments the skin, blood, and serum may be altered so as to bring out all the marks and changes of a burn or abrasion. In these cases the mind influenced by another mind makes an image through which the forces act to cause the changes. It is possible because, as so often asserted by the ancient sages, the Universe is really Will and Idea, or, as is so well put in a letter from one of the Adepts, "the machinery of the cosmos is not only occult, it is ideal: and the higher metaphysics must be understood if one is to escape from the illusions under which men labor and which will continually lead them into the adoption of false systems respecting life and nature in consequence of the great 'collective hallucination' in which modern scientific persons glory so much, but which they do not call by that name." (1)

So much, then, being briefly premised, it is said by the schools of occultism, known not only since the rise of the Theosophical movement but followed for ages in the East and continued down to the present day in India — that the trained man by the use of his will, mind, and imagination can disintegrate an object, send it along currents definitely existing in space, transport the mass of atoms to a distant place, passing them through certain obstacles, and reintegrate the object at the given distant spot exactly with the same visibility, limits, and appearance as it had when first taken up for transport. But this has its limitations. It cannot

ordinarily be done with a human living body. That would require such an expenditure of force and so interfere with the rights of life that it may be excluded altogether. Size and resistance of obstacle have also to do with success or failure. Omnipotence of a sort that may transcend law is not admitted in Occultism; that the Adepts pointed out when they wrote that if they could at one stroke turn the world into an arcadia for lofty souls they would do so, but the world can only be conquered step by step and under the rule of law. It is the same in all operations that copy nature either chemically or mechanically. Hence it is said in these schools that "there are failures in occult art as well as among men". Such failures come from an inability to cope with limiting conditions. We can analyse the phenomenon of disintegration and transport of mass of matter and reintegration in this way: There is the operator who must know how to use his will, mind, and imagination. Next is the object to be dealt with. Then there is the resisting obstacle through which it may have to pass; and the air, ether, and astral light through which it travels. Lastly is the question whether or not there is the force called cohesion, by means of which masses of matter are held together within limits of form.

If it be said that the force known as gravity holds masses of matter together, we are reduced to accepting a more mysterious explanation for a common thing than the three persons in one God. But cohesion without any other postulate amounts merely to saying that masses of matter cohere because they cohere.

Occultism, in common with the Vedantic philosophy, says that there is a force of cohesion which has its roots and power in the spirit and in the ideal form; and attraction and repulsion operate from the same base also. Further, that school holds gravitation to be but an exhibition of the action of these two — attraction and repulsion. Living masses such as vegetables, animals, and men

deal with matter in another state from that which is in minerals, and exhibit the quicker action of disintegrating forces; while minerals go to pieces very slowly. Both kinds are compelled in time to fall apart as masses in consequence of the action of evolutionary law when they are left altogether to themselves; that is, the whole quantity of matter of and belonging to the globe is continually subject to the hidden forces which are moulding it for higher uses and turning it, however slowly, into a higher class of matter. The normal rate is what we see, but this normal rate may be altered, and that it can be altered by intelligent mind and will is the fact. This alteration of rate is seen in the forcing processes used for plants by which they are made to grow much faster than is usual under common conditions. In the same way in masses of matter which will surely go to pieces in the course of time, long or short, the molecules may be pushed apart before their time and held so by the trained will. That is, the force of repulsion can be opposed to natural attraction so as to drive the molecules apart and hold them thus away from each other. When the repulsion is slackened, the molecules rush together again to assume their former appearance. In this case the shape is not altered, but the largely diffused body of molecules retains its shape though invisible to the eye, and upon appearing to sight again it simply condenses itself into the smaller original limits, thus becoming dense enough to be once more seen and touched.

When a small object is thus disintegrated by occult means it can be passed through other objects. Or if it is to be transported without disintegration, then any dense intervening obstacle is disintegrated for a sufficient space to allow it to pass. That the latter is one of the feats of fakirs, yogis, and certain mediums can be hardly a matter of doubt except for those who deny the occult character of the cosmos. Alleged spirits in respect to this have said, "We make the intervening obstacle fluid or diffused, or do

the same thing for the object transported", and for once they seem to be right. A gentleman of high character and ability in the northwest told me that one day a man unknown in his village came to the door, and exhibiting some rings of metal made one pass through the other, one of the rings seeming to melt away at the point of contact. H. P. Blavatsky has narrated to me many such cases, and I have seen her do the same thing. As, for instance, she has taken in my sight a small object such as a ring, and laying it on the table caused it to appear without her touching it inside of a closed drawer near by. Now in that instance either she disintegrated it and caused it to pass into the drawer, or disintegrated the drawer for a sufficient space, or she hypnotized me with all my senses on the alert, putting the object into the drawer while I was asleep and without my perceiving any sort of change whatever in my consciousness. The latter I cannot accept, but if it be held as true, then it was more wonderful than the other feat. The circumstances and motive were such as to exclude the hypnotizing theory; it was done to show me that such a phenomenon was possible and to give me a clue to the operation, and also to explain to me how the strange things of spiritualism might be done and, indeed, must be done under the laws of man's mind and nature.

Next we have the intelligent part of the matter to look at. Here the inner senses have to act under the guidance of a mind free from the illusions of matter, able to see into the occult cosmos behind the veil of objectivity. The will acts with immense force, exerting the powers both of attraction and repulsion as desired; knowledge of occult chemistry comes into use; the currents in the astral light or ether have to be known, as also how to make new currents. Those who have seen into the astral light and looked at the currents moving to and fro will understand this, others will either doubt, deny, or suspend judgment. The imagination as in

the case of precipitation, is of prime importance; for in these things imagination is the sight and the hand of the mind and the will, without which the latter can accomplish nothing, just as the will and brain of a man whose arms are cut off can do nothing unless others aid him. But mind, will, and imagination do not reconstruct the disintegrated object, for as soon as the dispersing force is slackened from its hold on the mass of molecules, the imagination having held the image of the object, the atoms obediently and automatically rearrange themselves as before.

All this may seem fanciful, but there are those who know of their own knowledge that it is all according to fact. And it is doubtless true that in no long time modern science will begin, as it is even now slowly starting, to admit all these things by admitting in full the ideal nature of the cosmos, thus removing at once the materialistic notions of man and nature which mostly prevail at the present day.

FOOTNOTE:

1. From an unpublished letter. ([return to text](#))

The Path

MARS AND THE EARTH (1) — *Annie Besant*

The apparent contradiction between the teaching of the Masters as put forward by their direct messenger, H. P. Blavatsky, and as understood by Mr. Sinnett is capable of very easy explanation. The solution turns on the words "solar system". If that term be held to denote the solar system known to Western Science, the sentence given by Mr. Sinnett is meaningless; but reference to the series of letters from which the isolated passage respecting Mars is quoted at once shows the meaning attached to the "solar system" in the correspondence. I naturally turned to the letters themselves — copies of which I have — to solve the puzzle, and I found that Master K.H. used the term in a special and quite definite sense.

He explains three kinds of manvantaras, pralayas, etc. — universal, solar, and minor. A minor manvantara is composed of seven rounds, i.e., the circuit seven times of a planetary chain of seven globes. To such a chain our earth belongs. A solar period consists of seven such sevenfold rounds, i.e., forty-nine; seven such planetary chains compose a "solar system"; in three of such chains our Earth, Mars, and Mercury form the D globe. Globe D of the Mars chain and globe D of the Mercury chain are visible to us, because those chains are sufficiently near our own in evolution, one behind us, one ahead of us, for their matter to affect our senses, while the remaining four chains are too far away in evolution to have enough in common with us for visibility. Mars and Mercury bear a special relation to our Earth in the whole evolution of the solar system, though not part of the Earth chain. The other four planetary chains belonging to our solar system are too far behind us or in front of us for even their globes D to be seen.

Other planets belonging to the solar system of Science as arranged in the West do not belong to the solar system of the Esoteric Philosophy, and it is the ignoring of this which has led to the confusion. A western reader naturally gives the term his own sense, not knowing that in the teachings it was used in a quite different one. And so, once more, we find the Masters' doctrines self-consistent.

[Note. The above article, sent for coincident publication in *Path* and *Lucifer*, is an important contribution, as it furnishes a final explanation which, if properly taken, will tend to assuage controversy. On page 163, Vol. I, *Secret Doctrine* the author, referring to this subject in a foot note, says: "Copies of all the letters received or sent with the exception of a few private ones — 'in which there was no teaching', the Master says — are with the writer". Some may have imagined that this statement in the foot note was a "license" taken by the author of the *Secret Doctrine*, but surprises are not uncommon, and there seems to be very little doubt about the truth of the assertion. It is extremely easy to misunderstand in respect to the "almost ideal machinery of the occult Cosmos" when we are dealing with it in English words produced by a thoroughly materialistic development, but in the course of time the teachings given out all will be found in harmony as our views expand. The word "solar", for instance, connotes only ideas in relation to the visible sun, and yet it is the only English word we could use if we wished to speak of an unseen solar orb superior to and governor of our visible one. In time, however, all these perplexities will be relieved. — Ed.]

FOOTNOTE:

1. Published also in *Lucifer*, of November, 1893. ([return to text](#))

INDIA BETWEEN TWO FIRES — *A Brahmin*

The above is the general topic for discussion by our dailies and weeklies just now. It seems to me that the above is perfectly true, but not in the sense they take it. India, educated, thinking India, is now truly between *two fire*; on one side is the fierce fire of materialism and intellectual selfishness, fanned by our foreign education, casting a lurid glare on our impoverished condition, making it doubly hideous; on the other side is the yet but tiny spark of our Sanatana Dharma, which the Theosophical Society is ever trying to fan into a flame, and which even at this stage is shedding its calm radiance over the minds of men. Young men, graduates of our Universities, are swayed to and fro, now abject followers of the men of science, now inclined toward our Religion; now a rank skeptic, now a new convert to a belief in the Shastras. Brothers do not agree with each other; one a bigot of science, and the other no less a bigot of his idol. Father and son, younger and elder, husband and wife, master and servant, teacher and students, all of them disagree; the one a rigid Hindu, the other a hater of all beliefs and dogmas. Truly we are passing through strange and dangerous times, and none can say whether it will be all plain sailing hereafter or there is a breaker ahead.

Twenty years ago, it was twenty years and no more, we two students, while boldly declaring our Religion to be Hinduism, considered ourselves something like heroes; and now many seriously question the truth of that which they do not find in the Shastras. Now the question is, which is to win at last, bigotry or Theosophy? By bigotry I mean bigotry either in Science or Religion, materialism or transcendentalism; for they are equally pernicious, equally limiting further progress, intellectual as well as spiritual. Even now the war has commenced between disbelief

and belief on the one hand and between reasonable belief and blind faith on the other, and many are passing from blind disbelief to blind faith without pausing to think what they are doing; so belief is *between two fires*, and yet hopes to win at last.

There are two very popular weekly papers in Bengal. One condemns all that is foreign, is opposed to all innovations and reforms (even the Railway and the Telegraph, strange as it may appear to you); the other would REFORM everything Indian, and condemns all that we have. Both are largely read, both admired by many. So those that think calmly and judge soundly are *between two fires*; yet they fondly hope that they will in time prevail.

On the one hand, the introduction of Western civilization is ever increasing our wants; on the other, we are, for many reasons, becoming poorer and poorer; many find themselves unable to make the two ends meet, others are in pinching want. While foreign luxuries are becoming common, our means of livelihood are becoming scarce, and we find ourselves *between, two fires* as regards our economic condition.

You in the far West may not sympathize with our thoughts and aspirations, with our movements and actions, yet purified, regenerated India, rising Phoenix-like from the ashes of its dark Kali Yuga, would be able to yet instruct the West by expounding its time-honored Shastric teachings, and in that relation, if not in others, it is bound to the West by the holy tie of spiritual sisterhood, a tie that can not, should not, be ignored by you.

And it is in that belief that I write to you, let Theosophy and Brotherhood prevail all the world over, let us help each other in the cause of Spiritual Progress of Humanity, and there are those who will assist us, as they have founded the Society to which we all have the honor to belong.

The Path

THE KEY-NOTE — A. F. H.

It is always the key-note of everything that we want to seek or strike. The key-note of Christianity seems to be the personal or personality, the key-note of Theosophy, individuality; therefore in the evolution of the race they work beautifully together, Christianity preceding the wider Theosophy, which, again, leads into the Universal, there becoming the Wisdom Religion and the "Heir of all the Ages".

We should be grateful to Christianity. As represented by Jesus, it was Theosophy. But at that time the World lived in the personal, and so translated his teachings into its own language, as is the custom of humanity, from childhood on, with everything it accepts — and it must do so to accept it.

The child begins with the personal; it naturally grasps for itself. "Self-preservation is the law of life" has always been said in the Western world, and Christianity has provided for the carrying out of this law. It has a personal God, personal salvation, a personal heaven with a personal harp, classifications of persons there, and personal bodies (which they regard as themselves) here, in this world, even suggesting that these will be resurrected into the other world. Then, only, will they be surely saved, for until then heaven is an uncertain state where they are represented by a filmy something which they call their soul, but to which they hardly venture to give their undivided attention or to consider as necessary, until after death. Meanwhile, their bodies and the relations of this life are more interesting and all absorbing.

This is the Froebel method. It is the method of all intelligent education and of evolution. "First that which is natural, and then that which is spiritual." But here must come in another stage of

development. The continuity of this life is questioned. Death steps in to take our loved ones, and thus our hearts are touched to long for a continuance of these ties, or the rush of civilization causes changes in outside ways. The lesser is sunk in the greater, small business enterprises cease to succeed, everything must change and be on a larger scale, houses must be torn down, palaces must be built, trusts must be formed, people must live in hotels or apartments if they have not purses to conduct life in a large way. The interests of man cease to be centred in himself, he is part of a whole; like a child when he begins to go to school, he is an individual in a community.

Then must begin consideration for others; his own interests cannot exclusively usurp his attention; others have rights; only by conceding these can he hold his place. Here comes in the germ of "Brotherly love", and the consciousness of Karma, or the law of action and reaction, cause and effect. Then, if some loved one is taken away, the feeling comes that there must be something beyond the body, there must be a continuity of life — and here we find the essence of the individual, the soul. Bodies lose their preeminence in our thoughts, we realize that our true life is on other and invisible planes. As we cannot see and hear our departed loved ones, we learn to meet them in the Over-Soul, the Universal, and thus again sink our separateness — this time, of the Soul — in the grand whole, or Spirit. Then man really lives, and begins to realize, to know, what he may be, and that, being Spirit, he can dominate and not be subject to matter, which is but the manifestation of Spirit. This larger life of Spirit with its limitless possibilities is the teaching of Theosophy, which is the continuation of Christianity, and the spirit, but not the letter, of Christ's teachings. We have lived in the letter, the body; now we live in the Spirit. We may live that Spirit in the Churches or out of the Churches. But we are told in the Bible that it is difficult for

new wine to be held in old bottles. Form is not lasting, and forms confine. The old meaning clings to them and the Spirit is hampered. When a man wishes to change his life, to live on a higher plane, we tell him he can do it more easily and rapidly by going to a new place, by changing his associations. It needs a man of marked conviction and firm will to renew himself amid old surroundings. And thus in the life of the Soul the beginner can work better and more rapidly among those who believe we *are* the Soul and the body is but raiment. The literature, the associations, the daily lives of his companions help him. For this reason only would we leave the Churches and join the Theosophical Society, for this and to help on the work of the Society which has helped us. But if we are strong enough to be carried by the Spirit, to live in our souls and aid those still in the bondage of the flesh, amid the old surroundings, we may do a great work in the Churches. That is a question each must judge for himself. In Theosophy one has a larger and more unquestioned freedom to do, to be, and to grow.

The Path

OCCULT ARTS: IV — *William Q. Judge*

No. IV.

SOME PROPOSITIONS BY H. P. BLAVATSKY. (1)

The following is extracted from H.P.B.'s first book, and is printed in this series with the belief that it will be useful as well as interesting. She gives some fundamental oriental propositions relating to occult arts, thus:

1. There is no miracle. Everything that happens is the result of law — eternal, immutable, ever-active. Apparent miracle is but the operation of forces antagonistic to what Dr. W. B. Carpenter, F. R.S. — a man of great learning but little knowledge — calls "the well ascertained laws of nature". Like many of his class, Dr. Carpenter ignores the fact that there may be laws once "known", now unknown, to science.
2. Nature is triune: there is a visible objective nature; an invisible, indwelling, energizing nature, the exact model of the other and its vital principle; and above these two is *spirit*, the source of all forces, alone eternal and indestructible. The lower two constantly change; the higher third does not.
3. Man is also triune: he has his objective physical body; his vitalizing astral hotly (or soul), the real man; and these two are brooded over and illuminated by the third — the sovereign, the immortal spirit. When the real man succeeds in merging himself with the latter, he becomes an immortal entity.
4. Magic, as a science, is the knowledge of these principles,

and the way by which the omniscience and omnipotence of the spirit and its control over nature's forces may be acquired by the individual while still in the body. Magic, as an art, is the application of this knowledge in practice.

5. Arcane knowledge misapplied is sorcery; beneficently used, true magic or wisdom.

6. Mediumship is the opposite of Adeptship; the medium is the passive instrument of foreign influences, the Adept actively controls himself and all inferior potencies.

7. All things that ever were, that are, or that will be, having their record upon the astral light, or tablet of the unseen universe, the initiated Adept, by using the vision of his own spirit, can know all that has been known or can be known.

8. Races of men differ in spiritual gifts as in color, stature, or any other external quality; among some people seership naturally prevails, among others mediumship. Some are addicted to sorcery, and transmit its secret rules of practice from generation to generation, with a range of psychical phenomena, more or less wide, as the result.

9. One phase of magical skill is the voluntary and conscious withdrawal of the inner man (astral form) from the outer man (physical body). In the cases of some mediums withdrawal occurs, but it is unconscious and involuntary. With the latter the body is more or less cataleptic at such times; but with the Adept the absence of the astral form would not be noticed, for the physical senses are alert and the individual appears only as though in a fit of abstraction — "a brown study", as some call it. To the movements of the wandering astral form neither time nor space offers any obstacle. The thaumaturgist thoroughly skilled in

occult science can cause himself (that is, his physical body) to *seem* to disappear or to apparently take on any shape that he may choose. He may make his astral form visible, or he may give it protean appearances. In both cases these results will be achieved by a mesmeric hallucination simultaneously brought on. This hallucination is so perfect that the subject of it would stake his life that he saw a reality, when it is but a picture in his own mind impressed upon his consciousness by the irresistible will of the mesmeriser.

But while the astral form can go anywhere, penetrate any obstacle, and be seen at any distance from the physical body, the latter is dependent upon ordinary methods of transportation. It may be levitated under prescribed magnetic conditions, but not pass from one locality to another except in the usual way. Inert matter may be in certain cases and under certain conditions disintegrated, passed through walls and recombined, but living animal organisms cannot.

Arcane science teaches that the abandonment of the living body by the soul frequently occurs, and that we encounter every day in every condition of life such living corpses. Various causes, among them overpowering fright, grief, despair, a violent attack of sickness, or excessive sensuality, may bring this about. The vacant carcass may be entered and inhabited by the astral form of an Adept, sorcerer, or an elementary (an earth-bound disembodied human soul), or, very rarely, an elemental. Of course an Adept of white magic has the same power, but unless some very exceptional and great object is to be accomplished he will never consent to pollute himself by occupying the body of an impure person. In insanity the patient's astral

being is either semi-paralyzed, bewildered, and subject to the influence of every passing spirit of any sort, or it has departed forever and the body is taken possession of by some vampirish entity near its own disintegration and clinging desperately to earth whose sensual pleasures it may enjoy for a brief season longer by this expedient.

10. The corner stone of magic is an intimate practical knowledge of magnetism and electricity, their qualities, correlations, and potencies. Especially necessary is a familiarity with their effects within and upon the animal kingdom and man. There are occult properties in many other minerals equally strange with that in the loadstone, which all practitioners of magic must know and of which so-called exact science is wholly ignorant. Plants also have like mystical properties in a most wonderful degree, and the secrets of the herbs of dreams and enchantments are only lost to European science, and, useless to say too, are unknown to it except in a few marked instances such as opium and hashish. Yet the psychological effects of even these few upon the human system are regarded as evidences of a temporary mental disorder.

To sum up all in a few words; Magic is spiritual wisdom; nature the material ally, pupil, and servant of the magician. One common vital principle pervades all things, and this is controllable by the perfected human will. The Adept can stimulate the movements of the natural forces in plants and animals in a preternatural degree. Such experiments are not obstructions of nature but quickenings; the conditions of intenser vital action are given.

The Adept can control the sensations and alter the

conditions of the physical and astral bodies of other persons not Adepts; he can also govern and employ as he chooses the spirits of the elements. He cannot control the immortal spirit of any human being living or dead, for all such spirits are alike sparks of the Divine Essence and not subject to any foreign domination.

Propositions 2 and 3 contain and include the seven-fold classification. In 1877 H. P. B. was writing for those who had known but the three-fold scheme. In number two the vital principle (*prana* or *jiva*) is given; the body with vitality makes two; the real man inside called the soul, being composed of *astral body*, *desires*, and *mind*, makes five; the spirit, including the connecting link of *Buddhi*, completes the seven. The will is one of the forces directly from spirit, and is guided, with ordinary men, by desire; in the Adepts' case the will is guided by *Buddhi*, *Manas*, and *Atma*, including in its operation the force of a pure spiritual desire acting solely under law and duty.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, page 587, *et seq.* ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE UPANISHADS: I — *C. J.*

I

Students of the Oriental Theosophy, which finds its highest expression in the Ten Upanishads, are met at the outset by a serious difficulty which has proved a real stumbling block in the way of many earnest disciples, and has almost completely veiled the true meaning of these most ancient mystical books to all who have approached them in a purely literary or philological spirit.

This serious difficulty, which is caused by the symbolism of the Upanishads, requires two qualifications for its solution: first, some knowledge at first hand of the interior truths and realities represented by these symbols; and secondly, a certain acquaintance with the symbology of the great religions of antiquity. This ancient symbology is marked by such a uniformity in countries and times as widely separated as those which gave birth to the Vedas and the Book of Job, the Mysteries of Osiris and the Apocalypse, that, in view of these resemblances, not only is one led to infer an identity of inspiration underlying all ancient symbolism, but also that an acquaintance with the method of expression of one ancient faith will often give clear insight into the darkest passages of another.

The source of this original identity of inspiration is not far to seek: for all the ancient religions treat of the same subject, the mysteries of the interior development of man, and the understanding of the universe which is reached in the course of that interior development. It is evident that a complete and exhaustive understanding of the ancient scriptures and the mysteries of inner life which are hidden beneath their symbols can be attained only by those whose inner unfoldment has gone

so far as to identify them with the spirit in which these ancient scriptures were written, the universal spirit of wisdom and goodness. But though a complete understanding of the whole meaning of books like the Upanishads is thus impossible for all but the highest and holiest Sages, one cannot follow the path of interior development, of the inner light, with earnestness and integrity, without gaining some insight into the hidden meaning of the symbols; and this, added to an acquaintance with other scriptures, may make clear much that seemed hopelessly obscure.

The best way to illustrate this is by a concrete example; and we cannot do better than begin with the Katha Upanishad — the "Secret of Death," as one translator calls it — which is distinguished for its purity and beauty of style and its universal application to human life, not less than for its avoidance of mere technical and scientific treatment of certain special powers and potencies of the inner life, such as one finds, for instance, in the Chhandogya and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads. The Katha Upanishad begins:

Vajashravasa, verily, seeking favor, offered in sacrifice all he possessed. He had a son, also, by name Nachiketas. Him, though still a child, faith entered, when the offerings were brought. He meditated:

– These have drunk water, eaten grass, given milk, and lost their strength. Joyless worlds he gains who offers these. He addressed his father:

– To whom, then, wilt thou give me? said he. Twice, thrice he asked him.

– To Death I give thee, said he.

It would not be contrary to the spirit of these ancient scriptures to find a meaning in the names of Nachiketas and his father.

Vajashravasa may mean "one who sacrifices according to tradition or ritual", while Nachiketas may mean "one who has lost the desire for sensation". But without insisting upon this, we may turn to the general meaning of father and son. A son, in the symbolism of the Upanishads, means a new birth; either spiritual regeneration, or simply reincarnation; this meaning of the new life which faith had entered, or of the soul in that new life, is represented here by Nachiketas. His father is the past birth, or the condition before the spiritual rebirth, which offers an inadequate sacrifice.

The lean cattle, who have "given milk and lost their strength", represent either worldly enjoyments or the physical powers which enjoy them; just as perfect, well-nourished cows represent the spiritual powers, which succeed them. Vajashravasa, the type of the soul in the former or unregenerate birth, offered up these lean cattle, the physical enjoyments; Nachiketas, his son, the new or regenerate birth, perceived that this offering was inadequate; the offering needed was not the sacrifice of worldly enjoyments, but the sacrifice of self.

[Nachiketas meditates.]

– I go the first of many; I go in the midst of many. What is this work of Death, that he will work on me today?

Look, as those that have gone before, behold so are those that shall come after. As corn a mortal is ripened; as corn he is born again.

[Nachiketas comes to the House of Death. Nachiketas speaks:]

– Like the Lord of Fire, a pure guest comes to the house. They offer him this greeting:

Bring water, O King Death!

Fair hopes and friendship, truth and holy deeds, sons and cattle, all forsake the foolish man in whose house a pure guest dwells, without food.

What is the House of Death to which Nachiketas comes? It has two meanings. The first and universal meaning is the physical world, the "world of birth and death" to which the soul comes in each new life. The second, more special, meaning is the underworld, visited by the spirit of the neophyte at initiation.

[After three days, Death returns. Death speaks:]

– As thou, a pure guest and honorable, hast dwelt three nights in my house without food — honor to thee, pure one, welcome to thee — against this, choose thou three wishes.

[Nachiketas speaks:]

– That my father may be at peace, well-minded, and with anger gone towards me, O Death; that he may speak kindly to me, when sent forth by thee; this of the three as my first wish I choose.

[Death speaks:]

– As before will he be kind to thee, sent forth by me; by night will he sleep well, with anger gone, seeing thee set free from the mouth of Death.

The three nights which Nachiketas passes in the House of Death have also two meanings; the first, the universal meaning, in which the three nights are the "three times", present, past, and future, the three conditions to which everything is subject in this physical world, the House of Death. The special meaning refers to

the initiation in which the soul "descended into hell, and rose again the third day. One of the three wishes of Nachiketas refers to each of these "three times"; the first, "that the father may be at peace", refers to the past; the meaning of "father" being the same as before.

[Nachiketas speaks:]

– In the heaven-world there is no fear; nor art thou there, and fear comes not with old age. Crossing over hunger and thirst, and going beyond sorrow, he exults in the heaven-world.

The heavenly fire thou knowest, Death; tell me it, for I am faithful. The heaven-worlds enjoy undyingness. This as my second wish I choose.

[Death speaks:]

– To thee I tell it; listen then to me, O Nachiketas, learning that heavenly fire. Know thou also the excellent winning of endless worlds, for this is hidden in the secret place.

He told him then that fire, the source of the worlds, and the bricks of the altar, and how many and what they are. And he again spoke it back as it was told; and Death, well pleased, again addressed him.

The next three verses, which speak of the triple fire as part of a ceremony, are evidently a later addition; they are therefore omitted here. It is possible that they take the place of older verses which spoke too clearly of the sacred fire and were therefore omitted in the later manuscripts. But the secret of the triple fire may be revealed by the words, "he told him that fire, the source of the worlds, and the bricks (of the altar), how many and what they are"; the triple fire being here the Higher Triad, the unmanifested

three that underlie creation, preservation, and regeneration; as also the being, consciousness, and bliss of the Self, the Atma. The altar being the manifested world, which is crowned by the unmanifested three. The square altar is thus the lower quaternary, the bricks being the four or seven planes or worlds of manifestation. The triple fire and the square altar would thus be the triangle above the square in symbolism, the triangle being the same as the Egyptian pyramid, also connected with "pur" or fire. The "speaking back" is the reflection of the seven in Nachiketas, the individual soul.

[Death speaks:]

– This is the heavenly fire for thee, Nachiketas, which thou hast chosen as thy second wish. They shall call this fire thine. Choose thy third wish, Nachiketas.

[Nachiketas speaks:]

– This doubt that there is of a man that has gone forth; "he exists" say some, and "he exists not" others say. A knowledge of this taught by thee: this of my wishes is the third wish.

[Death speaks:]

– Even by the gods it was doubted about this; not easily knowable and subtle is this law. Choose, Nachiketas, another wish. Hold me not to it; spare me this.

[Nachiketas speaks:]

– Even by the gods, thou sayest, it was doubted about this; nor easily knowable is it, O Death. Another teacher of it cannot be found like thee. No other wish is equal to this.

This third wish is the essence and crown of the whole Upanishad.

Not the first wish "that the father may be at peace," that the past may "sleep well"; nor the second wish, the heavenly fire, are the true mystery of the Secret of Death.

The words, "the doubt that there is of a man that has gone forth," evidently bear two meanings. They refer first to the death of the body, and the doubt as to the survival of the personality. But this is not the deeper meaning. Nachiketas has confidently looked forward to the time when he shall be "released by Death" and "freed from the mouth of Death"; and has spoken of "the heaven-world which enjoys immortality"; so that he does not doubt as to the immortality of the soul, in its ordinary sense of the individual survival after death.

It is not this physical death, but the death which precedes the true spiritual rebirth and inward illumination; the death of the passions and selfishness, of personal desire, which must be passed through before the initiation by the spirit is reached; what Paul calls the "death to sin, and the new birth to righteousness"; the death which comes only once, while the physical death comes many times; the turning-point of the soul, after it has reached its extremest limit on the outward path. This is the death whose secret Nachiketas asks. The "man that has gone forth" would be, in this sense, the Jivanmukta, "for whom there is no return", who has entered Nirvana, of whom the gods have doubted; " 'he exists' say some, 'he exists not,' others say."

Of this secret there is no teacher but Death; the death of selfishness must be passed through before an understanding can be reached of that true undyingness "which is not immortality but eternity"; and which may be reached in the midst of life, long before the time of physical death has come.

[Death speaks:]

– Choose sons and grandsons of a hundred years; and cattle and elephants and gold and horses. Choose the great treasure-house of the world, and live as many autumns as thou wilt.

If thou thinkest this an equal wish, choose wealth and length of days. Be thou mighty in the world, O Nachiketas. I make thee an enjoyer of thy desires.

Whatsoever desires are difficult in the mortal world, ask all desires according to thy will.

These beauties, with their chariots and lutes — not such as these are to be won by men — be waited on by them, my gifts. Ask me not of dying, Nachiketas.

This answers to the offer made by the Lord of the House of Death to another neophyte, who, like Nachiketas, "descended into hell, and rose again the third day"; the offer of the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them. It would seem that the knowledge and power which make the spiritual rebirth possible are great enough to render certain the winning of any lesser prize, if the ambition to be mighty on the earth remains. These alternatives are offered, therefore, by the power which, if they are refused, will become the Initiator.

[Nachiketas speaks:]

– By tomorrow these fleeting things wear out the vigor of a mortal's powers. Even the whole of life is little; and chariots and dance are in thy power.

Not by wealth can a man be satisfied. Shall we choose wealth if we have seen thee? Shall we desire life while thou art master? But the wish I choose is verily that.

Coming near to the unfadingness of the immortals, a fading

mortal here below, and understanding it, understanding the sweets of beauty and pleasure, who would rejoice in length of days?

This that they doubt about, O Death, what is in the great Beyond, tell me of that. This wish that draws nigh the mystery, Nachiketas chooses no other wish but that.

(To be concluded)

The Path

BUDDHA AND A DEVA (1)

Thus I have heard. On a certain day the Blessed one (Buddha) dwelt at Srasvati, at the Jeta grove, in the garden of Anata-pindaka. When the night was far advanced, a radiant celestial one (Deva), whose countenance was exceedingly sublime and whose refulgent splendor illuminated the whole of the grove, approached the Bhagavat (Buddha) and worshipped him, standing aside. He then addressed the Bhagavat in verse — What is the sharpest sword? What the deadliest poison? What the fiercest fire? What the grossest darkness?

Bhagavat replied in verse — A harsh word is the sharpest word; covetousness, the deadliest poison; anger, the fiercest fire; ignorance, the grossest darkness.

The Deva asked: Who does gain the greatest benefit? Who does lose the most? What is the most invulnerable armor? What the best weapon?

Bhagavat replied: He is the greatest gainer who gives to other, and he loses the most who receives from other. Patience is the most invulnerable armor; wisdom the best weapon.

Deva: Who is a thief? What is the most precious treasure for the wise? Who is a robber (not only on the earth, but also in the heaven)?

Bhagavat: Evil thought is a stealer; virtue, the most precious treasure for the wise. Immorality is a robber, not only on the earth but also in the heaven.

Deva: Who enjoys the greatest happiness? Who is the richest? Who is the noblest? Who the most ignoble?

Bhagavat: He whose desires are moderate is most happy; he is richest who is contented; the virtuous is noblest; the vicious is basest.

Deva: What is that which is attractive? What is that which is disgusting? What is the most horrible pain? What is the greatest enjoyment?

Bhagavad: Good is attractive; evil, disgusting. Of all the pains, the hell is the most tormenting; the deliverance from rebirth is the height of bliss.

Deva: What wish is right and proper? What wish is wrong and improper? What is the most violent fever? Who the best physician?

Bhagavat: Emancipation from transmigratory existence is right and proper to wish for; but not all the evil desires. Concupiscence is the most violent fever; Buddha, the best physician.

Deva: What power is able to ruin all the world? By what influence is all the world confused? What makes us forsake our friends? What does prevent our being born in the heaven?

Bhagavat: It is by ignorance that all the world is ruined, and by sceptics that it is confused. A cruel, covetous heart causes us to forsake our friends. Our attachment to agreeable objects renders it impossible for us to be born in the heaven.

Deva: What is it that neither fire can burn, nor water corrode, nor wind crush down, but that is able to make good the whole world? What was secure from the attack of a malefactor who would come to take it away?

Bhagavat: Blessing!

Deva then asked and said: Now I have only one doubt left to be

resolved; pray clear it away for me: — Who has been, is, and will be the greatest self-deceiver?

Bhagavat answered and said: Whoever possesses great riches, and yet fails to use them for promoting his blessings, has been, is, and will be the greatest self-deceiver.

The Deva, having heard the words of the Bhagavat, was full of exceeding joy, and worshipped him, throwing himself down at his feet. And he disappeared suddenly from the presence of the Bhagavat.

FOOTNOTE:

1. A Sutra, translated from the Chinese by M. Matzuyama. From Tracts of Buddhist Prop. Soc. of Kyoto, Japan. ([return to text](#))

The Path

UPANISHADS ON RE-BIRTH

Hence one whose fire is burned out is reborn through the tendencies in ind; according to his thoughts he enters life. But linked by the fire with the Self, this life leads to a world of recompense. – *Prashna Upanishad*.

Dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return. – *Genesis*

The above quotation from *Prashna Upanishad* gives the old doctrine, the same as in Buddhism, that re-birth is due to mind and to the tendencies therein. "Whose fire has burned out" means the fire of life expiring. "According to his thoughts" does not refer to what one wishes to have for rebirth, but to the seeds of thought left in the mind from the thinking of each hour of life; these in a mass make a tendency or many tendencies which on coming out either keep the soul to that family in all modes of thought and act or tend to segregate the soul from the circle into which it was born. "This life leads to a world of recompense", because by the fire of life it is linked to the Self, which being thus bound goes after death to the state where recompense is its portion. The alternation to and fro from one state to another for purposes of compensation is not the attainment of knowledge but the subjection to results eternally, unless the soul strives to find the truth and becomes free, and ceases to set up causes for future births. A Jewish tradition says that Adam had to reincarnate as David and later as the Messiah; hence "to dust thou shalt return".

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE UPANISHADS: II — C. J.

II

The first part of the Katha Upanishad, if we have interpreted its symbols aright, taught the descent of Nachiketas — the soul — into this outer world, graphically described as the House of Death; its lingering there for three nights, which are the three times, past, present, and future, that condition everything in the House of Death; there confronted by Death, the prince of this world; the soul is offered three wishes, one for the past, one for the present, one for the future. The first is the quiescence of the past and the tranquil return of the soul to the source whence it fell into the "mouth of death", the second, the secret of the three fires on the four-fold altar, or the three divine energies which underlie the four-fold world of manifestation, the world of the present; the third is the secret of the Great Beyond, that real world to which the soul's true life belongs, and whence it has strayed into this House of Death.

The first two wishes have been already satisfied; the third is treated of in the second and third parts of the Upanishad, which we shall translate and comment on as before. In the second part, the speaker is Death the Great Initiator; not the body's death, but the death of the lower self, which alone can open the doors of the Great Beyond. What lies behind that door is told as far as words can tell it; it is the eternal mystery, which remains hidden in secret, and everlastingly unrevealable for all who have not passed the initiation — or "new beginning" — of the death of the lower self.

[Death speaks:]

– The better is one thing; the dearer is another thing; these two draw a man in opposite ways. Of these two it is well for him who chooses the better; he fails of his object who chooses the dearer.

The better and the dearer approach a man; looking closely at them, the Sage discerns between them. The Sage chooses the better rather than the dearer; the fool chooses the dearer, through lust of possession.

The better is what belongs to the real world, the Great Beyond. The dearer is what belongs to this unreal world, the House of Death, in whose gift are "wealth and length of days, the great treasure-house of the world, and the beauties with their chariots and lutes"; representative of the ideals of the lower self. The better and the dearer are the blessedness and the happiness, in Carlyle's inimitable chapters of *Sartor Resartus* which speak of the Everlasting No, the Center of Indifference, and the Everlasting Yea; where with matchless vividness and power are depicted the death of the lower self and the new birth of the soul. These two, the better and the dearer, draw every man in opposite ways; every man, that is, has the longing for Death's fair gifts; and also the incipient sense of the Great Beyond, called, in its negative aspect, Conscience, but which becomes positive, as intuition and growing omniscience, when Death's Initiation has been passed through.

[Death continues:]

– Thou, indeed, understanding dear and dearly loved desires, Nachiketas, hast passed by them. Not this way of wealth hast thou chosen, in which many men sink.

Wide apart are these two minds, unwisdom, and that of which the knower says "it is wisdom". I esteem Nachiketas

to be one seeking wisdom, nor do manifold desires allure thee.

Others, turning about in un wisdom — self-wise, thinking they are learned — and fools, stagger, lagging in the way, like the blind led by the blind.

The Great Beyond gleams not for the fool, led away by the delusion of possessions. "This is the world, there is no other", he thinks; and so falls again and again under my dominion.

The understanding of desire is the deep and irrevocable conviction, based upon the experience of innumerable lives, innumerable incarnations, that desire can never be satisfied; that the gratification desired is never actually touched, but remains each time just one step out of reach. Like fruit under a glass case, the object of desire is never seized, but every effort towards perfect gratification is stopped by an irresistible barrier. The essential nature of desire is that it actually is never gratified, but every effort at gratification leads to another and this again to another. Every attempt at gratification is at once a disappointment and the father of a new desire. To this understanding of desire, which is the last ripeness of the lower self before it falls off the tree of life, must be added another qualification, the firm steady will, which, after the conviction of the futility of desire has been fully reached, gives effect to that conviction by checking the little children of desire, as they are born in the mind and run down through emotion into action. These three worlds, the world of mind, of emotion, and of action, are the "three worlds" which are to be conquered by the neophyte, and the first, that of the mind, must be conquered first. When this is done, the outward actions of desire, robbed of their motive power, will cease of themselves; their continuation would

show, not that the soul had risen above the body, of whose mere outward acts it was independent, but that the first of the three worlds, the mind where the children of desire are born, was still unconquered and unclean. The delusion that a pure soul may accompany impure action is a part of that unwisdom which brings men "again and again under the dominion of death". Then Death speaks of the Great Beyond:

– That is not to be gained even for a hearing by many; and, hearing it, many understand it not. Wonderful is the speaker of it, blessed is the receiver; wonderful is the knower of it, blessed is the learner.

Not by a baser man is this declared; but it is to be known by much meditation. There is no way to it unless told by another, nor can it be debated by formal logic.

The comprehending of this cannot be gained by debate; but when declared by another it is dearest to a good understanding. Thou hast obtained it, for thou art steadfast in the truth, and a questioner like thee, Nachiketas, is dear to us.

That which many do not even gain for a hearing is the Voice of the Silence, the first glimmer of the inner light which shines in the soul and illumines the Great Beyond. Many who hear it understand not; they follow the "promptings of conscience" blindly and haltingly, knowing not that this is the first gleam of the light that lightens the world. "The speaker of it" is the Higher Self, which brings the light to the soul; the hearer of it is the soul which receives that light. The Higher Self is the "other that tells it"; without being told by that other, it cannot be known; but whenever the hearer is ready, the teacher is ready also; when the soul is purified and reaches out toward the light, the light will certainly appear.

[Death speaks:]

– I know that what is called precious is unenduring; and by unlasting things what is lasting cannot be gained.

Therefore the triple fire was chosen by me, and instead of these unenduring things I have gained what endures.

Thus saying, and having beheld the fulfilment of desire, the seat of the world, the endless fruit of sacrifice, the shore where there is no fear, great praise, and the wide-famed world, thou, Nachiketas, hast wisely passed them by.

The lasting thing which cannot be gained by the unlasting is peace, which can never come from the gratification of desire, but only from the kindling of the triple fire, the three-fold Higher Self, of Being, Bliss, and Knowledge. The words "the fulfilment of desire" refer to Death's offer in the first part of the Upanishad. The seat of the world is the "Kingdoms of this world and the glory of them"; the fruit of sacrifice or good deeds is the rest in Devachan — the shore where there is no fear; all this, Nachiketas, understanding its unlasting character, had passed by.

[Death continues:]

– But that which is hard to see, which has entered the secret place and is hidden in secret, the mystery, the Ancient; understanding that bright one by the path of union with the Inner Self, the wise man leaves exaltation and sorrow behind.

A mortal, hearing this and understanding it, passing on to that righteous subtle one and obtaining it, rejoices, having good cause for rejoicing; and the door to it is wide open, I think, Nachiketas.

"The Mystery, the Ancient" is the Higher Self, which for the

unenlightened is hidden in the secret place, the beyond, above the ordinary consciousness of the soul; it is the ancient, because the Higher Self is the power which again and again causes the incarnation of the personality through a vast series of lives, and thus, as the Ancient of Days, it is endless both backwards and forwards. It is to be found by the path of union with the Inner Self, the bridge so often spoken of in the Upanishads. This bridge, which the disciple must cross by becoming it, is really the identification of the personality with the life of the Higher Self by perfectly following its dictates and assimilating its nature; by the perfect obedience through which alone there is liberty.

A mortal learning this obedience and understanding it, and then becoming himself the path by identifying himself with the law of the path, reaches that Subtle one, where is eternal joy and not that lower exultation which is merely the opposite of grief; this exultation and grief being the two sides of the lower, personal self, while joy and peace are of the Higher Self and have no opposites; for the Higher Self is beyond the world of opposites, heat and cold, sorrow and exultation, and the rest. As the law is always waiting for obedience, the door is always open.

[Death speaks:]

– What them seest to be neither the law nor lawlessness, neither what is commanded nor what is forbidden, neither what has been nor what shall be, say that it is THAT.

That resting-place which all the Vedas proclaim, and all austerities declare; seeking for which they enter the service of the eternal; that resting-place I briefly tell to thee.

It is the unchanging Eternal; it is the unchanging Supreme; having understood that eternal one, whatsoever a man wishes, that he gains. It is the excellent foundation, the

supreme foundation; knowing that foundation, a man grows mighty in the eternal world.

The Higher Self is again defined as that which is free from the pairs of opposites; that which is neither the righteousness of the ritual law nor yet the unrighteousness of breach of that law; neither the performance of ritual nor its neglect; but a new life, a new yet ancient being, above the virtue and vice of the ritual law, because it dwells in the Great Beyond, while the law of ritual is, at best, for this world or for Devachan. The Higher Self is also the resting-place declared by the Vedas, because it rests above the personal life, while the personal life goes through endless alternations of birth and death; as the Higher Self, being a facet of the Infinite One, contains within itself the infinite; he who has gained it possesses all things, and therefore possesses whatever he may desire.

[Death speaks:]

– The knower is never born nor dies; nor is it from anywhere, nor did anything become it. Unborn, eternal, immemorial, this ancient is not slain when the body is slain.

If the slayer thinks to slay it, if the slain thinks it is slain, neither of them understands; this slays not, nor is slain. Smaller than small, greater than great, this self is hidden in the heart of man.

He who has ceased from sacrifices and passed sorrow by, through the favor of that ordainer beholds the greatness of the Self.

Though seated, it travels far; though at rest, it goes everywhere; who but thee is worthy to know this bright one, who is joy without rejoicing?

The "knower" is again the Higher Self, which knows all things. It is the ordainer, because it is the will and power of the Higher Self which ordains the incarnations of the personality and directs the whole series, with a single purpose, from beginning to end; correcting one life and supplementing its deficiencies in those that follow. Though seated, though at rest, it travels far, from one end of the chain of births to the other; it is everywhere, in every birth, because it overshadows and ordains them all.

[Death continues:]

– Understanding this great lord, the Self, the bodiless in bodies, the unstable in stable things, the wise man cannot grieve. This Self is not to be gained by speaking of it, nor by cleverness, nor by much hearing. Whom this chooses, by him it is gained; and the Self chooses his body as its own.

He who has not ceased from evil, who is not at peace, who stands not firm, whose emotions are not at rest, cannot obtain it by understanding. Brahman and Kshatriya are its food; its anointing is death; who knows truly where it is?

This final clause reiterates the truth that through the death of the lower self, and perfect integrity, and through these only, the path to the Self can be known; that Self whose food is Brahman and Kshatriya — knowledge and power; and whose anointing comes only through the death of selfishness. When selfishness is dead, then that Self chooses the purified soul, which gradually becomes one with it, in the resting-place which all the Vedas sing.

The Path

HYPNOTISM (1) — *William Q. Judge*

What is the hypnotic force or influence? What really happens when a hypnotic experiment is performed? What is proved by it? What force is exerted that, after making a man sleep, rouses him to a false wakefulness in which he obeys a suggestion, seems to lose his identity, becomes apparently another person, speaks a language he knows nothing of, sees imagined pictures as real ones? How is it that in this state his physical body follows the operator's suggestion and becomes blistered by a piece of paper which possesses no blistering power, sneezes when there is no actual titillation of the olfactory nerves, shivers over a hot stove, and perspires if it be suggested that a block of ice is a mass of fire?

All this and very much more has been done in hypnotic experiments, just as it was done many years ago by mesmerizers, electro-biologists, and wandering fascinators of all sorts. Then it was outside the pale of science, but now since physicians renamed a part of it "hypnotism" it is settled to stay among the branches of psychology theoretical and applied. The new schools, of course, went further than the first did or could. They added a species of witchcraft to it by their latest claim to be able to externalize and localize the nerve-sensitiveness and hence mental impressionability of the subject; to put it in his photograph or within a glass of water, so that if the former be scratched or the latter touched, the patient at once jumped or screamed. This is the old way of making a wax image of your form and sticking pins in it, whereupon you pined and died; men and women were burned for this once. This, while interesting and important if true, possesses the interest of a nightmare, as it suggests how in the near future one's picture may be for sale to be blistered and

stabbed by an enemy, provided the extraneous localization of sensibility is first provided for. But the other experiments touch upon the great questions of identity, of consciousness, of soul, and of personality. They raise an issue as to whether the world be physical and mechanical, as Descartes thought, or whether it is fleeting and a form of consciousness existing because of thought and dominated by thought altogether, as the Theosophists modern and ancient always held.

Professor James of Harvard has published his conclusion that experiments in hypnotism convince him, as they have convinced many, of the existence of the hidden self in man, while the French schools dispute whether it is all due to one personality mimicking many, or many personalities wrapped up in one person and showing one phase after another. Facts are recorded and wonderful things done, but no reasonable and final explanation has been made by the modern schools. Except here and there they, being ignorant of man's hidden real nature and powers, or denying the existence of such, see no cause for alarm in all these experiments and no danger to either society or the individual. As the true evolution of man's inner powers at the same rate and time concurrently with all other racial and planetary evolution is not admitted by these schools, they cannot perceive in the future any possibly devilish use of hypnotic powers. The Theosophist, however, suggests an explanation for the phenomena, points to similar occurrences through history, and intimates a danger to come if the thinking world does not realize our true nature as a being made of thought and consciousness, built in and on these, and destructible by them also so far as his personality is concerned. The danger is not in knowing these things and processes, but in the lack of morality and ethics in the use of them both now and in the future.

One theory for use in explaining and prosecuting hypnotic

research is about as follows. Man is a soul who lives on thoughts and perceives only thoughts. Every object or subject comes to him as a thought, no matter what the channel or instrument, whether organ of sense or mental center, by which it comes before him. These thoughts may be words, ideas, or pictures. The soul-man has to have an intermediary or connecting link with Nature through and by which he may cognize and experience. This link is an ethereal double or counterpart of his physical body, dwelling in the latter; and the physical body is Nature so far as the soul-man is concerned. In this ethereal double (called astral body) are the sense-organs and centers of perception, the physical outer organs being only the external channels or means for concentrating the physical vibrations so as to transmit them to the astral organs and centers where the soul perceives them as ideas or thoughts. This inner ethereal man is made of the ether which science is now admitting as a necessary part of Nature, but while it is etheric it is none the less substantial.

Speaking physically, all outer stimulus from nature is sent from without to within. But in the same way stimuli may be sent from the within to the without, and in the latter mode is it that our thoughts and desires propel us to act. Stimuli are sent from the astral man within to the periphery, the physical body, and may dominate the body so as to alter it or bring on a lesion partial or total. Cases of the hair turning grey in a night are thus possible. And in this way a suggestion of a blister may make a physical swelling, secretion, inflammation, and sore on a subject who has submitted himself to the influence of the hypnotizer. The picture or idea of a blister is impressed on the astral body, and that controls all the physical nerves, sensations, currents, and secretions. It is done through the sympathetic nervous plexus and ganglia. It was thus that ecstatic fanatical women and men by brooding on the pictured idea of the wounds of Jesus produced on

their own bodies, by internal impression and stimulus projected to the surface, all the marks of crown of thorns and wounded side. It was self-hypnotization, possible only in fanatical hysterical ecstasy. The constant brooding imprinted the picture deeply on the astral body; then the physical molecules, ever changing, became impressed from within and the *stigmata* were the result. In hypnotizing done by another the only difference is one of time, as in the latter instances the operator has simply to make the image and impress it on the subject after the hypnotic process has been submitted to, whereas in self-hypnotization a long-continued ecstasy is necessary to make the impression complete.

When the hypnotic process — or subjugation, as I call it — is submitted to, a disjunction is made between the soul-man and the astral body, which then is for the time deprived of will, and is the sport of any suggestion coming in unopposed, and those may and do sometimes arise outside of the mind and intention of the operator. From this arises the sensitiveness to suggestion. The idea, or thought, or picture of an act is impressed by suggesting it on the astral body, and then the patient is waked. At the appointed time given by the suggestor a secondary sleep or hypnotic state arises automatically, and then, the disjunction between soul and astral body coming about of itself, the suggested act is performed unless — as happens rarely — the soul-man resists sufficiently to prevent it. Hence we point to an element of danger in the fact that at the suggested moment the hypnotic state comes on secondarily by association. I do not know that hypnotizers have perceived this. It indicates that although the subject be dehypnotized the influence of the operator once thrown on the subject will remain until the day of the operator's death.

But how is it that the subject can see on a blank card the picture

of an object which you have merely willed to be on it? This is because every thought of any one makes a picture; and a thought of a definite image makes a definite form in the astral light in which the astral body exists and functions, interpenetrating also every part of the physical body. Having thus imaged the picture on the card, it remains in the astral light or sphere surrounding the card, and is there objective to the astral sense of the hypnotized subject.

Body, soul, and astral man properly in relation give us a sane man; hypnotized, the relation is broken and we have a person who is not for the time wholly sane. Acute maniacs are those in whom the disjunction between astral man and soul is complete. Where the hypnotized one remains for months in that state, the astral man has become the slave of the body and its recollections, but as the soul is not concerned no real memory is present and no recollection of the period is retained.

The varied personalities assumed by some subjects brings up the doctrine of a former life on earth for all men, The division between soul and astral man releases the latter from some of the limitations of brain memory so that the inner memory may act, and we then have a case of a person reenacting some part of his former life or lives. But a second possibility also exists, — that by this process another and different entity may enter the body and brain and masquerade as the real person. Such entities do exist and are the astral shells of men and women out of the body. If they enter, the person becomes insane; and many a maniac is simply a body inhabited by an entity that does not belong to it.

The process of hypnotizing is as yet unknown in respect to what does happen to the molecules. We claim that those molecules are pressed from periphery to center instead of being expanded from the inside to the surface. This contraction is one of the symptoms

of death, and therefore hypnotizing is a long step toward physical and moral death. The view expressed by Dr. Charcot that a subject is liable to fall under the influence at the hands of anyone should be admitted, as also that in the wake of the hypnotizer will be found a host of hysteriacs, and that it all should be regulated by law is unquestionable. I go still further and say that many persons are already in a half-hypnotized state, easily influenced by the unprincipled or the immoral; that the power to hypnotize and to be sensitive to it are both progressive states of our racial evolution; that it can and will be used for selfish, wicked, and degrading purposes unless the race, and especially the occidental portion of it, understands and practices true ethics based on the brotherhood of man. Ethics of the purest are found in the words of Jesus, but are universally negated by Church, State, and individual. The Theosophical doctrines of man and nature give a true and necessary basis and enforcement to ethics, devoid of favoritism or illogical schemes of eternal damnation. And only through those doctrines can the dangers of hypnotism be averted, since legislation, while affixing penalties, will not alter or curtail private acts of selfishness and greed.

FOOTNOTE:

1. This article was originally written for the *N.Y. World*, at request. ([return to text](#))

The Path

WHAT PROOF HAVE WE? (1) — *J. C. Keightley*

Mr. Chairman, Friends: Before entering upon the question of the evening I shall ask your permission to make use, temporarily, of the pronouns "you" and "we". By the use of the pronoun "you" I shall for the moment designate persons outside the Theosophical Society, who might or might not be enquirers about, or interested in, the Eastern Teachings. By the use of the pronoun "we" I shall designate all members of the Theosophical Society, and I will beg you to remember that I recognize in reality no such distinction; that I make use of this nomenclature for the purposes of clear illustration only, and that experience has shown full well that there are many devoted Theosophists who have never heard that word, and many using the word who have not even grasped the outermost significance thereof.

The question of the evening is "What proof have we?" Now this question is being asked daily more and more, is pressing upon us from all sides. For this reason, before entering into any argument as to the nature of proof itself, I wish to examine into the bearing and the reason, in short the justification, of this question; I wish to see what reason there is in its being put to us at all. And above all it is necessary to know *why* it is put to us and who are the persons who bring it forward. For at the very outset of his entrance into the Theosophical forum (and by "forum" I mean that place wherein a man may speak of his convictions — and be heard), the Theosophist finds himself almost immediately confronted by this question of proof. Too often the question converts the forum into the arena; the place where the combat as if for life, or for that which is dearer than life, goes on. The rightfulness of this question naturally becomes our first concern. When we speak of our belief you press up to us demanding this

proof. What right have you to make that demand? There are two things which constitute a man's right: first, there is his need of a thing — his real need; that constitutes a right in the eyes of any moral community; *secondly*, — and a bad second, — there are the rights of custom. Let us examine the lesser rights first, viz. — the rights of custom.

Are you accustomed, then, in your daily life to demand the proof of things before you can accept them? Do you demand proof of the purity of the water you drink, of the food you eat, of the financial investments you make? On all these depend health, life, immunity from care. Do you go to the root of each subject, examining each for yourself, or do you take the asseveration of one or another expert on the subject? You do examine, I know, but do you examine to the very root? No! What journeys, what expense, what knowledge would that not involve! Hence the custom has arisen of accepting the verdict of an expert number of our fellow beings upon such points: each such person is supposed to have examined more or less into the subject, though he may or may not have done so. Have you ever heard the story of the aged gentleman who determined to take nothing without absolute proof and who was therefore found at midnight still longing to partake of his early cup of coffee, usually taken before rising, because the busy chemist called in had not yet had time to decide whether milk, sugar, and coffee were pure? Would you not, then, be quite as belated in your daily life if you were to undertake to obtain unimpeachable proofs for yourselves? It has hence come about that you believe many an improbable thing without proof. You trust your friends, your wives, your societies, your churches, your scientists, yes, even your theologians, at times, without proof. It would be rare to find a man who would admit that he did not believe the world moves round the sun, and yet what *proof* has he of that? None. He has not even the knowledge necessary to

obtain the real proof, that proof which is found alone in a man's own experience. In the same way he has accepted the presence of life, or lives, in the air and the water. He has accepted many a problem, many a discovery in this scientific age; he feels that to deny these would also make him a laughing-stock. And if we ask him "What proof have you of this or that?", he gives us in reply some well-known name. To such a point has this practice been carried that Prof. Tyndall said some years ago in the United States that in his belief the testimony of a number of veracious witnesses constituted ample proof. We can give you this, and the world-known names besides if you will, in support of Theosophy, but you would not accept; you probably would laugh at it. In our opinion you would be quite right in doing so. Nevertheless I point out to you that in thus meeting us at the outset with a demand for proof, you are setting up as a right that which you do not ask of any other department of the world's knowledge, except in a very few rare circumstances which I shall specify hereafter. To take up another point of the subject; not long ago I met a gentleman well-known in all English-speaking countries as a literary man of wide and varied accomplishment. He spoke to me of certain matters in which I felt deep interest. So deep indeed was this interest that later on I said to him "Can you give me any proof of what you advance?" What was his reply? It was this: "I did not ask you to believe the statements I was then putting forward, as matters of interest, of conversation, of what you please; I repeat, that I did not seek your belief, consequently you have no right to ask proof of them. Proof may only justly be asked of a man who is endeavoring to secure your adherence to what he puts forward".

This I believe in the common tenet. Consequently, the Theosophist, young or old, educated or non-educated, wise in experience or just entering upon that experience, official or non-official, has an entire right to put forward his belief with all the

eloquence and earnestness he can muster to the task without laying himself open to any charge of dogmatism, without giving you any right to demand his proofs. In order to be dogmatic he would have to make two assertions, (a)"These are the lines of my belief and I will never alter them, never enlarge them; they shall never grow fuller or wider than they now are. (b) I insist upon your accepting this present statement of mine as the only truth." If he has not unmistakably done these two things, he triumphantly escapes the charges of biased minds who see dogmatism in his earnestness and narrowness in his eloquent definition. I think if you will follow out these lines it will be plain to you that custom does not sanctify this demand so pressed upon Theosophists; no, not even that hallowed Custom which has been erected as a goddess in our midst but which changes her fashion and face with every year. Even the legal rule demands that the accuser, the challenger, shall prove his case.

In coming to a man's *need* of proof we touch upon deeper ground. I do not mean to say by this that the need is deep in every man; as we have in fact seen, it rarely is so. But let us suppose a man who has gone forth from all accustomed modes of thought, self-banished, as it were, from the normal realm of mind. Hungering for food, food for that man who is "the man that was and is and shall be, for whom the hour shall never strike", he comes and asks us "What proof have you of these things?" To *his* need we must perforce turn a compassionate ear. And yet, how little can we do; for, look you, we are not divided from him in thought, or heart, or experience by any will whatsoever of our own. It is the mere fact that we have touched what he has not touched, that we have seen where his eyes were closed, that we have heard while he listened to another voice, it is this fact which makes the difference between us. It is not a difference of higher or lower, of greater or lesser knowledge, of superiority or inferiority; it is

simply the difference of experience, as colorless as the difference between rates of vibration; we have evolved to a different point, or by differing means, and our conclusions vary from his because the content of our consciousness varies from his. But in a moment, in the flash of an eye, he may see all his past by another light, by the inner light, and may find himself transported much further along the great evolutionary path than we ourselves now are. All our knowledge is relative, and where a point of time makes up the situation, another point of time may alter its uttermost foundation.

When, further, a man has a real need of anything in this world, what does he ordinarily do? Let us suppose that he wished to ask of a chemist, of the shoemaker at his awl or of the miner shut out from daylight and health in his pit; what would happen then? We can fancy him going to the miner and saying, "I want proof of the geological strata in which your ore lies; proof that yours is the proper method of excavating: proof that this ore which I see at the mouth of the pit has really been brought up by you and by no other and from the place which you describe". What is the answer? A jeer and a curse, perhaps. Or perhaps a question, "Are you a miner? If you be, come on down and see for yourself". And if you are not, a further jeer. So with the shoemaker. He shows you his finished article; but if you ask him to demonstrate to you that it was made precisely so and so, from the skinning of the dead beast and the tanning of the leather up to the final fashioning that fits for it the child's dainty foot, a stare of surprise will be the least and the most courteous reply you can expect. Or fancy yourself entering the laboratory of Crookes or of Tesla or Edison and demanding proofs of his latest discoveries. Let us again take the Artist, the Sculptor, or any earthly creator you may choose, into this conclave, and let us in fancy ask him for the much-sought-for proof. They may show us the finished thing; they

may demonstrate all its parts; is that proof? No! No! How do we know that it was made as they say; by the methods they describe; with the materials they claim; under the conditions that they assert? We would have to obtain their formula, or what science calls their working hypothesis, we would have to take that home with us, and, securing just the same conditions, just the same materials, work out by their methods, duly prescribed, to their exact results. This being so, the first question they would ask of us is this, "Are you a man of my trade?"; and finding we were not, they too would turn aside from us with a more or less courteous putting-off as the case may be. It is clearly evident that every man who has attained, in any department of life, knows one primary thing, and that is, that no man can understand those results which are *his* proofs unless he also knows the working hypothesis and has experience of the trade.

What I am coming to is this. In order to have your proof, you must work for it. In all this great universe there is no proof obtainable except by work; whether work of the body; work of the eye; work of the mind, that great overseer which sums up the results of all other classes of work; work there must be or proof there is none. And, speaking for myself, I honor, I may say I revere, the man or woman strong enough, patient enough, determined enough to get proof. For the only proof lies in man's own experience. There is no other that does not melt away like the hoar frost on the mountain, like the foam dashed from the turbulent sea.

It thus comes about that the attitude of the Theosophist, or indeed of any really thinking person, is the attitude imposed by Nature herself. To know a thing you must be it; you must have experience of it. When the Theosophist quotes from the Christian Bible those most occult words, "Lead the life if ye would know the doctrine", he is not putting you off because of any lack of proof of

his own, because of any want of power of speech or eloquence, because he cannot point out the work, the method of work, or the way. No; he is uttering one of the eternal verities, and great Nature herself sustains him. Experience you must have, before you know a thing in its depth and breadth and length. In matters of the mind this experience may be purely mental, as in matters of sympathy; but mental experience in certain souls is at once the most objective and most evident of all experiences. Hence when you ask us for proof we know well that you are asking what you ask of very few. We know well that you rarely put your theologians or scientists or great artisans or inventors or mechanics or laborers — no, not even your statesmen or your women — to this test. Nevertheless, the true Theosophist, recognizing that he is in part his brother's keeper, will not return the answer of Cain, who cried "Am I my brother's keeper?", but, on the contrary, he will meet you with a fact in nature — the fact that you must work for your proof even as he worked, and that without such work the facts which he may offer will never become an integral part of your experience, will never be accepted by the thinking man within you as a truth in which he has part.

And now let me ask, What is proof? In Western lands there is a maxim, "The law is common sense." Let us, then, have recourse to this embodied common sense in order to make out our reply. Last week I asked one of the ablest barristers in London for a definition of proof. After a little puzzlement he said that the best reply he could make me would be that proof was "evidence sufficient to satisfy the Court." That sounds well; but Courts vary. There are some inquirers who assert that the production of phenomena would be sufficient proof of all the teachings of the East. This reminds us of the tale of the two Rabbis, the first of whom was endeavoring to prove to the second that he knew more

of the Supreme Being than his friend. In proof of this the learned Rabbi No. 1 offered to cause the walls of the temple where they sat to fall down. The second Rabbi placidly remarked: "Friend, that would prove that thou didst indeed know how to cause walls to fall down, but it would prove nothing else." Moreover, a law of the human mind very often commented upon would render such phenomena valueless. I am again reminded of another tale, the newest parrot story as imported from America (with the profanity discreetly left out, for the parrot not being intentionally, or, as we may say, consciously, profane, I think this little attention is due to him in a Theosophical Lodge). My parrot lived in a shop of a seller of fireworks, and was used to seeing very brilliant specimens of coruscations set off for the benefit of intending purchasers. These gave him great delight. In fact, he became quite hardened to them and began to regard them with an air of cynical and accustomed habit. One day, however, the shop blew up; the parrot found himself landed in a distant and barren field, minus his feathers (for he did not take his wardrobe with him on that rapid journey). Scratching his naked head with his bleeding claw, he exclaimed: "Ain't it wonderful! What *will* happen next?" This attitude is that of the phenomena seeker who, witnessing more and more, desires the repetition of the same experience over and over, but a little stronger each time; as witness the Spiritualists, who with all their remarkable phenomena have built up no real philosophy. But I will not take up your time by enlarging further upon this head, but shall be happy if anything I may have said will serve as a text which you can follow out in your own mind. And to those to whom the whole discourse may appear dull I would offer a prescription embodied in two of George Herbert's most exquisite lines addressed to the Church-goer:

"And, if the preacher weary,
God takes the text and preaches patience."

I am quite sure if you learn patience, Sovereign Patience, from my discourse, you will have learned a virtue greater than any I have within my gift.

Since, then, we find that phenomena are not proof, the nature of proof still remains unexplained. What proof does the Law offer? In almost all cases witnesses come forward and detail the narrative which Court and Jury hear. Take, for example, a murder case. Is the murder shown? No! Is it described? Not always. A tale is told by more or fewer witnesses. Told to whom? To what? To the minds of the Jurymen and the Court, and the Mind, the eternal witness, hears, weighs, sums up, judges, condemns or sets free. Here, then, we have the Law. The oracular embodied common-sense of the land recognizes that proof is subjective and not objective, and that the mind of man is the sole arbiter, the sole judge, and that the evidence upon which he makes up his verdict is evidence cognizable by the mind of man alone, valid to him alone; that mind is indeed the power behind the throne For, mark you, if the minds of the Jury differ in any case, the Jurymen in the minority who have not seen the case from the standpoint of the majority acquire no condemnation therefor. They are not reproached — not justly reproached, at all events, because they have not seen the case as others do and have not derived the same conclusions from the same evidence. All that is said is that their minds have not acted upon the evidence normal to the majority. And yet even in the history of the Law these minorities have proved to be right with the passage of time. Innocent men have been hung on the verdict of a majority. Take another point: the Law itself recognizes the constitutional inability of two or more minds to see an event alike. Bribed and perjured witnesses always tell the tale exactly alike; by this peculiarity the Law recognizes them. Veracious witnesses, being so many different minds, have each seen a different side of the

occurrence. And in this cause we have the Law itself unconsciously acknowledging that every mind is at a different standpoint of evolution from every other. In this lies the reason why each person must gain his own proof through his own experience. To what, now, do these facts lead us? To this: in this highly civilized day, in our *very* Christian countries, you will take the life of your fellow-beings on subjective proof when you will not for one instant receive the same as valid at the hands of your fellow Theosophists.

If, then, the Theosophist chose, as I doubt not he would choose, to disregard the peremptory nature of this demand for proof and the fact that it is seldom asked except for argumentative purposes, which, as everyone knows, end in mere contention; if he chose, I say, to give serious attention to the question, his natural reply would be this: What is that for which you demand proof? Is it for the whole bulk of Theosophic teaching? Is it for the existence of Masters? Is it for the reality of phenomena? Now of the latter question I think we have already disposed, but there is one thing more which might be said, and it is this: If you are not yourself master to some extent of the laws lying behind nature, or operating through nature, you do not know whether any phenomena which may be produced before you consist in (A) mere mesmeric or hypnotic phenomena causing you to see what has no temporary existence at all, or (B) the actual phenomena in which something has been created by the use of occult or hidden Law, which something did not exist in objective form at all before. It is thus clear that *only* to the Adept, who needs it not, can valid proof of this kind be given, and that those who ask for it are ignorant in the deepest sense of ignorance. To be ignorant and to know it is a depth; but to be ignorant and not to know it is a greater depth still. Now again, as to proof, as to the existence of a Great Lodge or Hierarchy of Wise Beings. On this I purposely

touch very lightly: and I may say, indeed, that if any one came to me saying that I had published my belief in Theosophical teachings and were to ask "Have you any proof?" I should reply: "For myself? Yes! Certainly I have proof. For you? No! For you I have none at all." You would mistake if you were to call this pride on my part. The reply would arise wholly from the knowledge that no man can in any sense be the savior of another man. Each man must arise and must get his own proof, with the help, perhaps, if he be working, of his fellow-workmen. But of proof as to the existence of the Elder Brothers of the race, I may permit myself to make one very common-sense remark, as it appears to me. Reverse the case. Say that I am living in Thibet and that I am asked as to the existence of certain living, very prominent, very highly evolved and able men, residents of America, but who have been known to visit other lands. I tell the Thibetans of these men; they ask for proof of their existence. I show pictures. They are not proof. I show letters. They are not proof. I call upon other men and women who have seen them to testify. Their word too is denied. I point to the religious and other books of America to show that a knowledge of these men has existed for a long period of time. This too is not proof. I call upon our learned men, who admit that the existence of such highly evolved men was always part of the belief of the residents of the country. My Thibetans shrug their shoulders at this mass of testimony and remain unconvinced. And any one of you, if you were standing by me, would no doubt say to me, "In heaven's name why not leave them to their ignorance?" Now this is precisely what I should do; in fact, I should never have proceeded so far as this imaginary picture points out. And why? Because it is part of my experience that no one gets any living proof that way, and I should not waste my time in attempting the impossible. It is not that I know more than the supposed inquirer. It is that the content of my consciousness is not the content of his consciousness and never

can become so by any effort of mine. He will have to live and work and get the proof himself, as I did, if I have it at all. And when we add to this fact, that the proof of a man's being a Mahatma or Great Soul has to do with the interior and mysterious processes of the soul itself; that the soul alone recognizes the Great Soul; that such a Being is first met upon the plane of soul, and there only at first; I think you will concede that this subject of proof becomes a very difficult one, and that you must be content to leave me to what you may, if you please, call my delusions; or else you may accept the working hypothesis of living the life if you would know the doctrine, and work out thereby the matter to its ultimate conclusion. For other means than life and work there are none. Other proof of the existence of Great Souls, mastering the bodies in which they dwell, having communion with mankind travailing in pain on the one hand, and with the great boundless freedom of spirit on the other; other proof, I say, than that your soul first touches Their souls, there is none. There never will be any other proof until you have first mastered that truth and have learned to know the intangible eternal presences by a proof more sure than the presence of evanescent form.

Or, again, the proof asked may be that of certain fundamental propositions of Theosophy, such as those laid down in the Secret Doctrine. These are first, the existence of a boundless, eternal Principle of life; second, the universality of the law of periodicity, or Karma; third, the spiritual identity of all souls with the Over-soul. Such proof can be sought, and can, so far as my own experience goes, be found in every department of life. I admit that in this so-called scientific age the merest weaklings are so inflated with the rabies of science that they think they must have scientific proof of everything, and hence would deny what maybe called proof by analogy. Science herself, laboriously great but often true, treats us no better. But permit me to take a case in

point, an illustration from a lecture recently delivered in this hall on what are called "The Lives." In that lecture it was shown that science demonstrated certain action and reaction always taking place in the unit, as it is called, of protoplasmic matter. It was also shown that this series of action and reaction was precisely the same as those given in the Secret Doctrine relative to the action of the life-principle in regard to the Solar systems, worlds, man, and even the constituent cells of his body. Now, as I say, science would refuse us the right to this proof by analogy. But let us see if we cannot wrest it from her own utterance. For what says science further, after postulating this unit of protoplasm and definite actions and reactions taking place? Science shows at once this fact, that the whole visible universe is built up of a series of just such units. In this conclusion, then, she herself gives us that proof in regard to the universe to which we have laid claim. Or take another case. In the same lecture it was said that protoplasm, the basis of all life, was built up of certain well-defined chemical constituents, but that if you put those constituents together in their exact proportions, living protoplasm would not result. What would be absent? Life would be absent. The scientist claims that there is no such thing as life *per se*, life in itself. But may we not fairly claim that if the absence of life or motion prevents this chemical structure so carefully builded up after the living-model, from being alive, it is a fair conclusion that there is a something called Life whose absence makes the difference between a living thing and a dead thing, as science uses the terms "life" and "death." I speak advisedly of the terminology of science, for to the Theosophist Life and a change in the modes of Life alone are known.

Going thus rapidly over the whole ground of proof, what I would finally suggest to my fellow Theosophists is this: The proof that is wanted is proof of the great spiritual side of life and that which in

all directions underlies the visible and material. Now the proofs of life are everywhere. They are found in all occupations, in all departments of life, in all sciences, in all arts; they are best found in the beings of whom life itself is composed. Take, for instance, the question of evolution, that great moot-point which is said to have been the chief among the discoveries (re-discoveries I should call them) of this century. You may find it everywhere. You may find it in statecraft, in the tendency away from warfare and towards arbitration. You may find it in the trades, in the tendency away from monopoly and towards cooperation; yes, even in the limited co-operation of monopolists, which is its most dangerous form. You may find it in education; in the tendency, growing greater every hour, to give the same advantages to both sexes. You may find it in theology, in that these later days have seen the study of comparative theology, in part adopted, in place of that method where a man learned only his own form of belief and, at most, the best argument of other schools, in order to be able to refute. You may find it in the industrial life of cities; in the custom, growing daily greater, of embracing the sale of all manner of goods in one shop, instead of employing that shop as a place where only one species of goods could be obtained. You will find it in the drama, which, opening at the beginning of the century with the statuesque method of the Greek stage, and passing through the romantic, the melodramatic or intensely real, the ideal (as in some plays of Tennyson and others of his school), has finally culminated at the close of the century in a school of playwrights who show all the situations of life arising out of and caused by the complexities of character of that thing painfully created, life after life by man: I mean, the heart of man itself. That heart has built up the whole of life about us. It is responsible for all the strange alternations, struggles, differences, and tragedies of life. The latter-day dramatist has seen it; the prophetic seer has sung it for centuries also. If you turn to music, if you turn to

painting, evolution is still plainly discerned. If, then, Theosophists wish to point out such proof relative to the ancient Eastern beliefs as may serve as sufficient basis for a man to begin to work upon, let them turn to the various departments of life and demonstrate the first faint clues of greater riddles in them. Not a mother among her children, not a workman by his bench, not a photographer spreading his film ready for the transforming fingers of the light to create some radiant image and cast it out of space upon the glass, not any man or any woman working-anywhere but can bring- some material from his or her place of life with which to build broad and wide the base of this universal temple which we can and will raise to the skies. Do not look abroad in things unknown to you for proof; seek that proof of the building spirit, the living spirit, the unseen all-powerful workman, in the Life of which you are part; and having discerned Him behind his customary mask, bring to us the faithful image of that which you have seen. The mother, observing the birth of character with the child, watchful of the development of the mere animal mind, joyous discerner of the first unfolding of the immortal soul, can put together argument for Reincarnation, for the belief that the strong character already shown in infancy — character dissimilar to that of all the ancestry perhaps — has been moulded by many a prior life. In the inter-correlation of forces, the behavior of energy, its conservation and interaction, the scientist can find still other proof. When the microscopist can find no bacteria present in a speck of matter placed under his most powerful lens, the photographer, preparing a plate sensitized to the action of the rays of the ultra-violet only- — the unseen rays whose action and existence can only be demonstrated by chemistry — the photographer, I say, photographing by these rays, produces pictures of living and moving bacteria to which the wonder-revealing lens was blind. The astral ray revealing the lower astral forms — is it not a fitting

sequence? And H. P. Blavatsky said that the greatest proof of occult theory would be found along biological and chemical lines. The schoolboy reads in his Natural Philosophy the first law of motion: "Action and reaction are equal and opposite in direction." It is true of emotion as well. And it reveals the Law of Karma. H. P. Blavatsky pointed out the path. We should each seek to give our own proofs. No more is needed. No more can be asked. The proofs lie within yourselves; your daily acts fecundate them, your lives are their heralds. You have but to speak them. There is not one of us from whom all the rest may not learn something of proof, were that proof but brought before them. And is it not a duty which we owe to our belief, to demonstrate the real amplitude of its base?

Or perhaps it is proof of our ideals that men ask. What kind of proof, think you, would hold good of an ideal? I can conceive no other proof than its action upon the life. Were I asked, "Who are these men who have attained in ever so small measure to some proof of these great truths?" I would make answer thus: They are those who have looked upon a far star beyond the tern pest. They are those who have worked and toiled and waited, who being crushed have arisen, who having fallen have struggled and have arisen again and again. They are those who have done this for the sole and pure sake of the realization of an ideal which assures them that the salvation of one is inextricably bound up in the salvation of all. They are those who have seen the mighty image of Unity and Harmony far beyond the contemplation of the mere mortal mind, and who work on towards it regardless of themselves, caught up in the glory of that immortal ideal. For the proof of a man is his life. The proof of an Ideal is its life in the soul.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Address to Blavatsky T. S., London, by Mrs. J. C. Keightley.

(return to text)

The Path

REINCARNATION IN JUDAISM AND THE BIBLE — *William Q. Judge*

The lost chord of Christianity is the doctrine of Reincarnation. It was beyond doubt taught in the early days of the cult, for it was well known to the Jews who produced the men who founded Christianity. The greatest of all the Fathers of the Church — Origen — no doubt believed in the doctrine. He taught preexistence and the wandering of the soul. This could hardly have been believed without also giving currency to reincarnation, as the soul could scarcely wander in any place save the earth. She was an exile from Paradise, and for sins committed had to revolve and wander. Wander where? would be the next question. Certainly away from Paradise, and the short span of human life would not meet the requirements of the case. But a series of reincarnations will meet all the problems of life as well as the necessities of the doctrines of exile, of wanderings for purification, of being known to God and being judged by him before birth, and of other dogmas given out among the Jews and of course well known to Jesus and whoever of the seventy odd disciples were not in the deepest ignorance. Some of the disciples were presumably ignorant men, such as the fishermen, who had depended on their elders for instruction, but not all were of that sort, as the wonderful works of the period were sufficiently exciting to come to the ears of even Herod. Paul cannot be accused of ignorance, but was with Peter and James one of several who not only knew the new ideas but were well versed in the old ones. And those old ones are to be found in the Old Testament and in the Commentaries, in the Zohar, the Talmud, and the other works and sayings of the Jews, all of which built up a body of dogma accepted by the people and the Rabbis. Hence sayings of Jesus, of Paul, and others have to be viewed with the

well-known and never-disputed doctrines of the day held down to the present time, borne well in mind so as to make passages clear and show what was tacitly accepted. Jesus himself said that he intended to uphold and buttress the law, and that law was not only the matter found in the book the Christian theologians saw fit to accept, but also in the other authorities of which all except the grossly unlearned were cognizant. So when we find Herod listening to assertions that John or Jesus was this, that, or the other prophet or great man of olden time, we know that he was with the people speculating on the doctrine of reincarnation or "coming back", and as to who a present famous person may have been in a former life. Given as it is in the Gospels as a mere incident, it is very plain that the matter was court gossip in which long philosophical arguments were not indulged in, but the doctrine was accepted and then personal facts gone into for amusement as well as for warning to the king. To an Eastern potentate such a warning would be of moment, as he, unlike a Western man, would think that a returning great personage would of necessity have not only knowledge but also power, and that if the people had their minds attracted to a new aspirant for the leadership they would be inflamed beyond control with the idea that an old prophet or former king had come back to dwell in another body with them. The Christians have no right, then, to excise the doctrine of reincarnation from their system if it was known to Jesus, if it was brought to his attention and was not condemned at all but tacitly accepted, and further, finally, if in any single case it was declared by Jesus as true in respect to any person. And that all this was the case can, I think, be clearly shown.

First for the Jews, from whom Jesus was born and to whom he said unequivocally he came as a missionary or reformer. The Zohar is a work of great weight and authority among the Jews. In

II, 199 b, it says that "all souls are subject to revolutions". This is metempsychosis or *a'leen b'gilgoola*; but it declares that "men do not know the way they have been judged in all time". That is, in their "revolutions" they lose a complete memory of the acts that have led to judgment. This is precisely the Theosophical doctrine. The Kether Malkuth says, "If she, the soul, be pure, then she shall obtain favor . . . but if she hath been defiled, then she shall wander for a time in pain and despair . . . until the days of her purification". If the soul be pure and if she comes at once from God at birth, how could she be defiled? And where is she to wander if not on this or some other world until the days of her purification? The Rabbis always explained it as meaning she wandered down from Paradise through many revolutions or births until purity was regained.

Under the name of "Din Gilgol Neshomes" the doctrine of reincarnation is constantly spoken of in the Talmud. The term means "the judgment of the revolutions of the souls". And Rabbi Manassa, son of Israel, one of the most revered, says in his book *Nishmath Hayem*: "The belief or the doctrine of the transmigration of souls is a *firm* and *infallible dogma* accepted by the whole assemblage of our church with one accord, so that there is none to be found who would dare to deny it . . . Indeed, there is a great number of sages in Israel who hold firm to this doctrine so that they made it a dogma, a fundamental point of our religion. We are therefore in duty bound to obey and to accept this dogma with acclamation . . . as the truth of it has been incontestably demonstrated by the Zohar and all books of the Kabalists."

These demonstrations hold, as do the traditions of the old Jews, that the soul of Adam reincarnated in David, and that on account of the sin of David against Uriah it will have to come again in the expected Messiah. And out of the three letters ADM, being the

name of the first man, the Talmudists always made the names Adam, David, and Messiah. Hence this in the Old Testament: "And they will serve Jhvh their God and David their king whom I shall *reawaken* for them." That is, David reincarnates again for the people. Taking the judgment of God on Adam "for dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return", the Hebrew interpreters said that since Adam had sinned it was necessary for him to reincarnate on earth in order to make good the evil committed in his first existence; so he comes as David, and later is to come as Messiah. The same doctrine was always applied by the Jews to Moses, Seth, and Abel, the latter spelt Habel. Habel was killed by Cain, and then to supply the loss the Lord gave Seth to Adam; he died, and later on Moses is his reincarnation as the guide of the people, and Seth was said by Adam to be the reincarnation of Habel. Cain died and reincarnated as Yethrokorah, who died, the soul waiting till the time when Habel came back as Moses and then incarnated as the Egyptian who was killed by Moses; so in this case Habel comes back as Moses, meets Cain in the person of the Egyptian, and kills the latter. Similarly it was held that Bileam, Laban, and Nabal were reincarnations of the one soul or individuality. And of Job it was said that he was the same person once known as Thara, the father of Abraham; by which they explained the verse of Job (ix, 21), "Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my own soul", to mean that he would not recognize himself as Thara.

All this is to be had in mind in reading Jeremiah, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou earnest out of the womb I sanctified thee"; or in Romans ix, v. 11, 13, after telling that Jacob and Esau being not yet born, "Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated"; or the ideas of the people that "Elias was yet to first come"; or that some of the prophets were there in Jesus or John; or when Jesus asked the disciples "Whom do men think that

I am?" There cannot be the slightest doubt, then, that among the Jews for ages and down to the time of Jesus the ideas above outlined prevailed universally. Let us now come to the New Testament.

St. Matthew relates in the eleventh chapter the talk of Jesus on the subject of John, who is declared by him to be the greatest of all, ending in the 14th verse thus:

And if ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come.

Here he took the doctrine for granted, and the "if" referred not to any possible doubts on that but simply as to whether they would accept his designation of John as Elias. In the 17th chapter he once more takes up the subject thus:

10. And his disciples asked him saying, Why, then, say the scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them; Elias truly shall first come and restore all things. But I say unto you that Elias is come already, and they knew him not but have done to him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of Man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

The statement is repeated in Mark, chapter ix, v. 13, omitting the name of John. It is nowhere denied. It is not among any of the cases in which the different Gospels contradict each other; it is in no way doubtful. It is not only a reference to the doctrine of reincarnation, but is also a clear enunciation of it. It goes much further than the case of the man who was born blind, when Jesus heard the doctrine referred to but did not deny it nor condemn it in any way, merely saying that the cause in that case was not for sin formerly committed, but for some extraordinary purpose, such as the case of the supposed dead man when he said that the

man was not dead but was to be used to show his power over disease. In the latter one he perceived there was one so far gone to death that no ordinary person could cure him, and in the blind man's case the incident was like it. If he thought the doctrine pernicious, as it must be if untrue, he would have condemned it at the first coming up, but not only did he fail to do so, he distinctly himself brought it up in the case of John, and again when asking what were the popular notions as to himself under the prevailing doctrines as above shown. Matthew xvi, v. 13, will do as an example, as the different writers do not disagree, thus:

When Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea Phillipi he asked his disciples, Who do men say that I am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremias or one of the prophets.

This was a deliberate bringing-up of the old doctrine, to which the disciples replied, as all Jews would, without any dispute of the matter of reincarnation; and the reply of Jesus was not a confutation of the notion, but a distinguishing of himself, from the common lot of sages and prophets by showing himself to be an incarnation of God and not a reincarnation of any saint or sage. He did not bring it up to dispute and condemn as he would and did do in other matters; but to the very contrary he evidently referred to it so as to use it for showing himself as an incarnate God. And following his example the disciples never disputed on that; they were all aware of it; St. Paul must have held it when speaking of Esau and Jacob; St. John could have meant nothing but that in Revelations, chap, iii, v. 12.

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and *he shall go no more out.*

Evidently he had gone out before or the words "no more" could have no place or meaning. It was the old idea of the exile of the

soul and the need for it to be purified by long wandering before it could be admitted as a "pillar in the temple of God". And until the ignorant ambitious monks after the death of Origen had gotten hold of Christianity, the doctrine must have ennobled the new movement. Later the council of Constantinople condemned all such notions directly in the face of the very words of Jesus, so that at last it ceased to vibrate as one of the chords, until finally the prophecy of Jesus that he came to bring a sword and division and not peace was fulfilled by the warring nations of Christian lands who profess him in words but by their acts constantly deny him whom they call "the meek and lowly".

The Path

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE UPANISHADS: III — C. J.

III

The third part of the Katha Upanishad continues the teaching of Death to Nachiketas, which has already been followed through the first two parts:

– Those who know the Eternal, the five fires, and the triple flame tell of the shadow and the light entering the cave through the long age, and drinking the reward of good deeds in the world.

No better sentence for illustrating the symbolism of the Upanishads could be chosen. The first words hardly need an explanation. They need, rather, realization in the inmost recesses of the heart. But who are the knowers or practicers of the five fires? These words allude to an ancient penance, when the ascetic stood bare-headed between four fires, in the blazing heat of the Indian sun. But this penance in itself is symbolical. The five fires are the five senses, or the five powers of sensation, which make up the phenomenal, illusory world; and it is the heat of these five fires of delusion which the true ascetic must learn to withstand. The knower of the triple flame is he who knows the Higher Self, the triple Atma, or the triad Atma, Buddhi, and Higher Manas; that is, Spirit, Soul, and pure reason. What, then, are the shadow and the light that these three tell the knower of the eternal, he who withstands the five fires of sense, and he who knows the triple flame of the Higher Self? We may discern the meaning by the words which follow. The shadow and the light enter the cave, or the hidden world, and enjoy for a long age the fruit of good deeds done in the world. The shadow and the light are, therefore, the Spirit, and its vehicle the soul, which, entering into the hidden

world of Devachan after death, reap the good Karma of the past life.

[Death continues:]

– Let us teach to Nachiketas what is the bridge of sacrificers, the unperishing Eternal, and the fearless shore of those who seek, to pass over.

The bridge by which the sacrificers of self pass over to the shore where there is no fear, the resting-place of the unperishing Eternal, is the link between the Higher and the lower self; it is the latent power of the lower self to rise to the Higher Self, and thus to cross over from the outer world which is its field of life to the inner world of the Higher Self.

– Know that the Self (Atma.) is the lord of the chariot; that the body (Sharira) is the chariot; know that soul (Buddhi) is the charioteer; and that mind (Manas) is the rein.

They say that the organs (or impulses) are the horses; and the external world of objects is their road. As the self is yoked to mind and the impulses, the wise say the Self is the enjoyer. But he who is unwise, with mind not bound to the Self (that is, with lower Manas preponderant), his impulses are ungoverned, like the charioteer's unruly horses. But he who is wise, with mind ever bound to the Self (with higher Manas preponderant), his impulses are controlled like the charioteer's good horses.

In this simile of the chariot, Buddhi governs kama through Manas, under the inspiration of Atma. The reins are well in hand, the horses are controlled, when Manas is recipient of the light of Atma, through the mediation of Buddhi; when the lower aspires to the Higher Self. It will be remembered that in the *Bhagavad-Gita* Krishna is the charioteer or Buddhi.

– But who is unwise, unmindful, and ever impure, obtains not that resting-place and goal); but falls back into the world of birth and death.

But he who is wise, mindful, and ever pure, he indeed reaches a resting-place from which he is not born again.

He who has wisdom for his charioteer, keeping mind well in hand, reaches the end of the path, the supreme resting-place of the evolving power.

The impulses are higher than the senses; mind (Manas) is higher than the impulses; soul (Buddhi) is higher than mind; and the Great Self (Mahamatma) is higher than Buddhi. Higher than this Great is the Unmanifested. Higher than the Unmanifested is the Logos (Purushas). Than the Logos, none is higher; that is the prop, the Supreme Way.

The "unwise, unmindful" is again he whose lower mind (Manas) is not dominated by the Higher. For only with this domination and preponderance of the higher mind over the lower, by which the center of life passes from the lower mind dominated by desire (kama-manas) to the higher mind dominated by Spirit Soul (Atma-Buddhi-Manas) is the final goal reached; for the center of life thus leaves a temporary and unstable dwelling for one that is eternal and fixed; and thus the end of the path is reached, the supreme seat of the power which evolves the worlds.

– The hidden Self does not shine forth in all beings; but is seen by the keen and subtle soul of subtle seers.

Let the wise man restrain voice (creative power) and mind; let him restrain them by the Self which is wisdom. Let him restrain this wisdom by the Self which is great; and this let him restrain in the Self which is peace.

This is the secret of the triple Self, the three-fold Atma; its three sides are Wisdom, Power, and Peace. These correspond to the three sides of the Self, Sat, Chit, Ananda, or Being, Consciousness, and Bliss, in the classification of the later Vedantins.

Then, having taught the final secret, the bridge across to the Great Beyond, and the way to cross over, and the nature of the Self that dwells on the other side, Death bids Nachiketas:

– "Awake, arise! Having obtained thy wishes, understand them. The wise say the path is hard to traverse, like the keen edge of a razor". Then, having won the soundless, touchless, formless, unfading, the everlasting, that has neither taste nor smell, the beginningless, endless Eternal, that is beyond the Great, he is released from the mouth of Death.

And the Initiation is ended; the lesson of death is learned. The Upanishad concludes:

– This is the immemorial teaching declared by Death to Nachiketas. Declaring and hearing it, the wise grows great in the world of the Eternal. He who causes this supreme secret to be heard in the assembly of those who seek the Eternal, or at the time of the union with those who have gone forth builds for everlastingness; he builds for everlastingness.

A last word as to the meaning of this "union with those who have gone forth". The Sanskrit word used is Shraddha, the yearly sacrifice to the spirits of ancestors in the ascending line; when the sacrificer is united in spirit to his forefathers in the other world. But the inner meaning is that union with spiritual ancestors in the ascending Guru parampara chain which is described in the last chapter of the "Idyll of the White Lotus". This union with the

spirit of the Great Ones who have gone before is the Great Initiation, the theme of the "immemorial teaching of Death".

The Path

A NOTE ON REINCARNATION — *Albert E. S. Smythe*

It is possible that since in our Western thought there is a good deal of hesitation about accepting the idea of reincarnation, involving, as it does usually, the belief in a previous objective state of existence of which no direct evidence can be offered and no memory remains, much might be done towards making the way plain by more constantly insisting on the simple fact of incarnation. Once people begin to think of themselves as dual entities, part physical and part non-physical, and of the non-physical being incarnated in the flesh in the ordinary course of Nature's providence, the further idea of a repetition of the process will easily creep into acceptance. Christians cannot reject incarnation in respect of Jesus of Nazareth. By-and-bye they will apply it to themselves. Belief in reincarnation will follow naturally. Let us teach that we are descended from the right hand of the Father, and that our destiny lies upward again towards that everlasting seat.

I have not met in my Theosophical reading any treatment of one aspect of reincarnation which has impressed me in considering the objection of failure of memory of past lives. While not a linguist I have devoted some attention to languages, and have been interested in many curious facts concerning idioms, and in the complete representation of ideas obtained in translating from one language to another. In the first place take the Irse, or Irish Keltic. The idiom requires that in giving expression to sensations such as hunger, thirst, fear, happiness, etc., the verb is used with prepositional pronouns. "I fear" would in Irish be literally expressed as "Fear is on me;" "I am hungry" as "Hunger is on me"; "I wish it" as "It is a wish with me". In the other case, take the salutations of various nations. We ask "How do you do?" or

"Howdy?" according to our academic or provincial training. The Frenchman enquires "How do you carry yourself?" The German wonders "How goes it?", and the Chinese "Have you eaten rice?" All these indicate the same underlying idea, but a different method in each case of conceiving and expressing it.

I do not purpose discussing the question of the possibility of conceiving an idea without giving it formal expression, but it is undeniable that the average man cannot think without words; he cannot have ideas until he has the means of expressing them. This is admitted by those who declare the English language deficient in terms fit to convey the force of the metaphysical conceptions found in the Sanskrit. Interesting light is also thrown on the subject in connection with the training of blind deaf-mutes, to whom a form or vehicle of expression is indispensable before reason manifests itself. The brain must be taught or trained to recognize certain symbols, either of form or of sound, before it can become a medium for the conveyance or expression of ideas.

But most of us speak only one language, and that English. We cannot understand a person speaking in a strange tongue, however clearly he conceives his idea in his own mind. The unfamiliar sounds convey nothing to the brain. Could one's brain respond directly to another's brain vibration, mere language would be unnecessary. It is probable that the idea would be transmitted directly without the circumlocution of mouth and ear. This appears to be indicated by what is called thought-transference, varied in Mr. W. T. Stead's experience of automatic writing.

Confined, then, as we are to one language for the recognition of ideas, and that a language scarcely four hundred years old, doubtfully intelligible even in Chaucer, it seems unreasonable to suppose that we could recognize the ideas we formed in the

language of another birth until at least we were familiar with the language we actually used in that previous existence, or until such a cultivation of the brain had been successfully undertaken as would permit the direct reception of thought impressions from the astral matrix. Neither can it be denied that this is the case, since we all have ideas "occurring" to us, as we say, for which we cannot account, and which have no apparent origin in our immediate surroundings. May they not be a direct survival from other lives in which they had been promulgated in the speech of the nation and period to which we then belonged? This we could not deny or affirm in the absence of familiarity with the forgotten language. It would be of interest to make enquiry among linguists, especially among those versed in the dead languages of all ages, as to whether any of these old tongues presented readier channels of thought than others, or than the present mother-tongue.

It is evident that the most important point is the necessity of clearly conceiving ideas in themselves, rather than their aspects presented by idiom, or by the varying expression of different languages and thinkers. This of course involves the practice of concentration and the development and control of imagination, the creative faculty on the mental plane.

The Path

THE FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS OF BRAHMANISM IN CHRISTIANITY

— *S. T. Krishnamacharya*

Moksha Shastra, or the Science of Emancipation or Salvation, is divided into three kinds; namely, Karma Yoga, Gnana Yoga, and Bhakti Yoga. This three-fold division is found in the Buddhistic writings. It is not unknown to the New Testament writers. We read in I *Corinthians*, chapter xii, 8: "To some is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit".

2. To all of these systems the observance of the moral and ceremonial laws is necessary. The Ten Laws are called by the Brahmins the Dasa Dharma; they are called by the Buddhists the Dasa Sila; by the Christians they are called the Ten Commandments.

3. According to the Brahmins the cause of Samsara or the misery of rebirth is Avidya or Ignorance. The Buddhists believe in the same doctrine. In Christianity we find a similar notion. We read in *Ephesians*, "We are alienated from God through ignorance and vanity of our minds".

4. To dispel ignorance the Brahmins and the Christians agree that we must renounce selfishness and the love of worldly objects.

5. The cause of misery, according to the Brahmins, is Avidya, which is defined in the Yoga Philosophy as the mistaking of non-eternal, impure, and painful things for eternal, pure, and pleasurable things. It is the mistaking the carnal for the spiritual, or the loving of the worldly objects instead of the soul. An allusion to this doctrine of the Yoga Philosophy is found in the New Testament. In *Colossians*, chap, ii, we read, "Why as though living

in the world are ye subject to the ordinances? Touch not, taste not, handle not; which are all to perish with the using, after the commandments and doctrines of men; which things have, indeed, a show of wisdom in humility and neglecting the body". In Romans we read that the cause of sin is the *phronema sarkos*, or the lust of the flesh. We are told that the carnal mind is in enmity against God and cannot please God. The Greek phrase *phronema sarkos* is in Sanskrit *sarirabhimana*.

6. The universal laws of Causation and Evolution, which play a very important part in the writings of the Brahmans and Buddhists, are not opposed to the doctrines of Christianity.

7. The word which Sanskrit and Pali writers use to express Rebirth by Karma is *punarganmo*. In the New Testament we find the word *paliggenesia* is used to express Regeneration. As the word *paliggenesia* (Regeneration) is a derivative of the Sanskrit word *punarganma*, we may presume that the New Testament writers used the Greek word *paliggenesia* (regeneration) to express the doctrine of Rebirth by Karma.

8. Brahmans and the Buddhists are all opposed to a belief in blind faith or simple dogmas. We read in the New Testament, "Prove all things and hold fast to that which is good".

9. Bhakti Yoga or the doctrine of Sanctification by Faith plays a very important part in the Sacred Books of the Brahmans and the Buddhists. In the New Testament *pistis* (Faith), which is a derivation of Bhakti, plays the same important part.

10. The definition of Yoga according to the Yoga philosophy is the suppression or stopping of the constant changes of the mental states. In the New Testament we are told that the Soul finds rest when it is in a blissful state. Christ says "Take up my yoke and you will find rest". This is simply a translation of the second Sutra of

the Yoga philosophy.

11. The doctrines of the Sermon on the Mount are beautifully summed up in the Yoga philosophy. According to it the surest way to attain enlightenment is:

1. To love happiness.
2. To pity the miserable.
3. To take pleasure in the practice of virtue.
4. To disregard vice.

12. The following two stanzas, which have been taken and translated by the Buddhists and Christians, beautifully express the truths of Brahminism.

1. To abstain from evil, and to be constantly virtuous; to do good and to lead an excellent life; this is in fact the surest way to obtain emancipation.
2. Let no one do to another that which he will not like to be done unto himself. This, in short, is the duty or virtue which is binding upon all, though one may practice other things or not.

13. India was not an unknown land to the early Christians. There was some sort of commerce between Palestine and India. According to Eusebius and other early Christian Church historians, there were Christian churches in India, founded by St. Bartholomew and St. Thomas at Calimine. The word Calimine may be derived either from Chola Mane or Kairanini or Triplicane near Madras. The Syrian Christians of India call their Saint Marthoma. The word Christ may be derived from either of the two Sanskrit words, Chrishna or Sreshta. In the New Testament the word Chrestos is translated "easy", as in the phrase

"my yoke is easy". As every one knows, there is a good deal of resemblance between the lives of Krishna and Christ.

14. In the New Testament the word Gospel does not always mean the life of Christ. When used by Christ himself the word must mean something other than his own life. The Greek word which is translated Gospel is *euaggelion* and literally means a good message. It exactly corresponds to the Sanskrit word *agama* used in the Yoga philosophy in a similar sense. The Sanskrit word used in the Yoga philosophy to express "universal" is *savanabhumna* or that which belongs to all countries or kingdoms. Therefore the Gospel of the Kingdom which Christ preached is the Universal Moral Laws. Again, the phrase "Gospel of the Kingdom" exactly corresponds to the Sanskrit phrase "Raja Vidya" used in the Bhagavad-Gita. Again, the Greek word which is translated angel is *aggelos*. This word exactly corresponds to the Sanskrit word *Sma Agatos* or *Sugatas* or *Tathagatas* or *Mahatmas* or those who bring good news. It is thus clear that while Buddha reached the Four Noble Truths or Chatur Vyahas, Christ preached the Gospel of the Kingdom, or the Universal Moral Laws or Yamas.

The Path

REINCARNATION OF ANIMALS — *William Brehon*

Very little has been said on the question whether or not the theory of Reincarnation applies to animals in the same way as to man. Doubtless if Brahman members well acquainted with Sanskrit works on the general subject were to publish their views, we should at least have a large mass of material for thought and find many clues to the matter in the Hindu theories and allegories. Even Hindu folk-lore would suggest much. Under all popular "superstitions" a large element of truth can be found hidden away when the vulgar notion is examined in the light of the Wisdom-Religion. A good instance of this on the material plane is to be found in the new treatment proposed for small-pox. The old superstition was that all patients with that disease must be treated and kept in darkness. But the practise was given up by modern doctors. Recently, however, some one had the usual "flash" and decided that perhaps the chemical rays of the sun had something to do with the matter, and began to try red glass for all windows where small-pox patients were. Success was reported, the theory being that the disease was one where the chemical rays injured the skin and health just as they do in ordinary sunburn. Here we see, if the new plan be found right, that an old superstition was based on a law of nature. In the same way the folk-lore of such an ancient people as the Hindu deserves scrutiny with the object of discovering the buried truth. If they are possessed of such notions regarding the fate of animals, careful analysis might give valuable suggestion.

Looking at the question in the light of Theosophical theories, we see that a wide distinction exists between man and animals. Man reincarnates as man because he has got to the top of the present scale of evolution. He cannot go back, for Manas is too much

developed. He has a *Devachan* because he is a conscious thinker. Animals cannot have *Manas* so much developed, and so cannot be self-conscious in the sense that man is. Besides all this, the animal kingdom, being lower, has the impulse still to rise to higher forms. But here we have the distinct statement by the Adepts through H.P. B. that while possibly animals may rise higher in their own kingdom they cannot in this evolution rise to the human stage, as we have reached the middle or turning-point in the fourth round. On this point H. P. B. has, in the second volume of the *Secret Doctrine* (first ed.) at p. 196, a foot note as follows:

In calling the animal "soulless" it is not depriving the beast, from the humblest to the highest species, of a "soul", but only of a conscious surviving Ego-soul, i.e., that principle which survives after a man and reincarnates in a like man.

The animal has an astral body that survives the physical form for a short period; but its (animal) Monad does not reincarnate in the same, but in a higher species, and has no "Devachan" of course. It has the *seeds* of all the human principles in itself; but they are latent.

Here the distinction above adverted to is made. It is due to the Ego-Soul, that is, to *Manas* with *Buddhi* and *Atma*. Those principles being latent in the animal, and the door to the human kingdom being closed, they may rise to higher species but not to the man stage. Of course also it is not meant that no dog or other animal ever reincarnates as dog, but that the monad has tendency to rise to a higher species, whatever that be, whenever it has passed beyond the necessity for further experience as "dog". Under the position the author assumes it would be natural to suppose that the astral form of the animal did not last long, as she says, and hence that astral appearances or apparitions of animals were not common. Such is the fact. I have heard of a few,

but very few, cases where a favorite animal made an apparitional appearance after death, but even the prolific field of spiritualism has not many instances of the kind, And those who have learned about the astral world know that human beings assume in that world the form of animal or other things which they in character most resemble, and that this sort of apparition is not confined to the dead but is more common among the living. It is by such signs that clairvoyants know the very life and thought of the person before them. It was under the operation of this law that Swedenborg saw so many curious things in his time.

The objection based on the immense number of animals both alive and dead as calling for a supply of monads in that stage can be met in this way. While it is stated that no more animal monads can enter on the man-stage, it is not said nor inferred that the incoming supply of monads for the animal kingdom has stopped. They may still be coming in from other worlds for evolution among the animals of this globe. There is nothing impossible in it, and it will supply the answer to the question, Where do the new animal monads come from, supposing that all the present ones have exhausted the whole number of higher species possible here? It is quite possible also that the animal monads may be carried on to other members of the earth-chain in advance of man for the purpose of necessary development, and this would lessen the number of their appearances here. For what keeps man here so long is that the power of his thought is so great as to make a *Devachan* for all lasting some fifteen centuries — with exceptions — and for a number who desire "heaven" a *Devachan* of enormous length. The animals, however, being devoid of developed *Manas*, have no *Devachan* and must be forced onwards to the next planet in the chain. This would be consistent and useful, as it gives them a chance for development in readiness for the time when the monads of that kingdom shall begin to rise to a

new human kingdom. They will have lost nothing, but, on the contrary, will be the gainers.

The Path

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM WITH H.P.B. — *William Q. Judge*

In 1875, '76, '77, and '78 my intimacy with H.H.B. gave me many opportunities for conversing with her on what we then called "Magic". These useful, and for me very wonderful, occasions came about late at night, and sometimes during the day. I was then in the habit of calling on her in the day-time whenever I could get away from my office. Many times I stayed in her flat for the purpose of hearing as much and seeing as much as I could. Later on, in 1884, I spent many weeks with her in the Rue Notre Dame des Champs in Paris, sitting beside her day after day and evening after evening; later still, in 1888, being with her in London, at Holland Park, I had a few more opportunities. Some of what she said I publish here for the good of those who can benefit by her words. Certainly no greater practical occultist is known to this century: from that point of view what she said will have a certain useful weight with some.

ON DEVACHAN

This term was not in use at this time. The conversation was about steps on the Path and returning here again. In answer to a question:

"Yes, you have been here and at this before. You were born with this tendency, and in other lives have met these persons [supposed Adept influences], and they are here to see you for that reason."

Later, when definite terms had come into use, the question raised was whether or not all stayed 1500 years in Devachan.

"Well, Judge, you must know well that under the philosophy we

don't all stay there so long. It varies with the character of each. A thoroughly material thinker will emerge sooner than one who is a spiritual philosopher and good. Besides, recollect that all workers for the Lodge, no matter of what degree, are helped out of Devachan if they themselves permit it. Your own idea which you have stated, that 1500 years had not elapsed since you went into Devachan, is correct, and that I tell is what Master himself tells me. So there you are."

PRECIPITATIONS BY MASTERS

In reply to a question on this she said:

"If you think Master is going to be always precipitating things, you mistake. Yes, He can do it. But most of the precipitations are by chelas who would seem to you almost Masters. I see His orders, and the thoughts and words He wishes used, and I precipitate them in that form; so does * * * and one or two more."

"Well, what of Their handwritings?"

"Anything you write is your handwriting, but it is not your personal handwriting, generally used and first learned if you assume or adopt some form. Now you know that Masters' handwritings, peculiar and personal to Themselves, are foreign both as to sound and form — Indian sorts, in fact. So They adopted a form in English, and in that form I precipitate Their messages at Their direction. Why Balmost caught me one day and nearly made a mess of it by shocking me. The message has to be seen in the astral light in *facsimile*, and through that astral matrix I precipitate the whole of it. It's different, though, if Master sends me the paper and the message already done. That's why I call these things 'psychological tricks'. The sign of an objective wonder seemed to be required, although a moment's thought will show it is not proof of anything but occult ability. Many a medium has

had precipitations before my miserable self was heard of. But blessed is the one who wants no sign. You have seen plenty of these things. Why do you want to ask me? Can't you use your brain and intuition? I've sampled almost the whole possible range of wonders for you. Let them use their brains and intuition with the known facts and the theories given."

IF WHITE MAGICIANS ACT, WHAT THEN?

"Look here; here's a man who wants to know why the Masters don't interpose at once and save his business. They don't seem to remember what it means for a Master to use occult force. If you explode gunpowder to split a rock you may knock down a house. There is a law that if a White Magician uses his occult power an equal amount of power may be used by the Black one. Chemists invent powders for explosives and wicked men may use them. You force yourself into Master's presence and you take the consequences of the immense forces around him playing on yourself. If you are weak in character anywhere, the Black ones will use the disturbance by directing the forces engendered to that spot and may compass your ruin. It is so always. Pass the boundary that hedges in the occult realm, and quick forces, new ones, dreadful ones, must be met. Then if you are not strong you may become a wreck for that life. This is the danger. This is one reason why Masters do not appear and do not act directly very often, but nearly always by intermediate degrees. What do you say, — 'the dual forces in nature'? Precisely, that's just it; and Theosophists should remember it."

DO MASTERS PUNISH

"Now I'm not going to tell you all about this. They are just; They embody the Law and Compassion. Do not for an instant imagine that Masters are going to come down on you for your failures and wrongs, if any. Karma looks out for this. Masters' ethics are the

highest. From the standpoint of your question They do not punish. Have I not told you that, much as detractors have cast mud at Them, never will the Masters impose punishment. I cannot see why such a question comes up. Karma will do all the punishing that is necessary."

ABOUT ELEMENTALS

"It's a long time ago now that I told you this part would not be explained. But I can tell you some things. This one that you and Olcott used to call * * * can't see you unless I let him. Now I will impress you upon it or him so that like a photograph he will remember so far. But you can't make it obey you until you know how to get the force directed. I'll send him to you and let him make a bell."

[In a few days after this the proposed sign was given at a distance from her, and a little bell was sounded in the air when I was talking with a person not interested in Theosophy, and when I was three miles away from H. P. B. On next seeing her she asked if * * * had been over and sounded the bell, mentioning the exact day and time.]

"This one has no form in particular, but is more like a revolving mass of air. But it is, all the same, quite definite, as you know from what he has done. There are some classes with forms of their own. The general division into fiery, airy, earthy, and watery is pretty correct, but it will not cover all the classes. There is not a single thing going on about us, no matter what, that elementals are not concerned in, because they constitute a necessary part of nature, just as important as the nerve currents in your body. Why in storms you should see them how they move about. Don't you remember what you told me about that lady * * * who saw them change and move about at that opera? It was due to her tendencies and the general idea underlying the opera." [It

was the opera of Tristan and Isolde, by Wagner. — J.] "In that case, as Isolde is Irish, the whole idea under it aroused a class of elementals peculiar to that island and its traditions. That's a queer place, Judge, that Ireland. It is packed full of a singular class of elementals; and, by Jove! I see they even have emigrated in quite large numbers. Sometimes one quite by accident rouses up some ancient system, say from Egypt; that is the explanation of that singular astral noise which you said reminded you of a sistrum being shaken; it was really objective. But, my dear fellow, do you think I will give you a patent elemental extractor? — not yet. Bulwer Lytton wrote very wisely, for him, on this subject".

[Riding over in Central Park, New York.] "It is very interesting here. I see a great number of Indians, and also their elementals, just as real as you seem to be. They do not see us; they are all spooks. But look here, Judge, don't confound the magnetism escaping through your skin with the gentle taps of supposed elementals who want a cigarette."

[In W. 34th street, New York. The first time she spoke to me of elementals particularly, I having asked her about Spiritualism. — J.]

"It is nearly all done by elementals. Now I can make them tap anywhere you like in this room. Select any place you wish." [I pointed to a hard plaster wall-space free from objects.] "Now ask what you like that can be answered by taps."

Q. What is my age? *Taps*: the correct number.

Q. How many in my house? *Taps*: right.

Q. How many months have I been in the city? *Taps*: correct.

Q. What number of minutes past the hour by my watch? *Taps*: right.

Q. How many keys on my ring? *Taps*: correct.

H. P. B. "Oh bosh! Let it stop. You won't get anymore, for I have cut it off. Try your best. They have no sense; they got it all out of your own head, even the keys, for you know inside how many keys are on the ring, though you don't remember; but anyhow I could see into your pocket and count the number, and then that tapper would give the right reply. There's something better than all that magic nonsense."

SHE PRECIPITATES IN LONDON

In 1888 I was in London and wanted a paper, with about four sentences written on it in purple ink, which I had left in America. I came down to her room where B. Keightley was, and, not saying anything, sat down opposite H. P. B. I thought: "If only she would get me back someway a copy of that paper." She smiled at me, rose, went into her room, came out at once, and in a moment handed me a piece of paper, passing it right in front of Keightley. To my amazement it was a duplicate of my paper, a *facsimile*. I then asked her how she got it, and she replied: "I saw it in your head and the rest was easy. You thought it very clearly. You know it can be done; and it was needed." This was all done in about the time it takes to read these descriptive sentences.

The Path

THE FIRE-SELF (1) — *Jasper Niemand*

I hung from the horns of the moon and the name of the Fire-Self was whispered to me.

(The Fire-Self, the Sage, the Instructor, (2) whose awakener is the memory of man.)

The name of the Fire-Self was whispered from afar; I dropped from the moon (3) the better to hear; dropped, though the moon grew big with desire to detain me. (4)

Into the darkness I fell; (5) icy the rushing breath that bore me to the mouth of the cavern deep and small, the abode whence the Fire-Self springs." (6)

(Forth leaps the Fire-Glory, (7) the one, devouring the man who awaits It.)

That Self came not forth: by many a name I called It.

Called till the echoes were silent, (8) replete with sound and the rejection thereof.

Not a god whose name could conjure it up, the Fire-Self, whispered by the memory of Man.

Memory, when I questioned, upbraided me, saying:

"Is not Fire the devourer of all; of men, gods, powers, even of the worlds in space:

"How has It dealt with the moon, the mother-world from which we fell:

"Has not her light paled before It; how then callest thou upon It by a name:

"Are we not one, I, thou, and It: namest thou *That-Which-Is* by a sound?

"I alone am its forerunner. I, Thought, in the stillness reflect It. Hold forth to Itself Its own image, thyself; abandoner of gods and of names."

(So hotly burned memory within me; memory, the servant of the flaming one.)

"Come", I cried; "Come forth, *Myself*; I alone can receive and maintain Thee".

Thought blazed up as a sudden torch, blazed long, discovering the darkness.

Thrice at the mouth of the cave I called; the third time that Self sprang upon me.

The Fire-Self blazed throughout my being: the man lay in dust and ashes.

In vain the moon poured her chill rays upon his body; the Fire-Self licked them up as it ran: a new man leaped from the scintillant river.

A man without form, without name; a fiery spark in the blazing ocean. In effulgent brightness They walked the skies together. They looked upon the Unutterable.

Said the Flame to the spark: "Let us forth into the Beyond". They knew the omnipotent Darkness; together They became one with That. Together they issued forth from That; the Fire and the Spark as one Self, calmed and quenched with Knowledge.

At the mouth of the cave They parted. (They who can never be dissevered. They who can never be dissociated. Rulers in two worlds are They, each in his own, linked by a tense and living

cord of Thought, the cord silvered (9) by the conquered moon, the gift giver.)

"Ere They parted, the Fire restored to the man-spark his form: man returned to the Fire-Self a part of Its Knowledge.

"Give me", I cried, "Thy chief secret at parting; let it go with me into the land without substance, where form is the only wisdom".

It fled, but I fled after; I laid my soul against Its fiery vesture.

"Unto me be it given to know Thee as Thou art. Give me Thy name that I may call Thee again; in Thee is my only real Life; a god (10) am I, now I know It".

The Fire-Self upreared, a gigantic pillar: the Devourer of worlds rose before me. (11) The Flame found a voice that was soundless, (12) mightier than the uproar of waters.

"If thou wouldst be Self of Myself, answer me this," said that voice.

"When is the Fire-Self greater than great? Speak aright and abide with Me forever."

"It is greatest when It leads Its sparks forth into the Silence and becomes the One Wisdom", I answered.

The Fire-Self receded, thrusting me forth as spent lava is spued from the volcano.

"Greatest am I" — spake the Glory, remonstrant, "when Man, the spark struck from myself, spends my Wisdom in the service of his fellows".

"Better is it", said the Fire-Self, "to give the heart knowledge to the hungry and the thirsty, than to over-run with Me the azure fields of Light. "When thou ridest thus, man art thou no more: That thou

art from Which the heart of man set forth.

"But when thou bringest back the Memory thereof, when thou spendest that Life for thy fellows, That thou art to which I shall return; thou art thyself the goal called 'Great Compassion': to reach that goal I spend myself upon the worlds in space. Great is Wisdom, but greater is the use thereof. Be thou my outrunner; attain that Consciousness and the use thereof for Me. Call upon me then and I obey thee: My doors open only when the heart of man beats against them, calling in the name of its fellow man".

FOOTNOTES:

1. See *Voice of the Silence*, page 76, notes 23-24. ([return to text](#))
2. Sometimes called "the *Presence*" by occultists. "For when the *Presence* is upon him, he knows more than others suspect or divine." — (Unpublished Mss. through H.P.B.) ([return to text](#))
3. ". . . destroy thy lunar body . . ." — (*Voice of the Silence*, p. 11.) ([return to text](#))
4. "Desire nothing". — (*Voice of the Silence*, pp. 13-14.) ([return to text](#))
5. ". . . the twilight that precedes the valley of true light . . ." — (*Voice*, p. 4). ([return to text](#))
6. See I Kings, ch. 19, v. 11-1; where "the Lord was not in the rushing whirlwind, or in the earthquake or the fire, but was in the still small voice". Compare throughout this article with the *Voice of the Silence*, pp. 1,1, 11, 19, and on the One Master. Also *Upanishads*, ". . . the Ancient within who is difficult to see hidden in the cave . . ." ". . . the Self . . . smaller than small, greater than great, hidden in the *heart* of the creature." "The way lies through the heart". ([return to text](#))

7. Compare *Ezekiel*, chap. 43; v. 2-6. ([return to text](#))

8. *Voice of the Silence*, p. 10. The sounds "die and are heard no more". ([return to text](#))

9. "Or ever the silver cord be loosed or the golden bowl be broken." — *Ecclesiastes*, ch. 12, v. 6. Occultists understand "the *golden bowl*" (the "cup") in an especial sense. The "conquered" astral — a higher body of astral (starry) substance. See also "Soma juice on Mount Meru". ([return to text](#))

10. ". . . before the mystic power can make a god of thee . . ." — (*Voice*, p. 12). ([return to text](#))

11. "The Self of Matter and the SELF of Spirit can never meet". — (*Voice* p. 12.) Hence the worlds of form disappear. ([return to text](#))

12. The Voice of the Silence; the heart consciousness. ([return to text](#))

The Path

UNITED YET INDEPENDENT — *H. T. Edge*

In cooperative work, as in every other problem before students of occultism, there are two extremes to be avoided and one right course to be maintained; two evils opposed to one good; a pair of opposites reconciled by a unity; and in cooperative work, as in other problems, many make the mistake of avoiding the more obviously wrong extreme merely to fall into the other extreme which is less obviously wrong. A body of workers should neither repel one another nor lean on one another. The former maxim is so obvious that no one fails to recognize its truth and to strive to act in accordance with it; but there are many who, in doing so, rush to the opposite pole of weak reliance on others. Workers should cling to the cause, not to each other; for if they cling to each other, the failure of an individual will be disastrous for the whole; while, if each one clings to the cause, each one must be torn away separately ere the whole fabric can be destroyed. The pillars of a temple do not lean up against one another, neither do they counteract each other; each stands firmly on its own base and is independent of the support of the others, yet all unite in the common object of supporting the dome. We must be as the pillars of a temple, helping one another, yet independent and each on his own base. The destruction of one or two does not seriously impair the building, for the others still stand firm.

In unity is strength, and though we must be united in a common object, yet we must not lose the advantage arising from our individual unity. A body of workers all mutually dependent constitutes a single united centre of force; but if, while maintaining their unity of purpose, they retained their independence of individual action, they would be more powerful, for they would constitute a number of separate centres

synthesized by one great centre — a number of unities forming one cardinal unity. When many members of a body are self-reliant, their self-reliance synthesizes itself into a great power and stability, and the total force is much greater than it would be if they all leaned up against one another. It is a law of nature that a number of *logoi* or individualities should constitute collectively a single superior *logos* or individuality. Our Egos, though each acts independently, all emanate from a single central *logos*, of which they are only parts, but whose quality of egoism each reflects. Our bodily organs, though each has a separate function, all unite to form the whole man. They do not thwart each other, nor absorb one another's functions nor combine to do the work of one. We should be like the rays of the sun, which shoot in all directions and yet are but fulfilling the separate details of a single organized plan. It is upon this very diversity of course that depends the successful carrying out of that plan; for were all the rays to shoot in the same direction the sun as a luminary would be a failure. This illustration also serves to show us how two people pursuing opposite courses can yet subserve a common end; for to every ray there is another that shoots in the precisely opposite direction.

Why should we try to persuade our friends over to our own views, or grieve because they differ from us in details? Would we have all workers do the same work, all climbers ascend the same path, all occultists follow the same ray of truth? Light has many hues and the sun has many planets; and though there is a maxim to the effect that those not yet qualified to be suns may remain for the present humble planets, no reason is given why we should all be the same planet. A general, in conducting a campaign, assigns to each division of his army a particular portion of the work he wishes carried out; a master-printer assigns to each operative his due share of the work in hand, one setting the type, another

reading the proofs, and so on. Each subdivision does its own work without interfering with the work of others, and through this simultaneous carrying out of many dissimilar details the whole plan, for which all alike cooperate, is successfully accomplished.

Though most of us recognize this principle in matters of external work, there are many who fail to carry its application into more interior departments of our work; it applies equally well to methods of thought and ways of looking at the questions that affect our moral life. One student may, through the exigencies of his own nature, be impressed most strongly by the value of fiery energy, while another may pin his faith to the principle of "power through repose": if these two should try to convert one another, they would be merely wasting time and labor, and the work of both would be hindered. Each should do what is best for himself, and leave the other to follow what is best for him. We are all necessarily impressed with different aspects of the great problem, and must therefore all work on different tacks, but, while recognizing our own method as the best so far as we ourselves are concerned, we must frankly acknowledge the equal importance (to the general body) of our brother's plan.

Many are the paradoxes that present themselves to the student of occultism, and among them this is not the least important — to work in perfect harmony with our colleagues, and at the same time to work as if upon our own individual effort depended the whole enterprise. To realize this we must be united yet independent.

The Path

THE RED RAJPUTS

Brother Charles Johnston, F.T. S., formerly of the Dublin Lodge in Ireland, is a member of the Royal Academy of Science and retired from the British Civil Service of India. His interest in Indian questions of religion, philosophy, and ethnology is very great, and as his linguistic accomplishments are extensive, his studies in that field are of value. The *Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review* for October, 1893, has an article by him under the above title which Theosophists will do well to read if they can procure it.

Starting with the assertion of De Quatrefages that there are four principal color groups in the human family, of white, yellow, red, and black races, he adds this from the *Mahabharata*:

The color of the Brahmans is white; of the Kshatriyas red, of the Vaish-yas yellow, of the Shudras black.

While Col. Tod has given much of what is called the history of the Rajputs, Johnston shows that although we have been in contact with Rajputana for over a hundred years, there as yet exists no material for an exact study of its ethnology; while the latter as an exact science is very young and was for a long time hampered by the old Mosaic traditions about Shem, Ham, and Japhet. He holds that the Rajputs are red in color, and also makes good argument on the point that in ancient times they as Kshatriyas or warriors were above the Brahmans so far as mystical and spiritual knowledge went. Quoting the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad thus, "This knowledge has never before dwelt in any Brahman", he goes to point out that Krishna, the great King and Sage, was a Kshatriya, while next comes Buddha, admitted by the Hindus to be an Avatar, who was also a Kshatriya, all being held by him to be Rajputs. Krishna traced his doctrine from the Kshatriya Manu

through a line of Rajarshis or Rajanya sages. This is in the *Bhagavad Gita*, where the last personage named in the line is Ikshvaku, of whose race was Buddha. Hence he ascribes the spirit of the Upanishads and of Buddhism to the mystical genius of the Rajanya race. The well-known characteristic of the Brahmans of not having missionaries should be remembered at this point. The reformers they have had have been mostly among themselves, as, for instance, the great Brahman Shankaracharya. If Johnston's argument be right, then it is a very remarkable fact that the Gayatri, or that holy verse which is the "mother of the Vedas", repeated every morning by thousands of Brahmans as they bathe in the Ganges, was composed by a Kshatriya and not by a Brahman. On this we have in the Upanishads these words: "The Brahman sat at the foot of the Kshatriya". This upholds the spiritual dignity of the Rajanyas, who are the Kshatriyas and the Red Rajputs. And, as he shows, to this time the Ranas of Mewar "unite spiritual with royal authority and officiate as high priests in the temple of the guardian deity of their race". We should not forget, either, that it is recorded respecting the proceedings after the death and cremation of the body of Buddha that the Moriyas of Pippalivana, saying that Buddha was of their soldier caste, took away the embers to erect a cairn over them. (1) And the name to be applied to these is *lohita*, or red, which is also the name of the planet Mars, the fighter.

Johnston's ethnological deduction is as follows: "That the Kshatriyas of ancient India are identical in ethnic characteristics with the Rajputs of today". The Red Rajputs are the descendants of the solar race, a race of kings, of mystical men who not only could learn of mystic occultism but could also fight and rule, which is contrary to the regulation for the Brahman.

If we turn now to the *Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, p. 405, there is most interesting and suggestive matter on this head, with names also,

given doubtless with a purpose not divulged. She says:

Two persons, Devapi of the race of Kuru, and Mauru (Mora) of the family of Ikshvaku . . continue alive throughout the Four Ages, residing at Kalapa. They will return hither in the beginning of the Krita Age . . . Mara (Moru), the son of Shigra, through the power of devotion (Yoga) is still living . . . and will be the restorer of the Kshattriya race of the Solar Dynasty.

Max Muller, it is said, translates Moru as Morya, of the Morya dynasty, evidently of the same race or family as those who came and took the embers from the cremation of Buddha. To take the embers, when read under the rules of Indian symbolism, is very much like "taking the essence of spiritual culture after all the rest is burned or purged away". Another valuable article to read in connection with this is the Moryas and Koothoomi in *Five Years of Theosophy*, 483. All students of these extremely interesting points are indebted to Brother Johnston for his paper, all too short as it was.

FOOTNOTE:

1. See *Mahaparinibbana Sutta*, American Oriental Department. No.14. ([return to text](#))

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CHRISTIAN FATHERS ON REINCARNATION — *William Q. Judge*

Our brother George R. S. Mead, the General Secretary of the European Section T. S., has held that whether or not Origen, the greatest of the Fathers, believed in reincarnation, the Christian Church never formally anathematized the doctrine. If this position is sound there will yet be an opportunity for the Roman Church to declare the doctrine by holding that the anathema pronounced was against a species of incarnation or of metempsychosis not very clearly defined except as a preexistence of the soul as opposed to a special creation for each new body. This declaration can only be made by placing the future lives of the soul on some other planet after leaving this one. That would be reincarnation, but not as we understand it.

The issue of *Lucifer* for February has valuable contributions under "Notes and Queries" on this subject, and from that I extract something. Beausobre says:

It is a very ancient and general belief that souls are pure and heavenly substances which exist before their bodies and come down from heaven to clothe and animate them. *
* I only quote it to show that his nation (Jews) believed for a long time back in the preexistence of souls. * * All the most learned Greek fathers held this opinion, and a considerable portion of the Latin fathers followed them herein. * * It has been held by several Christian philosophers. It was received into the Church until the fourth century without being obnoxious to the charge of heresy.

Beausobre, however, calls the belief an "error". It would be interesting to know whether it is not the fact that at about the

fourth century the monks and bishops were ignorant men who would be more likely to take up a narrow dogma necessary for preservation of their power than to hold the broader and grander one of preexistence. Origen died about A. D. 254. He was so great and learned that even in his lifetime other men forged his name to their own writings. But while he was still living uneducated monks were flocking into the ranks of the priesthood. They obtained enough strength to compel Jerome to turn against Origen, although previously holding similar views. It was not learning, then, nor spiritual knowledge that brought about the subsequent condemnation of Origen, but rather bigotry and unspiritual ignorance. Origen distinctly held as a fundamental idea "the original and indestructible unity of God and all spiritual essences". This is precisely the doctrine of the Isovasya Upanishad, which says:

When to a man who understands, the Self has become all things, what sorrow, what trouble can there be to him who once beheld that unity?

Franck's *Kabale* is referred to in these answers as saying that Origen taught transmigration as a necessary doctrine for the explaining of the vicissitudes of life and the inequalities of birth. But the next quotation throws doubt again into the question, closing, however, thus:

When the soul comes into the world it leaves the body which had been necessary to it in the mother's womb, it leaves, I repeat, the body which covered it, and puts on another body fit for the life we lead on earth. * * *But as we do not believe in metempsychosis*, nor that the soul can ever be debased so as to enter into the bodies of brute animals.

There are several ways of looking at this. It may be charged that some one interpolated the italicized words; or that Origen was

referring to transmigrating back to animals; or, lastly, that he and his learned friends had a theory about incarnation and reincarnation not clearly given. My opinion is that he wrote as above simply as to retrograde rebirth, and that he held the very identical doctrine as to reincarnation found in *Isis Unveiled* and which caused it to be charged that H. P. B. did not know or teach reincarnation in 1877. Of course I cannot produce a quotation. But how could such a voluminous writer and deep thinker as Origen hold to the doctrines of unity with God, of the final restoration of all souls to pristine purity, and of preexistence, without also having a reincarnation doctrine? There are many indications and statements that there was an esoteric teaching on these subjects, just as it is evident that Jesus had his private teaching for the select disciples. For that reason Origen might teach preexistence but hold back the other. He says, according to Franck, that the question was not of metempsychosis according to Plato, "but of *an entirely different theory which is of a far more elevated nature*". It might have been this.

The soul, considered as spirit and not animal soul, is pure, of the essence of God, and desirous of immortality through a person; the person may fail and not be united to the soul; another and another person is selected; each one, if a failure in respect to union with the Self, passes into the sum of experience; but finally a personal birth is found wherein all former experiences are united and union gained. From thenceforward there is no more falling back, for immortality through a person has been attained. Prior to this great event the soul existed, and hence the doctrine of preexistence. For all of the personal births the soul was the God the Higher Self of each, the luminous one, the Augoeides; Existing thus from all time, it might be the cause of rebirths but not itself be reincarnated, as it merely overshadowed each birth without being wholly in the flesh. Such a doctrine, extremely mystical and

providing for each a personal God with a great possibility held out through reunion, could well be called by Origen "a different theory" from metempsychosis and "of more elevated character".

When once more the modern Christian Church admits that its founders believed in preexistence and that Jesus did not condemn reincarnation, a long step will have been taken toward uprooting many intolerant and illogical doctrines now held.

The Path

ZOROASTRIANISM — *S. D. Bharucha*

RELIGION OF THE "FIRE WORSHIPERS"

The managers of the Parliament of Religions of the World's Fair requested Mr. Narroji of London, a Parsee who is in Parliament, to advise as to the best means for having the Zoroastrian religion represented there, and they were directed to the Rahnunai Mazdayasnan Society of Bombay, which appointed their lecturer, Mr. Sheriarji D. Bharucha, to prepare an address. This he did, and it may be regarded as authoritative. The Society subsequently published the address, and these extracts are from it. (1)

TIME

There are two expressions as to Time. The first is Time without bounds, or Eternity. The second is Time with a fixed period and therefore restricted to mean a cycle of time. The state of the Universe before the present cycle of time is not treated of in the books. But the end of the world is synchronous with the end of the present cycle when the last of Saoshyants will come. He will regenerate all; the souls in hell will be raised up and all souls will be brought unto bliss, for God's wish cannot be gainsayed. [Hence we see that the old cyclic doctrine is held and that final damnation is not possible. In some Persian books recurrent cycles are mentioned.]

CREATION

Its object is to promote happiness. The doctrine of creating something out of nothing is not held, but it is taught that the material cause of the world was supplied by the efficient cause Himself. At first there was a spiritual series of creatures. [This resembles the system of *Secret Doctrine*. After these came

corporeal creations, the lower coming first, and then man last. In the course of this evolution the Saoshyants, who are saviors and teachers, come among men.

MAN'S CONSTITUTION

Man is a compound of material and spiritual parts, thus:

<i>Tanu</i>	Body
<i>Ushtana</i>	Life
<i>Urvan</i>	Soul (Feminine)
<i>Fravashi</i>	Soul (Masculine)

To soul are ascribed *mind, consciousness*, and the like.

The soul having been furnished with every aid is expected to come out successful in its moral career and get reward. But if it fails no vicarious salvation can be asked, as that is unknown to the religion.

ETHICS

As salvation depends on works, it is a peremptory duty to lead a holy life. The code is: Good word, good thought, good deed. All the very highest virtues are inculcated and described in the same way as in any modern system, and vices are emphatically denounced.

WORSHIP AND RITUAL

Oral recitations of the Sacred Word, sometimes accompanied with ritual, form their worship. Every Parsee generally prays by himself [this is the religion of Jesus], but public worship by all is sometimes performed. Most of the ritual must be performed by the priests. The most necessary ritual is the prayer on untying and retying the sacred thread, called *Kusti*, round the waist on the sacred shirt called *Sudra*. [This thread is extremely like the

Brahminical one]. Between seven and fifteen the child must be invested with *Kusti* and *Sudra*. The *Sudra* is a white linen shirt with a breast-piece in front. *Kusti* is a thread or tape made of seventy-two woolen threads, girded three times round the waist with four knots, two in front and two behind. It is worn day and night. It is made of lamb's wool. The ceremony of investiture is called *Navzot*, *i. e.*, new or first worship, and is performed by one priest in presence of the audience. The materials, colors, knots, and numbers are all symbolical. Laymen cannot take part in the principal ritualistic performances, but can touch some of the accessory implements. [Herein is similarity to Roman Catholic ritual.] Animal sacrifices were once offered, but are not now.

PARSIS NOT FIRE-WORSHIPERS

A fallacious notion that the Zoroastrians worship fire arose from their outward reverence for it as a great natural salutary agent. All their writers modern and ancient repudiate the notion, and Zoroaster enjoined the worship of the Supreme Being alone. Ferdosi says in the *Shahnameh*, a great epic,

Do not say that they were fire-worshippers;
For they were worshipers of God the Holy.

It is extremely probable that Zoroaster found the people worshipping idols, as certain references point to that fact, and reformed them gently by suggesting that they salute as holy the fire, which is the best and highest symbol of the Divine. In the Sun it represents the source of all life on earth, and it would be the part of a wise man to direct people who lived among idolators to such a grand and pure symbol, certainly less open to objection than are the images of Jesus and Mary used in modern times by Christians.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Brief Sketch of the Zoroastrian Religion and Customs, Duftur
Ashkara Press, Bombay. ([return to text](#))

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THE REAL BASIS OF ASTROLOGY — *George E. Wright*

In attempting to arrive at any philosophical explanation of Astrology it will be necessary for us to regard the solar system in several aspects. If, for instance, we were to consider the sun in a purely physical sense, we should find him to be the source of life and heat. He might also be conceived as the parent of the planets that lie within his circle of attraction, inasmuch as they are supposed to have originally sprung from him, according to the commonly-accepted Nebular Hypothesis. But having proceeded thus far, we have come to the end of knowledge regarding the Sun's properties so far as defined by astronomical science. In the same way taking up Saturn, Jupiter, and the other planets, we find that they have no relation with each other except such as is expressed by the general law of attraction. Astronomy is thus seen to be limited in its scope to the physical or the material aspect of the planetary bodies.

ASTROLOGY A HIGHER ASPECT

But is this all? Is there nothing beyond? May we not by careful study and analysis discover some elements existing in the sun and his satellites which are not recognized by materialistic science, and which may throw some light upon the problems of planetary existence? The ancients thought so, and the oldest science known and taught among men was the science of astrology. Just how far they reasoned out the rules governing the movements and influences of the planets we cannot tell. That part of astrology has never been divulged, being probably retained as something occult and pertaining to advanced initiation. What they did transmit was merely a set of empirical rules and statements which were essentially exoteric. Perhaps it was just as

well, as in this Kaliyuga of physical science astrology was bound to be neglected, and sneered at, and denounced in any event, whether its rationale was revealed or kept secret. There has, however, been published one book in recent years wherein are given many hints and suggestions by which any student, if so inclined, might do much towards reconstructing the science of astrology and placing it upon a basis of reason instead, as it is now, of empiricism. I refer, of course, to the *Secret Doctrine*.

MICROCOSMIC ANALOGY

In all speculative inquiries, whether in the field of physics or metaphysics, there is no argument which appeals to reason more forcibly than that of analogy. "As above, so below." This phrase expresses the intimate relation and correlation between microcosm and macrocosm. Do we not recognize the fact that law and order permeate the universe? Students of occultism learn as one of their earliest lessons that Man is ever to be regarded as the microcosm and external Nature the macrocosm, or, in other words, that the same general laws or tendencies governing mankind are also exhibited in the natural world. This analogy being once clearly established, it is comparatively easy to understand that the planets and the Sun, like Man, may have a manifold constitution, and may be regarded in many different aspects. The astronomical view is manifestly the lowest, as it comprises only their physical or material attributes.

PLANETS VARIOUSLY DEVELOPED

Let us take as a starting-point, therefore, the well-known seven principles of Man. These may doubtless be applied to each of the planets. At first sight, this may seem perplexing and difficult to prove, at least in its entirety. Where, it may be asked, is the Atma or the Astral body of Saturn, for instance? This is a question that would be very hard to answer without a key. Fortunately that key

is at hand. It is as follows: that while all of the seven principles are inherent in each planet, they may and probably do have different degrees of development. We know that in the stone and the plant and the animal these seven principles exist, though partly latent. In the animal kingdom, for instance, only the four lower principles have as yet found expression, the others remaining in abeyance or undeveloped. So, with the planets, it may be that only a partial development has as yet been attained in some, while others have reached a higher stage. This supposition is doubtless hypothetical, and of course cannot be proven by any appeal to the five senses; yet analogically it is extremely reasonable and more than probable. If it is so, and if the seven planets possess higher attributes distributed among them in varying degrees, then we can begin to understand, or, at any rate, obtain an inkling of, the real basis of astrology.

ORIGIN OF THE ZODIAC

Reference has been made to the Sun as the parent of his satellites. This is explained by the Nebular Hypothesis. It has been shown by Madame Blavatsky in the *Secret Doctrine* (Vol. 1, page 588) that the Nebular Hypothesis is a theory which only partially accounts for the formation of suns and planets generally. In reality, it only throws back the inquiry as to the origin of the Cosmos one step, leaving still unexplained the origin of matter, out of which nebulae were evolved. However, accepting the Hypothesis in its material aspect as probably true, we see how, in accordance with its provisions, the Sun, in turning upon its axis and at the same time moving forward in space, threw off or left behind at different epochs masses of nebulous matter which themselves revolved in the same direction around the Sun and gradually hardened into worlds. As these planets were stripped off from the Sun's equator, they must necessarily have passed off in the same direction into space, and consequently they have ever since

moved upon the same plane, although at varying distances from the central nebula.

These planets are all revolving at varying rates of speed around the sun. Hence it follows that we upon the earth, in looking at the different planets, would always see them travelling in the same path across our apparent sky. That path, which extends about 8 degrees on each side of the ecliptic, is called the zodiac.

COMPOSITION OF THE SUN

If we proceed to view the different planetary bodies in a higher aspect than the merely astronomical, we shall find that they possess certain characteristics or properties which vary with their varying degrees of development. The Sun, for instance, has from time immemorial been known astrologically as the "giver of life." If this be a true denomination, then we must suppose that all life as it exists upon this, and doubtless upon other globes, is derived from the Sun. Life must come from some source, and certainly we cannot trace its origin anywhere on our earth. Yet the life principle is universally diffused, and may be detected in a greater or less degree of development in every atom of matter whether organic or inorganic. This would have been a bold statement to make in public only a very few years ago, but today it requires no argument, being generally admitted by the scientific world. Certainly the latest investigations of physicists tend to corroborate the ancient astrological theory of the origin of life. It is now conceded that the photosphere of the Sun is not composed of fire, as was so long supposed, but is a magnetic or electric envelop. Nor is it very difficult to believe that the phenomenon called life is a certain phase or differentiation of the same mysterious force which in its lowest physical manifestation is known as electricity. In an article on the "Source of Heat in the Sun" in the *Popular Science Monthly*, Mr. Robert Hunt, F.R.S.,

wrote as follows:

"Arago proposed that this envelop should be called the Photosphere, a name now generally adopted. By the elder Herschel the system of this photosphere was compared to mother-of-pearl. It resembles the ocean on a tranquil summer day, when its surface is slightly crisped by a gentle summer breeze. Mr. Nasmyth has discovered a more remarkable condition than any that had previously been suspected, objects that are peculiarly lens-shaped like willow-leaves, different in size, not arranged in any order, crossing each other in all directions, with an irregular motion among themselves. The size of these objects gives a grand idea of the gigantic scale upon which physical operations are carried out in the Sun. They cannot be less than 1,000 miles in length, and from 200 to 300 miles in breadth. The most probable conjecture which has been offered respecting those leaf or lens-like objects is that the photosphere is an immense ocean of gaseous matter in a state of high incandescence, and that they are perspective projections of the sheets of flame. . . . But regarding Life — Vital Force — as a power far more exalted than either light, heat, or electricity, and, indeed, capable of exerting a controlling power over them all, we are certainly disposed to view with satisfaction that speculation which supposes the photosphere to be the primary seat of vital power, and to regard with a poetic pleasure that hypothesis which refers the solar energies to life."

From the above statement it may be seen how modern science treads upon the heels of ancient wisdom, astrology having always denominated the Sun as "hyleg," the giver of life.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE OTHER PLANETS

In the admission of this hypothesis of life as emanating from the Sun, we have at once stepped beyond and outside of the physical

and material aspect of the great luminary. If all life proceeds from him, then each individual life must also depend upon the common origin, and we are launched upon the sea of astrology. The direct connection between the Sun, 93,000,000 miles distant, upon the health, and consequently to that extent upon the destiny, of every human being, is established. But the influence of other planets upon the inhabitants of earth is less easy of comprehension. Yet even here the law of analogy may hold to some extent. If the Sun has an acknowledged effect upon all of earth's people, the other planets should also possess some influence, even though in a varying degree. Notwithstanding their varying size, it is well known that the power of their attraction is sufficient to cause a considerable variation in the eccentricity of the earth's orbit, and if they possess such influence on the physical plane, why should they not have as much, or even greater, influence upon the astral or psychic plane? Astrology teaches that such is the case, and assigns to each planet a certain kind and degree of such influence. Thus the planet which we familiarly know as Mercury has in all ages and in all nations and in all languages stood as the representative of wisdom. In Sanskrit he was called Buddha, Lord of Wisdom; in Iranian or Chaldaean, Nebo, knowledge; in Egyptian, Thoth or thought. On account of his proximity to the Sun, he was said to receive seven times as much light and life as the earth. In modern exoteric astrology he governs the constructive, the inventive, the intuitive faculty which finds expression in literary or commercial excellence. Originality, at least such originality as can be said to exist, comes from Mercury, the "messenger of the gods".

In Venus is again exemplified the wonderful symbolism of the East. Hindu astrology from the earliest times considered this planet as having two aspects, in one being known as Sukra, the bright, the shining, and in the other and lower aspect as Usanas,

desire. In these names are allegorized the dual and differing influences which Venus exercises upon humanity. In her higher aspect she is the "lesser fortune" of exoteric astrology, shedding a mild and benevolent ray upon the soul of man, inclining him to the gentler affections of family and kindred, and the ties of friendship and social intercourse. She thus lightens up a world otherwise dark, and too often full of sorrow and care. But in her character as Usanas she typifies the lower form of desire, which, carried to excess, leads to so much misery and wrong. This is the true explanation of the influence of Venus. Later astrologers lost the key and confused her significations. Sukra-Usanas became Lucifer-Venus, and the dual name was thought to refer only to her appearance at various seasons in the year as evening and as morning-star. The name Venus was derived directly from Usanas, and Sukra, the shining one, became Lucifer, the bright, the morning-star. And then, last of all, the church took a hand and formulated a theory or, rather, a myth — - whichever you choose to call it — still further degrading the noble conception of the early Aryan star-gazers. She decided that, as the loftier aspects of Venus had disappeared from Latin astrology and only the grosser aspect prevailed, Lucifer should be considered as a fallen angel, as a basis for the myth of Satan, in fact; and that idea has descended to the present day among even the orthodox Protestants, who are not generally aware of its Romanist origin.

In the name of Jupiter is found an argument for the Hindu claim to the invention of astrology. The Latin word "Jupiter" is borrowed from Greek mythology, where the father of the gods is called "Zeus pater," but this is manifestly a direct copy from the Sanskrit "Dyaus pitar," father of heaven, an epithet of Indra. The word "Zeus" has no meaning, but "Dyaus" in Sanskrit has a very definite interpretation. The root "div" means "to shine", and hence its application to the sky. Our word "day" is directly

evolved from it. In the same way the Aryans, reverencing the sky with all its starry host, came to regard it as "divine", and "dyaus", which originally meant bright and shining, passed into Greek as Zeus, the god of gods. Astrology very appropriately considers Jupiter as governing the religious faculty in Man, and he also indicates judgment and reason. He is the greater benefic, and his influence under favorable directions is always for the highest and most permanent good. The Sun may bring glory, and Mercury may induce fame, but Jupiter confers more lasting and substantial benefits by penetrating the inner nature and stimulating the spiritual growth.

In Saturn we have the antithesis of Jupiter. He is the "greater infortune", and, indeed, to his baleful influence may be traced nearly all of the misfortune with which humanity is afflicted. The name "Saturn" can be traced to Sut or Sut-Typhon, the dragon of Egyptian mythology, the evil spirit, the spirit of darkness, from which Christianity deduced the conception of the devil, even borrowing the very name and calling this personage Satan. Yet Saturn did not originate in Egypt. Like almost every other important mythical idea and metaphysical thought, we can trace this one back to India, where Asita, the evil one, means literally that which is black. To this day in exoteric astrology Saturn always represents a dark person. And even such a simple, everyday word as soot, in English, the black particles of smoke deposited in chimneys, comes from the same ancient source. So, too, Saturn's day has always been the seventh day of the week in all nations and all languages. Among the Egyptians Sut-Typhon was so dreaded that his day was set apart for special prayer and worship, a custom which was subsequently taken up by the Hebrews and continued by them up to the present time.

The etymology of Mars is equally interesting. Of course we are familiar with its Greek form, "Ares", which doubtless came from

the Egyptian Artes. Yet neither of these names has any inherent significance. It is only when we again refer to the Sanskrit that light appears. Here the name appears as Ava, and it means primarily a corner, an angle, hence anything sharp or cutting. This gives us the key to the influence of Mars. He is not peaceful and pleasant, but quarrelsome and sudden. He presides over battles as the Roman god of war, and in sickness he produces violent and sharp attacks such as fevers and apoplexy. All lingering diseases are due to Saturn. Therefore is Mars termed the "lesser infortune." The good aspects of Mars, however, confer advancement in military life, and sometimes even produce marriage, but in the latter case there is seldom any real affection, marriage being suddenly brought about by an influx of mere passion. It is an aphorism in astrology that people born with Mars in Aries on the ascendant always have a scar upon the face. The reason for this is said to be that when Mars comes exactly to the ascendant he causes an accident, and as Aries rules the head, it will take the form of some cut or bruise which will show through life upon the countenance.

Although the earth is not usually considered in exoteric astrology to have any influence, at least upon the lives of its own inhabitants, it may be interesting to know that our planet, like the others, possesses marked characteristics. How gratifying it would be to us if we could only define those characteristics as being of a lofty and noble order. But alas! such is not the case. From the most ancient times the earth has stood for all that is ignoble and material and base and unspiritual. In order not to offend the susceptibilities of people, dwellers upon this globe — "of the earth earthy" — astrology has kindly cast a veil over our weakness, and hidden under the disguise of an assumed name the symbol which designates our planet and its influence. The term "part of fortune" expresses to a limited degree the nature of that influence. It does,

indeed, represent the merely temporal prosperity of the native. It measures, so to speak, the exact size of the pile of dollars or other kinds of money and property which each person is able to accumulate in a lifetime. The existence of the Part of Fortune is disputed by some modern astrologers on the ground that it is purely a figment of the imagination, yet Claudius Ptolemy laid great stress upon it, and as he derived his rules from Egyptian and Chaldaean predecessors, it would seem as though there must be some foundation for it.

HELIOCENTRIC AND GEOCENTRIC ASTROLOGY

The mere fact of the Part of Fortune, or Earth, being included in all ancient horoscopes is an indication that at one time astrology was based upon the heliocentric system. According to the present geocentric theory which constructs a horoscope about the earth as a centre, it would seem absurd to introduce the same Earth again in the same horoscope as a planet or satellite of itself. Yet if at a remote epoch the heliocentric system was in vogue, the Earth would certainly figure along with Mars, Venus, and the other planets. And if, then, at a subsequent period the science was purposely or ignorantly muddled by being changed into a geocentric scheme, the Earth might very naturally survive as a feature of the horoscope, changed only in name to the Part of Fortune.

The principal objection urged against astrology at the present day is the fact that it implies a geocentric arrangement of the heavens. We all know how Copernicus revolutionized modern astronomy by introducing, or perhaps revamping, the heliocentric theory, and everyone knows what a tremendous step forward was thus taken in our knowledge and understanding of the movement of all bodies in our solar system. And it is therefore quite natural to denounce astrology as false because it still adheres to the

geocentric arrangement. Yet the comparison is not entirely perfect. We mortals are dwelling upon this Earth, and according as the other planets revolve and focus upon us their rays, so are we, according to the astrological theory, affected. So, to all intents and purposes, we may truly consider them as circling around the earth as a centre, and in that fashion construct our horoscopes. If we were living upon Mars, it would be equally appropriate to place Mars in the centre, and likewise if we were denizens of the Sun we would put the Sun in the centre, in which case we would have truly and as a matter of fact a system of heliocentric astrology.

I have brought forward this view of the subject to show that astrology should not be condemned solely on account of its geocentric proclivities, and to answer the criticism of R. A. Proctor and other scientific writers. Yet, having made that defense, I am ready to admit that the astrology of the future will probably be heliocentric. The cycles and epicycles of Ptolemy answered their purpose for fifteen hundred years, and afforded a tolerably reasonable account of the motions of the planets. So, too, and perhaps in a yet greater degree, geocentric astrology has fulfilled the necessary conditions of horoscopy. Various attempts, on the other hand, have been made to construct a heliocentric system, but so far without success.

PRECESSION OF THE EQUINOXES

Another objection frequently brought against astrology is the fact that by means of the precession of the equinoxes the signs of the zodiac have since the time of Ptolemy passed entirely out of the constellations after which they were named. This appears to be a more difficult question to meet than the previous one. Yet Ptolemy was fully aware of this constant change in the position of the signs, for he distinctly provided in the *Tetrabiblos* for this

contingency. He said in Book I, Chap. xii.:

"The beginning of the whole Zodiacal circle (which in its nature as a circle can have no other beginning or end capable of being determined) is, therefore, assumed to be the sign Aries which commences at the vernal equinox."

It will thus be seen that Ptolemy, and doubtless other astrologers before him, considered the influence of the Zodiacal signs as belonging to the places which they occupied, and not to the stars of which they were composed.

Ashmand says: "He (Ptolemy) has expressly and repeatedly declared that the point of the vernal equinox is ever the beginning of the Zodiac, and that the 30 degrees following it ever retain the same virtue as that which he has in this work attributed to Aries, although the stars forming Aries may have quitted those degrees. The next 30 degrees are to be accounted as Taurus, and so of the rest. There is abundant proof throughout the *Tetrabiblos* that Ptolemy considered the virtues of the constellations of the Zodiac as distinct from the spaces they occupied."

DIRECTIONS AND TRANSITS

Predictions in astrology are based upon three kinds of aspects, which are known respectively as primary and secondary directions and local transits. These follow an obscure and inexplicable law of cycles, and, while apparently distinct, are in reality greatly dependent upon each other; so much so, that if an astrologer consults but one kind, he will obtain very unsatisfactory and uncertain results. Primary directions depend upon the revolution of the earth upon its own axis every twenty-four hours. In that time each planet apparently travels completely around us, making a circuit of 360 degrees. As in twenty-four

hours these pass over the meridian 360 degrees, in one hour they will pass over 15 degrees, and one degree being equal to one-fifteenth of an hour, is therefore equivalent to four minutes. One degree of right ascension is considered equal to one year of time. Hence an error of four minutes in the time of birth will cause an error of one degree of right ascension or of one whole year in the subsequent life of the native. This is why it is so essential to know the exact moment of birth before drawing up a horoscope, or at least before attempting to forecast future events. And the lack of this information has been the cause of so many failures of astrologers in the past to accurately predict important occurrences. Fortunately there are rules by which the exact moment of birth may be ascertained and the truth of primary directions vindicated.

It is comparatively easy to compute secondary directions. They are said to be "merely the aspects formed by the Sun or Moon within a few weeks after birth by their proper motion in longitude in the heavens." But this definition fails to convey any meaning to the ordinary reader. I would add in explanation that, following the same law of cycles as is manifested in primary directions, although in a slightly different aspect, each day succeeding birth is considered as equivalent to a year of subsequent life. Thus the tenth day after birth will show events that will happen in the tenth year, the twentieth day the twentieth year, and so on. Secondary directions indicate affairs of secondary importance, yet whose effects last several weeks or months, while primary directions denote the greater occurrences and epochs of a career, frequently extending over a series of years, during which time a person is said to be uniformly lucky or unlucky as the case may be.

Local transits are extremely simple and are generally employed by professional astrologers. They are based upon the direct

motion of the planets around the Sun. While to the observer of the heavens night after night the planets which are visible appear to retain about the same relative position to each other, in reality they are moving onward at varying rates of speed, and each night take a slightly different position. While our earth completes the circuit of the Sun in one year, it takes about thirty years for Saturn to finish his orbit. Each planet has a different rate of speed. Hence the combinations of position that arise daily are practically infinite. The local transits are the transits of one planet over the place of another in any nativity. They produce the minor events of life, the daily cares, annoyances, triumphs, and joys which everyone has, but which do not as a rule occasion any lasting effect. If, however, there is a coincidence of several evil transits at about the same time, particularly if the primary and secondary directions are also bad, then serious results may be expected. It is said that even primary directions cannot take effect without having transits of a similar nature to work through, and on this many professional astrologers ignore primary directions altogether, claiming that the local transits furnish all the data required for making predictions. In reality the reason for such omission is the difficulty of computing such primary directions. Local transits, on the other hand, require no mathematical skill or labor. The positions of the planets from day to day are given in every ephemeris or almanac published.

EMPIRICAL RULES

It may be inferred from the foregoing hasty sketch of the main features of astrology that there is much in the science, as at present taught and practised, which cannot be understood. We read the rules laid down in the books, but no analysis is able to make clear to us their reason. Taking the aspects, for instance, no one can tell why a square, which implies four, should consist of only three signs of the Zodiac, while trine, implying three, should

in reality embrace four signs or houses. Many other perplexing features arise to embarrass the student. It may be admitted without argument that a large part of the science is empirical. We have simply inherited a mass of rules and aphorisms which may be applied blindly, and our only consolation is that when properly used they generally bring about results which tally with the actual facts. We may not know why a certain direction in some person's horoscope will produce decidedly good or malefic effects, but that such effects are produced is proven to us again and again, until even the most skeptical must acknowledge the verification. Perhaps the empiricism is incident to the materialism of the age. It may be that with greater psychic development, or at any rate development of the intuitive intelligence, many of these blind rules will be made plain.

PRESENT ASTROLOGICAL STATUS

In the meanwhile it is not by any means safe to sneer at this most ancient of all sciences, or even to belittle its importance at the present day. The mistakes of professional astrologers, the vain pretenses of vulgar charlatans, the lack of earnest and thorough study on the part of those who are by nature qualified to succeed in it, are all drawbacks which combine to hide a knowledge of astrology from, the world at large, and thus render it essentially occult. Yet no one can investigate its claims in an unprejudiced spirit, or even pursue the study of it to a limited extent, without coming across sufficient evidence to prove that there is really something in it, — that it is not all a mere imaginary scheme. Individual assertion is, of course, of little value in a matter of this kind, else the testimony of the wisest men of all ages would not be so contemptuously disregarded as it is by the self-sufficient, materialistic, scientific writers of today. Doubtless there is room for improvement in the art and practice of astrology as it is now set forth, yet the errors and misconceptions of its practitioners

are far more than outweighed by the constant verification of its rules and principles. What it wants is not ignorant abuse and denunciation, but serious investigation and study. Perhaps the twentieth century, whose dawn is already heralded by a widening of the range of human thought and a breaking down of the old walls of bigotry, will develop some intuitive soul who will see through the veils of empiricism by which astrology is now obscured, and so lift it up to the plane where it rightfully belongs as one of the keys to the mysteries of life and cosmic evolution.

The Path

LODGES OF MAGIC — *H. P. Blavatsky*

The following article by Madame Blavatsky appeared in "Lucifer" for October, 1888, and has teaching value for Theosophists still.

"When fiction rises pleasing to the eye.
Men will believe, because they love the lie;
But Truth herself, if clouded with a frown.
Must have some solemn proofs to pass her down."

CHURCHILL

One of the most esteemed of our friends in occult research propounds the question of the formation of "working-Lodges" of the Theosophical Society, for the development of adeptship. If the practical impossibility of forcing this process has been shown once in the course of the Theosophical movement, it has scores of times. It is hard to check one's natural impatience to tear aside the veil of the Temple. To gain the divine knowledge, like the prize in a classical tripos, by a system of coaching and cramming, is the ideal of the average beginner in occult study. The refusal of the originators of the Theosophical Society to encourage such false hopes has led to the formation of bogus Brotherhoods of *Luxor* (and Armley Jail?) as speculations on human credulity. How enticing the bait for gudgeons in the following specimen prospectus, which a few years ago caught some of our most earnest friends and Theosophists.

"Students of the occult science, searchers after truth, and Theosophists who may have been disappointed in their expectations of Sublime Wisdom being freely dispensed by HINDI MAHATMAS, are cordially invited to send in their names to . . . , when, if found suitable, they can be admitted, after a short probationary term, as Members of an Occult Brotherhood, who

do not boast of their knowledge or attainments, but teach freely" (at £1 to £5 per letter?) and without reserve (the nastiest portions of P. B. Randolph's "Eulis") "all they find worthy to receive" (read: teachings on a commercial basis; the cash going to the teachers, and the extracts from Randolph and other "love-philter" sellers to the pupils!) (1)

If rumor be true, some of the English rural districts, especially Yorkshire, are overrun with fraudulent astrologers and fortune-tellers, who pretend to be Theosophists, the better to swindle a higher class of credulous patrons than their legitimate prey, the servant maid and callow youth. If the "lodges of magic", suggested in the following letter to the Editors of this Magazine, were founded without having taken the greatest precautions to admit only the best candidates to membership, we should see these vile exploitations of sacred names and things increase an hundredfold. And in this connection, and before giving place to our friend's letter, the senior Editor of LUCIFER begs to inform her friends that she has never had the remotest connection with the so-called "H(ermetic) B(rotherhood) of L(uxor)", and that all representations to the contrary are false and dishonest. There is a secret body — whose diploma, or Certificate of Membership, is held by Col. Olcott alone among modern men of white blood — to which that name was given by the author of *Isis Unveiled* for convenience of designation, (2) but which is known among Initiates by quite another one, just as the personage known to the public under the pseudonym of "Koot Hoomi" is called by a totally different name among his acquaintance. What the real name of that Society is, it would puzzle the "Eulian" phallicists of the "H. B. of L." to tell. The real names of Master Adepts and Occult Schools are never, *under any circumstances*, revealed to the profane; and the names of the personages who have been talked about in connection with modern Theosophy are in the possession only of

the two chief founders of the Theosophical Society. And now having said so much by way of preface, led us pass on to our correspondent's letter. He writes:

"A friend of mine, a natural mystic, had intended to form, with others, a Branch T.S. in his town. Surprised at his delay, I wrote to ask the reason. His reply was that he had heard that the T.S. only met and talked, and did nothing practical. I always did think the T.S. ought to have Lodges in which something practical should be done. Cagliostro understood well this craving of humans for something before their eyes, when he instituted the Egyptian Rite and put it in practice in various Freemason lodges. There are many readers of *Lucifer* in . . . shire. Perhaps in it there might be a suggestion for students to form such lodges for themselves, and to try, by their united wills, to develop certain powers in one of the number, and then through the whole of them in succession. I feel sure numbers would enter such lodges, and create a great interest for Theosophy. "A."

In the above note of our venerable and learned friend is the echo of the voices of ninety-nine hundredths of the members of the Theosophical Society: one hundredth only have the correct idea of the function and scope of our Branches. The glaring mistake generally made is in the conception of Adeptship and the path thereunto. Of all thinkable undertakings that of trying for Adeptship is the most difficult. Instead of being obtainable within a few years or one lifetime, it exacts the unremitting struggles of a series of lives, save in cases so rare as to be hardly worth regarding as exceptions to the general rule. The records certainly show that a number of the most revered Indian Adepts became so despite their births in the lowest, and seemingly most unlikely, castes. Yet it is well understood that they had been progressing in

the upward direction throughout many previous incarnations, and, when they took birth for the last time, there was left but the merest trifle of spiritual evolution to be accomplished, before they became great living Adepts. Of course no one can say that one or all of the possible members of our friend A's ideal Cagliostrian lodge might not also be ready for Adeptship, but the chance is not good enough to speculate upon: Western civilization seems to develop fighters rather than philosophers, military butchers rather than Buddhas. The plan "A" proposes would be far more likely to end in mediumship than Adeptship. Two to one there would not be a member of the lodge who was chaste from boyhood and altogether untainted by the use of intoxicants. This is to say nothing of the candidates' freedom from the polluting effects of the evil influences of the average social environment. Among the indispensable pre-requisites for psychic development, noted in the mystical Manuals of all Eastern religious systems, are a pure place, pure diet, pure companionship, and a pure mind. Could "A" guarantee these? It is certainly desirable that there should be some school of instruction for members of our Society; and had the purely exoteric work and duties of the founders been less absorbing, probably one such would have been established long ago. Yet not for practical instruction on the plan of Cagliostro, which, by-the-bye, brought direful suffering upon his head, and has left no marked traces behind to encourage a repetition in our days. "When the pupil is ready, the teacher will be found waiting", says an Eastern maxim. The Masters do not have to hunt up recruits in special. shire lodges, nor drill them through mystical non-commissioned officers: time and space are no barriers between them and the aspirant; where thought can pass they can come. Why did an old and learned Kabbalist like "A." forget this fact? And let him also remember that the potential Adept may exist in the Whitechapels and Five Points of Europe and America, as well as in the cleaner and more

"cultured" quarters; that some poor ragged wretch, begging a crust, may be "whiter-souled" and more attractive to the Adept than the average bishop in his robe, or a cultured citizen in his costly dress. For the extension of the Theosophical movement, a useful channel for the irrigation of the dry fields of contemporary thought with the water of life, Branches are needed everywhere; not mere groups of passive sympathisers, such as the slumbering army of church-goers, whose eyes are shut while the "devil" sweeps the field; no, not such. Active, wide awake, earnest, unselfish Branches are needed, whose members shall not be constantly unmasking their selfishness by asking "What will it profit us to join the Theosophical Society, and how much will it harm us?", but be putting to themselves the question "Can we not do substantial good to mankind by working in this good cause with all our hearts, our minds, and our strength?" If "A." would only bring his . . . shire friends, who pretend to occult leanings, to view the question from this side, he would be doing them a real kindness. The Society can get on without them, but they cannot afford to let it do so.

Is it profitable, moreover, to discuss the question of a Lodge receiving even theoretical instruction, until we can be sure that all the members will accept the teachings as coming from the alleged source? Occult truth cannot be absorbed by a mind that is filled with preconception, prejudice, or suspicion. It is something to be perceived by the intuition rather than by the reason; being by nature spiritual, not material. Some are so constituted as to be incapable of acquiring knowledge by the exercise of the spiritual faculty; e.g. the great majority of physicists. Such are slow, if not wholly incapable of grasping the ultimate truths behind the phenomena of existence. There are many such in the Society; and the body of the discontented are recruited from their ranks. Such persons readily persuade themselves that later teachings,

received from exactly the same source as earlier ones, are either false or have been tampered with by chelas, or even third parties. Suspicion and inharmony are the natural result, the psychic atmosphere, so to say, is thrown into confusion, and the reaction, even upon the stauncher students, is very harmful. Sometimes vanity blinds what was at first strong intuition, the mind is effectually closed against the admission of new truth, and the aspiring student is thrown back to the point where he began. Having jumped at some particular conclusion of his own without full study of the subject, and before the teaching had been fully expounded, his tendency, when proved wrong, is to listen only to the voice of his self-adulation, and cling to his views, whether right or wrong. The Lord Buddha particularly warned his hearers against forming beliefs upon tradition or authority, and before having thoroughly inquired into the subject.

An instance. We have been asked by a correspondent why he should not "be free to suspect some of the so-called 'precipitated' letters as being forgeries", giving as his reason for it that while some of them bear the stamp of (to him) undeniable genuineness, others seem from their contents and style to be imitations. This is equivalent to saying that he has such an unerring spiritual insight as to be able to detect the false from the true, though he has never met a Master, nor been given any key by which to test his alleged communications. The inevitable consequence of applying his untrained judgment in such cases would be to make him as likely as not to declare false what was genuine, and genuine what was false. Thus what *criterion* has any one to decide between one "precipitated" letter, or another such letter? Who except their authors, or those whom they employ as their *amanuenses* (their *chelas* and disciples), can tell? For it is hardly one out of a hundred "occult" letters that is ever written by the hand of the Master in whose name and on whose behalf they are sent, as the

Masters have neither need nor leisure to write them; and that when a Master says, "I wrote that letter", it means only that every word in it was dictated by him and impressed under his direct supervision. Generally they make their chela, whether near or far away, write (or precipitate) them, by impressing upon his mind the ideas they wish expressed, and if necessary aiding him in the picture-printing process of precipitation. It depends entirely upon the *chela's* state of development how accurately the ideas may be transmitted and the writing-model imitated. Thus the *non-adept* recipient is left in the dilemma of uncertainty whether, if one letter is false, all may not be; for, as far as intrinsic evidence goes, all come from the same source and all are brought by the same mysterious means. But there is another and a far worse condition implied. For all that the recipient of "occult" letters can possibly know, and on the simple grounds of probability and common honesty, the unseen correspondent who would tolerate one *single fraudulent line in his name* would wink at an unlimited repetition of the deception. And this leads directly to the following. All the so-called *occult* letters being supported by identical proofs, *they have all to stand or fall together*. If one is to be doubted, then all have, and the series of letters in the *Occult World, Esoteric Buddhism*, etc., etc., may be, and there is no reason why they should not be in such a case — *frauds*, "clever impostures", and "forgeries", such as the ingenuous though stupid agent of the "S.P. R." has made them out to be, in order to raise in the public estimation the "scientific" acumen and standard of his "Principals".

Hence, not a step in advance would be made by a group of students given over to such an unimpressible state of mind, and without any guide *from the occult side* to open their eyes to the esoteric pitfalls. And where are such guides, so far, in our Society? "They be blind leaders of the blind", both falling into the ditch of

vanity and self-sufficiency. The whole difficulty springs from the common tendency to draw conclusions from insufficient premises, and play the oracle before ridding oneself of that most stupefying of all psychic anesthetics — IGNORANCE..

FOOTNOTES:

1. Documents on view at LUCIFER's Office, viz., Secret MSS. written in the handwriting of (name suppressed for past considerations), "Provincial Grand Master of the Northern Section". One of these documents bears the heading, "A brief Key to the Eulian Mysteries," *i.e.* *Tantric* black magic on a phallic basis. No; the members of *this* Occult Brotherhood "do not boast of their knowledge". Very sensible on their part: least said soonest mended. ([return to text](#))

2. In *Isis Unveiled* vol. ii. p. 308. It may be added that the "Brotherhood of Luxor" mentioned by Kenneth Mackenzie '*vide* his *Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia* as having its seat in America, had, after all, nothing to do with the Brotherhood mentioned by and known to us, as was ascertained after the publication of *Isis* from a letter written by this late Masonic author to a friend in New York. The Brotherhood Mackenzie knew of was simply a Masonic Society on a rather more secret basis, and, as he stated in the letter, he had *heard of, but knew nothing of our* Brotherhood, which having had a branch at Luxor (Egypt), was thus purposely referred to by us under this name alone. This led some schemers to infer that there was a regular Lodge of Adepts of that name, and to assure some credulous friends and Theosophists that the "H. B. of L." was either identical or a branch of the same, supposed to be near Lahore! — which was the most flagrant untruth. ([return to text](#))

MOON'S MYSTERY AND FATE — *William Brehon*

Probably no heavenly body has received as much attention from men in all ages as our moon. Many causes contributed to this. The moon is near us; she is a remarkable and large object in the sky; she enlightens the night; she appears to have much to do with man and his affairs. Omens, spells, wishes, oracles, divination, traditions cluster around her during all time. It would be difficult to find a scripture that does not exalt the moon. The Christian Bible says that God ordained that the sun should rule the day and the moon the night. The Roman Church depicts Mary the Mother of God holding the child while she stands upon the crescent moon. The twelfth chapter of Revelations opens thus:

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.

Other religions are the same as this modern Hebraic one in giving the moon a very great prominence.

Even science cannot escape the fascination. The brilliancy and nearness of the moon and her many recurring changes all aid in fixing the attention of science. Modern and ancient science alike unite in watching the night's great light as she performs her journey round us. Nations regulate themselves and their acts, religious and commercial, by the moon. Feast days of the church are fixed more by the lunar than the solar calendar, for all the movable feasts depend on the moon. Calendars rule commercial affairs in credits, obligations, and settlements.

From earliest times the calendar, ruled in fact by the moon's motion, has been of immense interest to man. Periodically rulers

of the earth try to reform the calendar of days and months when it as periodically gets out of order. The present arrangement of months with twenty-eight, twenty-nine, thirty, and thirty-one days was invented to make a calendar which would last some centuries before another one will be needed, just because the moon's motion will not give twelve regular months, but twelve regular ones and one small one of about six days. And when the present style of reckoning was introduced, many communities of men in Europe rebelled because they thought they had been deprived of some actual days of life.

Caesar ordered a reformation of the calendar by attempting to use the sun, but in time it fell into great confusion. Pope Gregory XIII directed ten days to be suppressed, and then found that the Julian calendar had an error which would amount to three days in four hundred years — quite a serious matter. The Gregorian year now prevails, except in Russia. But still the greater number of men and the greater number of festivals depend on the moon and her motion. While if we examine the records relating to superstition, we will find that whatever may have been the place once held by the sun, it has been usurped by the moon, leaving one nation distinctly worshippers of the Lord of Day.

Modern Theosophy, coming on the field as the uniter of all religions by explaining the symbols and traditions of each, is not exempt from the mystery of the moon. H. P. Blavatsky is our sole originator of a theory regarding the satellite which one could not have invented with the most wonderful imagination. She says her teachers told her, and leaves us to work out the details; but her theory will bear investigation if taken as part of the whole evolutionary scheme reported by her. If we had thought to escape from lunar dreams and puzzles we were in error, for while she plainly asserts that the former body of the entity now called Man's Earth is the very moon in our sky, the existence of a

mystery is as plainly declared. The first mystery which she claimed to reveal — and, indeed, she first of every one states it — is that in a remote period, when there was no earth, the moon existed as an inhabited globe, died, and at once threw out into space all her energies, leaving nothing but the physical vehicle. Those energies revolved and condensed the matter in space near by and produced our earth; the moon, its parent, proceeding towards disintegration, but compelled to revolve around her child, this earth. This gives us a use and history for the moon.

But then the same messenger says that the "superstition" prevailing so long and widely as to the moon's bad influence, as in insanity, in necromancy, and the like, is due to the fact that the moon, being a corpse intimately associated with earth, throws upon the latter, so very near to her, a stream of noxious emanations which, when availed of by wicked and knowing-persons, may be used for man's injury. Then the same writer goes on to assert that six mysterious doctrines or facts remain yet untold, and all relating to the moon.

It would be idle to speculate on these mysteries, for it has ever been found that unless the Great Initiates speak the general run of men can but modify, enlarge, or intertwine by their fancy those facts and doctrines of which they have heard. But as to the fate of the moon, H. P. B., speaking for those Initiates, says plainly what is to become of our satellite.

In the first volume of *Secret Doctrine*, in a foot note on page 155 of the first edition, she writes:

Both [Mercury and Venus] are far older than the earth, and before the latter reaches her seventh Round her mother moon will have dissolved into thin air, as the "moons" of the other planets have, or have not, as the case may be, since there are planets which have *several* moons — a

mystery again which no Œdipus of astronomy has solved.

This is extremely plain as to our moon, yet raises another mystery as to the general subject of moons. If correspondence is a law of nature, as I firmly believe, then it would be in accordance with it for the moon, considered as earth's former body, to dissolve all away in course of time. And as evolution proceeds with uniformity, the upward progress of our races and earth should be marked by the gradual fading and final disappearance of the moon, as H. P. B. says. It is likely that before our sixth round is ended, it being the round relating to *Buddhi* as the vehicle of *spirit*, the body of the moon, which was the vehicle for *prana* and astral body, will have disappeared. Very probably one of the unrevealed mysteries has to do with the uses and purposes of and for the whole mass of matter now constituting the moon's bulk. But whatever those mysteries are, the fate of our satellite is very clearly asserted, for the benefit of those who have confidence in H. P. B.'s teachers, and who are willing to take the key of correspondence for the unlocking of the lock of Nature.

The Path

POINTS OF AGREEMENT IN ALL RELIGIONS (1) — William W. Judge

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN : Let me read you a few verses from some of the ancient Scriptures of the world, from the old Indian books held sacred by the Brahmans of Hindustan.

"What room for doubt and what room for sorrow is there in him who knows that all spiritual beings are the same in kind and only differ from each other in degree?"

"The sun does not shine there, nor the moon and the stars, nor these lightnings, and much less this fire. When He shines, everything shines after Him; by His light all this is lighted.

Lead me from the unreal to the real!

Lead me from darkness to light!

Lead me from death to immortality!

Seeking for refuge, I go to that God who is the light of His own thoughts; He who first creates Brahman and delivers the Vedas to him who is without parts, without actions, tranquil, without fault, the highest bridge to immortality, like a fire that has consumed its fuel". — *Mundaka Upanishad*.

Such are some of the verses, out of many thousands, which are enshrined in the ancient Hindu Vedas beloved by those we have called "heathen"; those are the sentiments of the people we have called idolaters only.

As the representative of the Theosophical movement I am glad to be here, and to be assigned to speak on what are the points of agreement in all religions. I am glad because Theosophy is to be found in all religions and all sciences. We, as members of the

Theosophical Society, endorse to the fullest extent those remarks of your chairman in opening, when he said, in effect, that a theology which stayed in one spot without advancing was not a true theology, but that we had advanced to where theology should include a study of man. Such a study must embrace his various religions, both dead and living. And pushing that study into those regions we must conclude that man is greatly his own revealer, has revealed religion to himself, and therefore that all religions must include and contain truth; that no one religion is entitled to a patent or exclusive claim upon truth or revelation, or is the only one that God has given to man, or the only road along which man can walk to salvation. If this be not true, then your Religious Parliament is no Parliament, but only a body of men admiring themselves and their religion. But the very existence of this Parliament proclaims the truth of what I have said, and shows the need which the Theosophical Society has for nineteen years been asserting, of a dutiful, careful, and brotherly inquiry into all the religions of the world, for the purpose of discovering what the central truths are upon which each and every religion rests, and what the original fountain from which they have come. This careful and tolerant inquiry is what we are here for today; for that the Theosophical Society stands and has stood; for toleration, for unity, for the final and irrevocable death of all dogmatism.

But if you say that religion must have been revealed, then surely God did not wait for several millions of years before giving it to those poor beings called men. He did not, surely, wait until He found one poor Semitic tribe to whom He might give it late in the life of the race? Hence He must have given it in the very beginning, and therefore all present religions must arise from one fount.

What are the great religions of the world and from whence have

they come? They are Christianity, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, and Mohammedanism. The first named is the youngest, with all its warring sects, with Mormonism as an offshoot and with Roman Catholicism boldly claiming sole precedence and truth.

Brahmanism is the old and hoary religion of India, a grown-up, fully-developed system long before either Buddhism or Christianity was born. It extends back to the night of time, and throws the history of religion far, far beyond any place where modern investigators were once willing to place even the beginning of religious thought. Almost the ancient of ancients, it stands in far-off India, holding its holy Vedas in its hands, calmly waiting until the newer West shall find time out of the pursuit of material wealth to examine the treasures it contains.

Buddhism, the religion of Ceylon, of parts of China, of Burmah and Japan and Tibet, comes after its parent Brahmanism. It is historically older than Christianity and contains the same ethics as the latter, the same laws and the same examples, similar saints and identical fables and tales relating to Lord Buddha, the Savior of Men. It embraces today, after some twenty-five hundred years of life, more people than any other religion, for two-thirds of the human family profess it.

Zoroastrianism also fades into the darkness of the past. It too teaches ethics such as we know. Much of its ritual and philosophy is not understood, but the law of brotherly love is not absent from it; it teaches justice and truth, charity and faith in God, together with immortality. In these it agrees with all, but it differs from Christianity in not admitting a vicarious salvation, which it says is not possible.

Christianity of today is modern Judaism, but the Christianity of Jesus is something different. He taught forgiveness, Moses taught

retaliation, and that is the law today in Christian State and Church. "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth" is still the recognized rule, but Jesus taught the opposite. He fully agreed with Buddha, who, preaching 500 years before the birth of the Jewish reformer, said we must love one another and forgive our enemies. So modern Christianity is not the religion of Jesus, but Buddhism and the religion of Jesus accord with one another in calling for charity, complete tolerance, perfect non-resistance, absolute self-abnegation.

If we compare Christianity, Buddhism, and Hinduism together on the points of ritual, dogmas, and doctrines, we find not only agreement but a marvellous similarity as well, which looks like an imitation on the part of the younger Christianity. Did the more modern copy the ancient? It would seem probable. And some of the early Christian Fathers were in the habit of saying, as we find in their writings, that Christianity brought nothing new into the world, that it existed from all time.

If we turn to ritual, so fully exemplified in the Roman Catholic Church, we find the same practices and even similar clothing and altar arrangements in Buddhism, while many of the prescribed rules for the altar and approaching or leaving it are mentioned very plainly in far more ancient directions governing the Brahman when acting as priest. This similarity was so wonderful in the truthful account given by the Catholic priest Abbe Hue that the alarmed Church first explained that the devil, knowing that Christianity was coming, went ahead and invented the whole thing for the Buddhists by a species of *ante facto* copying, so as to confound innocent Catholics therewith; and then they burned poor Abbe Hue's book. As to stations of the cross, now well known to us, or the rosary, confession, convents, and the like, all these are in the older religion. The rosary was long and anciently used in Japan, where they had over one hundred and seventy-two

sorts. And an examination of the mummies of old Egypt reveals rosaries placed with them in the grave, many varieties being used. Some of these I have seen. Could we call up the shades of Babylon's priests, we should doubtless find the same rituals there.

Turning to doctrines, that of salvation by faith is well known in Christianity. It was the cause of a stormy controversy in the time of St. James. But very strangely, perhaps, for many Christians, the doctrine is a very old Brahmanical one. They call it "The Bridge Doctrine", as it is the great Bridge. But with them it does not mean a faith in some particular emanation of God, but God is its aim, God is the means and the way, and God the end of the faith; by complete faith in God, without an intermediary, God will save you. They also have a doctrine of salvation by faith in those great sons of God, Krishna, Rama, and others; complete faith in either of those is for them a way to heaven, a bridge for the crossing over all sins. Even those who were killed by Krishna, in the great war detailed in the *Ramayana*, went straight to heaven because they looked at him, as the thief on the cross looking at Jesus went to Paradise. In Buddhism is the same doctrine of faith. The twelve great sects of Buddhism in Japan have one called the Sect of the Pure Land. This teaches that Amitabha vowed that any one who calls three times on his name would be born into his pure Land of Bliss. He held that some men may be strong enough to prevail against the enemy, but that most men are not, and need some help from another. This help is found in the power of the vow of Amita Buddha, who will help all those who call on his name. The doctrine is a modified form of vicarious atonement, but it does not exclude the salvation by works which the Christian St. James gives out.

Heaven and Hell are also common to Christianity, Buddhism, and Brahmanism. The Brahman calls it Swarga; the Buddhist, Devachan; and we, Heaven. Its opposite is Naraka and Avitchi.

But names apart, the descriptions are the same. Indeed, the hells of the Buddhists are very terrible, long in duration and awful in effect. The difference is that the heaven and hell of the Christian are eternal, while the others are not. The others come to an end when the forces which cause them are exhausted. In teaching of more than one heaven there is the same likeness, for St. Paul spoke of more than a single heaven to one of which he was rapt away, and the Buddhist tells of many, each being a grade above or below some other. Brahman and Buddhist agree in saying that when heaven or hell is ended for the soul, it descends again to rebirth. And that was taught by the Jews. They held that the soul was originally pure, but sinned and had to wander through rebirth until purified and fit to return to its source.

In priesthood and priestcraft there is a perfect agreement among all religions, save that the Brahman instead of being ordained a priest is so by birth. Buddha's priesthood began with those who were his friends and disciples. After his death they met in council, and subsequently many councils were held, all being attended by priests. Similar questions arose among them as with the Christians, and identical splits occurred, so that now there are Northern and Southern Buddhism and the twelve sects of Japan. During the life of Buddha the old query of admitting women arose and caused much discussion. The power of the Brahman and Buddhist priests is considerable, and they demand as great privileges and rights as the Christian ones.

Hence we are bound to conclude that dogmatically and theologically these religions all agree. Christianity stands out, however, as peculiarly intolerant — and in using the word "intolerant" I but quote from some priestly utterances regarding the World's Fair Parliament — for it claims to be the only true religion that God has seen fit to reveal to man.

The great doctrine of a Savior who is the son of God — God himself — is not an original one with Christianity. It is the same as the extremely ancient one of the Hindus called the doctrine of the Avatar. An Avatar is one who comes down to earth to save man. He is God incarnate. Such was Krishna, and such even the Hindus admit was Buddha, for he is one of the great ten Avatars. The similarity between Krishna or Cristna and Christ has been very often remarked. He came 5,000 years ago to save and benefit man, and his birth was in India, his teaching being Brahmanical. He, like Jesus, was hated by the ruler, Kansa, who desired to destroy him in advance, and who destroyed many sons of families in order to accomplish his end, but failed. Krishna warred with the powers of darkness in his battles with Ravana, whom he finally killed. The belief about him was that he was the incarnation of God. This is in accord with the ancient doctrine that periodically the Great Being assumes the form of man for the preservation of the just, the establishment of virtue and order, and the punishment of the wicked. Millions of men and women read every day of Krishna in the *Ramayana* of Tulsi Das. His praises are sung each day and reiterated at their festivals. Certainly it seems rather narrow and bigoted to assume that but one tribe and one people are favored by the appearance among them of an incarnation in greater measure of God.

Jesus taught a secret doctrine to his disciples. He said to them that he taught the common people in stories of a simple sort, but that the disciples could learn of the mysteries. And in the early age of Christianity that secret teaching was known. In Buddhism is the same thing, for Buddha began with one vehicle or doctrine, proceeded after to two, and then to a third. He also taught a secret doctrine that doubtless agreed with the Brahmans who had taught him at his father's court. He gave up the world, and later gave up eternal peace in Nirvana, so that he might save men. In

this the story agrees with that of Jesus. And Buddha also resisted Mara, or the Devil, in the wilderness. Jesus teaches that we must be as perfect as the Father, and that the kingdom of heaven is within each. To be perfect as the Father we must be equal with him, and hence here we have the ancient doctrine taught of old by the Brahmins that each man is God and a part of God. This supports the unity of humanity as a spiritual whole, one of the greatest doctrines of the time prior to Christianity, and now also believed in Brahmanism.

That the universe is spiritual in essence, that man is a spirit and immortal, and that man may rise to perfection, are universal doctrines. Even particular doctrines are common to all the religions. Reincarnation is not alone in Hinduism or Buddhism. It was believed by the Jews, and not only believed by Jesus but he also taught it. For he said that John the Baptist was the reincarnation of Elias "who was for to come". Being a Jew he must have had the doctrines of the Jews, and this was one of them. And in Revelations we find the writer says: "Him that overcometh I will make a pillar in the house of my God, and he shall go out no more".

The words "no more" infer a prior time of going out.

The perfectibility of man destroys the doctrine of original sin, and it was taught by Jesus, as I said. Reincarnation is a necessity for the evolution of this perfection, and through it at last are produced those Saviors of the race of whom Jesus was one. He did not deny similar privileges to others, but said to his disciples that they could do even greater works than he did. So we find these great Sages and Saviors in all religions. There are Moses and Abraham and Solomon, all Sages. And we are bound to accept the Jewish idea that Moses and the rest were the reincarnations of former persons. Moses was in their opinion Abel the son of Adam;

and their Messiah was to be a reincarnation of Adam himself who had already come the second time in the person of David. We take the Messiah and trace him up to David, but refuse, improperly, to accept the remainder of their theory.

Descending to every-day-life doctrines, we find that of Karma or that we must account and receive for every act. This is the great explainer of human life. It was taught by Jesus and Matthew and St. Paul. The latter explicitly said:

"Brethren, be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that also shall he reap."

This is Karma of the Brahman and Buddhist, which teaches that each life is the outcome of a former life or lives, and that every man in his rebirths will have to account for every thought and receive measure for the measure given by him before.

In ethics all these religions are the same, and no new ethic is given by any. Jesus was the same as his predecessor Buddha, and both taught the law of love and forgiveness. A consideration of the religions of the past and today from a Theosophical standpoint will support and confirm ethics. We therefore cannot introduce a new code, but we strive by looking into all religions to find a firm basis, not due to fear, favor, or injustice, for the ethics common to all. This is what Theosophy is for and what it will do. It is the reformer of religion, the unifier of diverse systems, the restorer of justice to our theory of the universe. It is our past, our present, and our future; it is our life, our death, and our immortality.

FOOTNOTES:

1. An address delivered April 17th, 1804. before the Parliament of Religions at San Francisco, Calif., by William Q. Judge.

The Midwinter Fair at San Francisco had annexed to it a Religious

Parliament modeled after the first great one of 1893 at Chicago. Dr. J. D. Buck and William Q. Judge, the latter as General Secretary American Section, were officially invited to address the Parliament at one of its sessions as representatives of the Theosophical movement. Time was so short that all speakers were limited to thirty minutes each; for that reason the address is not as full as it would be had more time been granted. But the occasion once more showed the strength of the T.S. movement. ([return to text](#))

The Path

HOW TO STUDY THE "SECRET DOCTRINE": I — *J. H. Fussell*

Is there a key to the study of the *Secret Doctrine*? Are the seeming contradictions in the *Secret Doctrine* really such, or is there a possibility of their reconciliation?

It is not the purpose of this paper to show that the apparent contradictions are *not* contradictions, nor even to attempt to reconcile any of them; for, while it is claimed by some students that such reconciliation can be shown in many cases, others fail to see it in any. Nor is it necessary to bring up the question of the fallibility of the writer of the book, for even going so far as to grant infallibility to H. P. B., which she herself would have disclaimed, there remains the imperfection of the language in which the book is written, and its inadequacy to express purely metaphysical ideas. There is, however, it is claimed, a key to the study of the *Secret Doctrine*, the use of which will open many of its doors, clear away many of its difficulties, connect many otherwise disconnected statements, and even reconcile some of its apparent contradictions.

Theosophy is synthetic. The *Secret Doctrine* is also synthetic, and the key to its study, if such may be found, must also be, so to say, synthetic. For the difficulty in understanding it is partly due to the fact of the many points of view from which each subject is treated and the absence of definite links to connect the different statements thence arising: *e. g.* a subject in one place may be treated from the standpoint of the Vedanta philosophy, and in another place from that of the Sankya philosophy, and again from a third standpoint elsewhere. Add to all this the personal equation of the reader, usually a very important factor, depending upon education and general trend of mind, and it will

be evident that it is no easy matter to reduce to order the great mass of information contained in the volumes under consideration.

It may be as well at this point to call to mind one of the preliminary requisites for the study of Occultism, and the value of a pursuit of the second object of the T. S., viz.: to free the mind from all preconceived ideas which may be due to inheritance and training, so that the true underlying meaning of the subject in hand may be grasped apart from the garb in which it is given, or the particular system of philosophy according to which it is presented. In other words, every student must learn to think for himself, and must realize that the ultimate tribunal to which he must refer everything is his own inner nature. The completest philosophy ever conceived can be no more than a mere working hypothesis for the student until he has arrived at that point where such a philosophy may be proved and tested in every way, *i. e.* until he is able to reformulate the same philosophy for himself and is able to base it on his own knowledge, not on the knowledge of others. In fact, each one ought to have his own philosophy of life: not a cut and dried philosophy with hard and fast limits, but a living philosophy which can grow as the mind develops, taking in a wider and wider horizon and sending its roots deeper and deeper in search of the living waters of Truth.

The key above referred to is threefold and consists of the three fundamental propositions of the *Secret Doctrine*. (1) Space does not permit of giving these here in full, but they may be summed up briefly as follows:

(a) "An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable Principle, on which all speculation is impossible. . . . It is beyond the range and reach of thought unthinkable and unspeakable."

This first proposition is a statement of the unity underlying the whole manifested universe, the unity of source and the unity of ultimate essence of all things, of the whole of nature, of things animate and inanimate, of universes, worlds, men, atoms. A further statement of this proposition is, that although the ultimate Reality, the ever Unmanifested, is One, yet the *sine qua non* of all manifestation is duality. Manifestation implies duality, relativity, and is unthinkable save as comprising subject and object, cogniser and the thing cognized, the ego and the non-ego, spirit and matter. To rise above this quality one must pass from the finite, the conditioned, the manifested, into the unmanifested, the unconditioned, the infinite. From this duality which underlies all manifestation further spring the pairs of opposites, for the object of cognition can only be such in reference to other objects; a condition or state or property can be known only in reference to other conditions, states, or properties. This arises from and indeed constitutes one of the primary functions of mind, that of analysis and comparison. Separateness and illusion do not exist save in the mind; it is in the mind that arises the idea of the "me" and the "not me", and then the further analysis of the totality of the "not me" by means of the pairs of opposites, heat and cold, light and darkness, love and hate.

(b) "The absolute universality of the law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, ebb and flow." The Universe *in toto* is periodically "the playground of numberless universes, manifesting and disappearing", called "the manifesting stars" and the "sparks of eternity".

(c) "The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every soul — a spark of the former — through the cycle of Incarnation (or "Necessity") in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term".

This proposition further goes on to say that each Soul or divine spark, in order to have an independent (conscious) existence must have "(a) passed through every elemental form of the phenomenal world of that Manvantara, and (b) acquired individuality, first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised effort (checked by its Karma), thus ascending through all the degrees of intelligence from the lowest to the highest Manas, from mineral and plant up to the holiest archangel."

It is easily seen that propositions (b) and (c) depend upon (a). For if there is a Unity underlying all things it must imply, and be implied by, universal law as in (b), and also it must imply a unity in evolution as in (c). If we grant the unity of all things in source and essence, this ultimate unity must also apply to the law underlying and guiding all manifestation, and synthesizing all the known *laws* of the manifested universe. Furthermore, if we grant the One Reality, the ever Unmanifested Unity, and also that manifestation is the differentiation not of, but arising in, the One, thus causing the apparent "many", it must follow that between "non-manifestation" and the condition of greatest manifestation, between homogeneity and the utmost heterogeneity, there is endless progression, endless gradation, without one break or a single missing link in the chain of evolution.

There is, then, a sequence and a logical connection between these fundamental propositions, and since they are given as being "fundamental" it may be that in them we may find a key to the whole philosophy of the *Secret Doctrine*.

The tendency of Western thought and civilization has for a long time been in the direction of specialization. Religion, Philosophy, and Science have been separated and considered apart from one another, so much so that Religion has said "The secrets of life and

death are with me alone, follow me." Science has said "Follow me and I will teach you to map out the heavens and weigh the sun in a balance; I will teach you the story of evolution, and the chemical combination of atoms upon which life depends." But if asked "What of the Soul?" Science answers. "I have nothing to do with the Soul, it is outside my province; we can never know anything about the soul, or that it exists; but follow me, accumulate facts, frame hypotheses, and get knowledge." And Philosophy? . . . Philosophy has been running between the two, between dogmatic Religion and dogmatic Science, and ending too often in agnosticism, or else mere empiricism. Let it not be understood, however, that the writer is unaware that there are many of the exponents of Religion, of Philosophy, and of Science who cannot be included in the above; but he asks, can it be denied that such has been the general trend of thought in these departments.

What, however, has this to do with using a key to the study of the *Secret Doctrine*? It is an illustration of the tendency of thought which each one of us has from education and heredity, viz.: to treat part of a subject as the whole subject, to look at things from one standpoint only, and so long as we are unable to view a subject as a whole and in its relation to other subjects, so long will the *Secret Doctrine* remain practically a sealed book; so long will the different view-points cause its statements to appear contradictory; so long will the connecting links be unperceived. What is needed is a study of fundamentals, and a constant application of and appeal to them. The *Secret Doctrine* begins with a statement of fundamentals; and its philosophy, far older than Plato, is yet Platonic, *proceeding from universals to particulars*. Hence to study it, to comprehend it, the student must proceed along the same lines, and endeavor to grasp with his mind the fundamentals, and to realize that neither man nor

anything can be separated from the All, but that all evolution has one origin, is guided by one law, and has one aim. If the student can ever keep this in his memory, then can he also take up the study in the way that Science does, from particulars to universals, but with a far different result, for he no longer has to look for a key; he has it in his own hand.

(To be continued)

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Secret Doctrine*, I., 14-17 (new ed.), 43-45. ([return to text](#))

The Path

PROOFS OF THE HIDDEN SELF — *William Q. Judge*

THROUGH DREAMS

The dream state is common to all people. Some persons say they never dream, but upon examination it will be found they have had one or two dreams and that they meant only to say their dreams were few. It is doubtful whether the person exists who never has had a dream. But it is said that dreams are not of importance; that they are due to blood pressure, or to indigestion, or to disease, or to various causes. They are supposed to be unimportant because, looking at them from the utilitarian viewpoint, no great use is seen to follow. Yet there are many who always make use of their dreams, and history, both secular and religious, is not without records of benefit, of warning, of instruction from the dream. The well-known case of Pharaoh's dream of lean and fat kine which enabled Joseph as interpreter to foresee and provide against a famine represents a class of dream not at all uncommon. But the utilitarian view is only one of many.

Dreams show conclusively that although the body and brain are asleep — for sleep begins primarily in the brain and is governed by it — there is still active a recollector and perceiver who watches the introspective experience of dreaming. Sorrow, joy, fear, anger, ambition, love, hate, and all possible emotions are felt and perceived in dreams. The utility of this on the waking plane has nothing to do with the fact of perception. Time all is measured therein, not according to solar division but in respect to the effect produced upon the dreamer. And as the counting of this time is done at a vastly quicker rate than is possible for the brain, it follows that some person is counting. In all these dreams there is a recollection of the events perceived, and the memory of it is

carried into the waking state. Reason and all the powers of intelligent waking man are used in dreams; and as emotion, reasoning, perception, and memory are all found to be even more active in dreams than in waking life, it must follow that the Hidden Self is the one who has and does all this.

The fanciful portion of dreams does not invalidate the position. Fancy is not peculiar to dreaming; it is also present in waking consciousness. In many people fancy is quite as usual and vivid as with any dreamer. And we know that children have a strong development of fancy. Its presence in dream simply means that the thinker, being "liberated temporarily from the body" and the set forms or grooves of the brain, expands that ordinary faculty. But passing beyond fancy we have the fact that dreams have prophecy of events not yet come. This could not be unless there exists the inner Hidden Self who sees plainly the future and the past in an ever present.

IN CLAIRVOYANCE

Waking clairvoyance cannot now be denied. Students of Theosophy know it to be a faculty of man, and in America its prevalence is such as to call for no great proof. There is the clairvoyance of events past, of those to come, and of those taking place.

To perceive events that have taken place in which the clairvoyant had no part nor was informed about, means that some other instrument than the brain is used. This must be the Hidden Self. Seeing and reporting events that subsequently transpire gives the same conclusion. If the brain is the mind, it must have had a part in a past event which it now reports, either as actor or as hearer from another who was present, but as in the cases cited it had no such connection as actor, then it follows that it has received the report from some other perceiver. This other one is the Hidden

Self, because the true clairvoyant case excludes any report by an eye-witness.

Then again, when the clairvoyant is dealing with an event presently proceeding at a distance, it is necessary that a perceiver who recollects must be present in order to make report. For the brain and its organs of sight and hearing are too far off. But as the clairvoyant does report correctly what is going on, it is the other Hidden Self who sees the event, bridges the gap between it and the brain, and impresses the picture upon the bodily organs.

THE FEELING OF IDENTITY

If recollection is the basis for the feeling of identity continuous throughout life, and if brain is the only instrument for perception, then there is an inexplicable series of gaps to be accounted for or bridged over, but admitting the Hidden Self no gaps exist.

We are born feeling that we are ourself, without a name, but using a name for convenience later on. We reply to challenge by saying "It is I" — the name following only for convenience to the other person. This personal identity remains although we fall asleep each night and thus far become unconscious. And we know that even when a long period is blotted out of memory by fall, blow, or other accidental injury, the same feeling of identity crosses that gap and continues the same identical "I" to where memory again acts. And although years of life with all their multiplicity of events and experience have passed, leaving but a small amount of recollection, we yet know ourselves as that unnamed person who came to life so many years before. We do not remember our birth nor our naming, and if we are but a bundle of material experience, a mere product of brain and recollection, then we should have no identity but constant confusion. The contrary being the case, and continuous personal identity being felt and perceived, the inevitable conclusion is that

we are the Hidden Self and that Self is above and beyond both
body and brain.

The Path

HOW TO STUDY THE "SECRET DOCTRINE": II — *J. H. Fussell*

If, as has been claimed, the three fundamental propositions constitute a key to the study of the *Secret Doctrine*, the student should endeavor to apply these not merely to the philosophy as a whole, but to each and every department and special topic and to the linking of these together. Only by so doing can the true relations between the latter be found, and the place and importance of each in respect to the whole. It must therefore be borne in mind that these propositions apply to the whole manifested Cosmos, to Universes, worlds, and men, to all planes of the Cosmos as well as to all kingdoms of Nature; that back of all manifestation is the One Reality, one common Source; that guiding all manifestation is one Universal Law; and that the working of this one Law and the line of evolution are fundamentally the same in all cases.

A study of the great systems of ancient philosophy would show that underlying each are these same propositions, or some phases of them which, although differently expressed, embody the same fundamental ideas. In some instances these have been put into the form of aphorisms, which to a great extent are the keynotes of the systems in which they are so expressed. Such, for instance, are the following: "As above, so below", from the Hermetic school of philosophy; "Man is the Microcosm of the Macrocosm", from the ancient Hindu philosophy; both of these aphorisms are expressions of what is known as the "Law of Correspondences" which was used by all the great Hindu philosophers and to a greater or less degree by more modern writers, *e.g.*, some of the early Church Fathers, and by Boehme, Swedenborg, and others. It will easily be seen that these aphorisms are dependent upon the fundamental propositions of the *Secret Doctrine*, and in a

measure contain or imply the latter. Then there is the Cabalistic saying, "A stone becomes a plant; a plant, a beast; a beast, a man; and man, a god". This particular statement is, however, only a partial statement of the third proposition; it is only a partial statement of evolution. It goes further than the modern scientific statement of evolution in that it does not stop at man, but it makes no statement of the stages of evolution preceding the mineral; it only begins at the lowest point of the cycle of evolution, omitting the elemental kingdoms on the downward arc. The above statements and many others are constantly referred to in the *Secret Doctrine*, and by presenting these fundamentals in different aspects the student who learns to connect them together is better enabled to comprehend the methods and working of Nature and also that to us most vital problem — man's place in Nature. Furthermore, these various statements furnish an additional argument for the Wisdom Religion's being the fountain of Truth from which *all* streams of Truth have sprung.

It is necessary, then, to examine these aphorisms and to include them as part of the key of which we are in search. In a letter from a Master to Mr. A. P. Sinnett advice is given to the student to hold to the doctrine of analogy and correspondences. (1)

Everything follows analogy. "As above, so below." Man is the Microcosm of the Universe. That which takes place on the spiritual plane repeats itself on the Cosmic plane. Concretion follows the lines of abstraction; corresponding to the highest must be the lowest; the material to the spiritual. (2)

If man indeed be the Microcosm of the Macrocosm, a copy in miniature of the Universe, we can well understand the value of the injunction given by the Delphi Oracle, "Know Thyself!", and

the student of the *Secret Doctrine* cannot fail to notice the frequent application therein of knowledge about man to the elucidation of the mysteries of the Cosmos. In the same way knowledge of Nature as a whole gives us a knowledge of Nature's miniature, man. The study of man and the study of Nature must be pursued together, hand in hand; if we would understand one we must understand both, each one in relation to the other.

Not only is man the Microcosm of the Macrocosm, but each molecule, each atom, as well as each world and each system of worlds, mirrors the whole Universe; and each individual monad, each spark of the Universal Over-Soul, whether informing a world, a man, or an atom, is a mirror of the Universal Over-Soul.

"Lift thy head, O Lanoo; dost thou see one or countless lights burning in the dark midnight sky?"

"I sense one Flame, oh Gurudeva, I see countless undetached sparks shining in it."

"Thou sayest well. And now look around and into thyself. That light which burns inside thee, dost thou feel it different in anywise from the light that shines in thy Brother-men?"

"It is in no way different, though the prisoner is field in bondage by Karma, and though its outer garments delude the ignorant into saying 'Thy Soul and my Soul'."

The radical unity of the ultimate essence of each constituent part of compounds in Nature — from Star to mineral Atom, from the highest Dhyān Chohan to the smallest infusoria, in the fullest acceptation of the term, and whether applied to the spiritual, intellectual, or physical worlds — this is the one fundamental law in Occult Science. (3)

This fundamental law in Occult Science is the basis of the "Law of Correspondences", which in so many cases has been hit upon by

Mystics and used by them intuitionally and, very often it would seem, fancifully. And being acquired merely intuitionally, and no basis or foundation being given, this law has come to be regarded by many as a mere empiricism. All through the *Secret Doctrine* this law is held to, and it is illustrated to such an extent that it rests with the student himself to test whether it be a law or not. Let the student hold to the doctrine of analogy and correspondences. The Law of Correspondences does not merely hold on one and the same plane, as, for instance, in the case of man and Nature, the physical external man corresponds to physical external Nature, the astral man to the astral side of Nature, etc., but there is also a correspondence between different planes, and action and reaction from plane to plane. Manifestation takes place on four planes, which are phenomenal and *rupic* (*rupa*=form), while above these are three *arupa* or formless planes, where form ceases to exist and which cannot become objective to us. The three higher planes are noumenal and subjective, the four lower are phenomenal, and are, or may be, objective to us. The seven planes represent the seven states of Cosmic consciousness, the three higher planes being inaccessible to human intellect as developed at present. "These seven planes correspond to the seven states of consciousness in man." (4) All ultimate causes originate on the higher planes, and pass from plane to plane to the lowest which is the plane of ultimate effects, whence there may again be reaction on the higher planes. That which may appear as an effect on any plane, due to a cause on a higher plane, may itself act as a cause in reference to a still lower plane. In this way there is correspondence from plane to plane, and in this way all manifestation proceeds, from plane to plane; from within, without. And although very few who can see into the astral and psychic planes of Nature can connect these with the physical plane, or rise to the purely spiritual, yet no links are missing between them, and it is only by a comprehension of the

Law of Correspondences that it is possible to connect them together. The varied aspects of Nature, the many phases of development which we see in all the kingdoms of Nature and which exist on all the phenomenal planes; the hierarchies of beings — gods, men, elementals — which represent the stages of the development of the soul, are all links in the endless chain of manifestation. Destroy one link and the chain would be destroyed; but granting continuity, granting the law of cause and effect — Karma, it follows that the Law of Correspondences must also hold good, and we shall be wise if we follow the advice of the Master and hold to it as a guide in our studies.

(To be continued)

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Secret Doctrine*, I, 187 (new edition, I, 210). ([return to text](#))
2. *Secret Doctrine*, I, 177 (new edition, I, 200). ([return to text](#))
3. *Secret Doctrine*, I, 120 (new edition, I, 145). ([return to text](#))
4. *Secret Doctrine*, I, pp. 199-200 (new edition, p. 2:1). ([return to text](#))

The Path

NEMESIS — *Katharine Hillard*

In a note to p. 305 of the second volume of the *Secret Doctrine*, Mme. Blavatsky points out the difference between the Greek idea of Nemesis and the Aryan Karma, which is often thought to be exactly the same thing. But the conception of Nemesis varied with different poets at different epochs, and from the purely abstract idea of the inevitable punishment of sin became anthropomorphised into a goddess to be worshipped and to be placated by prayer and submission. "If we would connect Karma with Nemesis", says Mme. Blavatsky in the passage referred to, "it has to be done in the triple character of the latter as Nemesis, Adrasteia, and Themis. For while the latter is the goddess of Universal Order and Harmony (who, like Nemesis, is commissioned to repress every excess and keep man within the limits of Nature and righteousness under severe penalty), *Adrasteia* — the inevitable — represents Nemesis as the immutable effect of causes created by man himself. Nemesis, as the daughter of *Dike*, is the equitable goddess, reserving her wrath for those alone who are maddened with pride, egotism, and impiety. It is, then, *Adrasteia*, or "the inevitable" who would answer best to the Eastern conception of Nemesis, or Karma, as Eternal Law working out its necessary consequences. "Every act rewards itself", says Emerson, "or, in other words, integrates itself, in a twofold manner; first, in the thing, or in real nature; and secondly, in the circumstance, or in apparent nature. Men call the circumstance retribution. The causal retribution is in the thing, and is seen by the soul. The retribution in the circumstance is seen by the understanding; it is inseparable from the thing, but is often spread over a long time and so does not become distinct till after many years. Crime and punishment grow out of one

stem. Punishment is a fruit that unsuspected ripens within the flower of the pleasure which concealed it. Cause and effect, means and ends, seed and fruit, cannot be severed; for the effect already blooms in the cause, the end preexists in the means, the fruit in the seed."

Emerson was thoroughly in sympathy with the teachings of the Oriental philosophy, and nowhere more completely so than in this passage from his essay on *Compensation*. For he not only points out to us that a deed and its consequences are one, but seizes that more occult view that the real thing is in the soul, and is perceived by the soul. It is in what we *are* that the reality lies, and what we do is but the impress that the seal of our nature prints upon the world without. If that seal be as the head of a god, so much the better for the world, and, in reversion, for ourselves; but that seal has been modelled by the forces of our own soul, and we only are responsible for the image that it bears. No subterfuge will avail us, no shirking and no dallying alter the preordained result of the forces we have chosen to set in motion. "The world is full of judgment-days", says Emerson elsewhere, and we are continually being judged, not only for our sins, but for our blunders. "You should have known better", says stern Nature, when we transgress her rules and suffer the consequences and try to plead ignorance as an excuse. And deep in our inmost souls we know that she is right. "Nothing can work me damage except myself", says St. Bernard; "the harm that I sustain I carry about with me, and never am a real sufferer but by my own fault." And if the believer in only one life upon earth could realise this, how much more should those who have made the doctrine of reincarnation their own appreciate the idea of more remote causes for suffering than can be traced in one earthly existence! Far back in the mists of time, by some initial choice of good or evil, did we begin to create that Nemesis which surrounds us

today, built up year after year and life after life the palace or the prison of the soul. For choice, within certain limits, we have always, and it is ours to weave the black thread or the white at will into the web of our future destiny. "Karma-Nemesis guards the good and watches over them", says the Occultist, "in this as in future lives, and punishes the evil-doer, aye, even to his seventh rebirth. So long, in fact, as the effect of his having thrown into perturbation even the smallest atom in the Infinite World of harmony has not been finally readjusted. For the only decree of Karma — an eternal and immutable decree — is absolute Harmony in the world of matter as in the world of Spirit." (*S.D.*, I, 643).

So that we see that our Nemesis is no offended Deity, punishing with anger an infringement of his arbitrary decrees, but the striving of the universe to right itself, to repair the injuries that our heedless or wilful actions have effected in the harmony of the whole. If, then, the corner-stone of the universe is that spiritual unity which manifests itself in universal brotherhood, the more we can do to make that brotherhood a material reality, the more nearly we shall approach the harmony of the spiritual world, which is Life and Love, not Death and Selfishness. And as Emerson has shown us, the real thing is in the soul, the causal retribution there. Can any punishment that earthly justice can inflict upon a man be half so terrible as that which comes from within, the torments that spring from his own fear, his own remorse? Not long ago, Felix Adler gave a magnificent discourse on "The Penalties of Sin", every word of which might find an echo in all right-thinking-minds. The report I read (for I was not so fortunate as to hear it) said that he concluded by stating the difference between the present generation and its forefathers in respect to the doctrine of sin. "Our forefathers were haunted by the sleepless eye of God, which they believed to be ever fixed

upon them, piercing every veil and wall. They believed that God would punish them, either immediately or at the last judgment. But now man has become his own accuser, and the judgment-seat is transferred to his own breast. In his own brain is the prototype of the universal laws. In the name of those universal laws he pronounces sentence upon himself. "The more our moral nature unfolds, the more difficult does it become to satisfy the awful divinity within our bosom. The most agonizing pain which the modern man can suffer, as many know to their bitter cost, is self-condemnation. The highest boon to which we can aspire is to be able to dwell in peace with the God within us."

Surely every Theosophist would re-echo these words of the great ethical teacher. And should we not agree with him also when he said that the true aim of punishment was reformation, not vengeance, and that the pangs of conscience were to be regarded as the beginning of a process of spiritual regeneration? For what is the voice of conscience but the voice of the higher Ego in man, of that diviner Self who is ever striving to reach the lower nature and bring it up into closer relations with the God within us? If we refuse to listen to that voice, if knowing the right we still the wrong pursue, we are knotting another mesh of that great net of Destiny in whose folds we shall some day struggle unavailingly, like captive birds. Our struggles will be all in vain, for the meshes of Nemesis hold fast, but neither Nemesis nor vengeance wove them, but we ourselves of our own free choice. The criminal sets in motion long years (it may be long lives) beforehand, the train of causes that one day lands him in a jail, but imprisonment will do him no good unless it go hand-in-hand with reform. What men call the vengeance of the law is but too often the right name for its punishments; it is the revenge of the community for its violated peace and order that is embodied in the verdict of the jury and the sentence of the judge, the strong arm of the law

stretched out to slay and not to save. When the idea of universal brotherhood shall have become a more living reality, all prisons will be reformatories in the truest sense of the word, and the wrong-doer will be taught to listen to the voice in his own soul, and helped to obey its dictates and to struggle back towards the right. The way of the transgressor is hard, but how doubly hard when he has to retrace his painful footsteps with all the forces of his vitiated nature battling against him, all the demons of the sinful past rising up to oppose his progress! Byron was said to have had every gift but the faculty of knowing how to use them, and he has left an ample record of the torments inflicted by a misspent life. Could there be anything more terrible than the "Incantation" in *Manfred*, which summons the elements of his own character to be his torturers?

The Voice says to him:

From thy false tears I did distil
An essence which has strength to kill;
From thine own heart I then did wring
The black blood in its blackest spring;
From thine own lip I drew the charm
Which gave all these the chiefest harm:
In proving every poison known.
I found the strongest was thine own!

By thy cold breast and serpent smile.
By thy unfathomed gulfs of guile;
By the perfection of thine art
Which passed for human thine own heart:
By thy delight in others' pain,
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,
I call upon thee! and compel
Thyself to be thy proper Hell!

So much for Nemesis as "the just indignation of the gods". But justice has good gifts as well as evil in her well-balanced scales, and the soul can decree itself a nobler mansion as the swift seasons roll, and can lay the cornerstone today. Built up of lofty thoughts and noble purposes, founded upon the rock of steadfast resolution and unflinching courage, crowned with the fair white dome of love and truth, that edifice shall rise, a mansion not built with hands, but eternal in the heavens. And if we fashion our lives thus, Nemesis shall wear for us not the terrible aspect of the avenging Furies, but the smile that Wordsworth saw upon the face of Duty.

Stern lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face;
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds;
And fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong,
And the most ancient heavens thro' thee are fresh and
strong.

The Path

HOW TO STUDY THE "SECRET DOCTRINE": III — J. H. Fussell

(Concluded from page 149)

Perhaps the first great difficulty which confronts the student of the *Secret Doctrine* arises from the lack of method which seems to prevail throughout the work. But if in spite of this he can at all familiarize himself with the subject matter, he will almost certainly come to the conclusion that, although from a literary standpoint this lack of method certainly exists, yet from the standpoint of a student of Theosophy it is a great gain. For there is, so it seems to the writer, a *deeper* method in the seeming lack of it than could have been obtained in any other way. The student, however, at the very outset is warned and may know what to expect, and if he is wise he will lay his plans accordingly. H. P. B. herself speaks of the "necessity under which the writer (H. P. B.) has labored to be ever explaining the facts given from the hoariest Past by evidence gathered from the historical period. No other means was at hand, at the risk even of being once more charged with a lack of method and system." (1) And she has been so charged by those who forget the reason which she herself gave for such lack of method. In considering this we come to another very important matter which must be taken into account in our study of the *Secret Doctrine*, and a knowledge of which to a great extent reveals the *deeper* method underlying the seeming lack of it.

The *Secret Doctrine* is based upon Stanzas from the "Book of Dzyan", a book hitherto unknown to Orientalists, and but little known in the East. These stanzas "give an abstract formula which can be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to all evolution: to that of our tiny earth, to that of the chain of planets of which that earth

forms one, to the Solar Universe to which that chain belongs, and so on, in an ascending scale, till the mind reels and is exhausted in the effort." (2)

Consider for a moment! In what language could such an abstract formula be written; how could it be expressed? It could only be in a language which is perfectly symbolical, and whose symbols, while primarily representing abstract ideas and being subject to mathematical law, are yet capable of being applied to all the departments of Nature and thus of having as many interpretations. Such a language or writing was "the early hieroglyphic cypher, still preserved in some Fraternities, and named in Occultism the *Senzer*". (3) In regard to this language it is stated that there was a time when it was "known to the Initiates of every nation, when the forefathers of the Toltec understood it as easily as the inhabitants of the lost Atlantis, who inherited it, in their turn, from the sages of the Third Race, the *Manushis*, who learned it direct from the *Devas* of the Second and First Races". (4)

Such was the ancient "Mystery" language, the language of symbolism, which has been preserved to a greater or less extent in the languages in which the ancient scriptures of the World were originally written, and which was the foundation of the Jewish Kabala. Students of the Kabala and of the symbolism of the ancient religions have arrived at the conclusion that all have not only sprung from one primeval teaching but that all bear record to the one primeval "esoteric" language. It is claimed in the *Secret Doctrine* that from one small volume written in this ancient sacerdotal tongue were derived the books of Kiu-ti, the book of Shu-king, China's primitive bible, the sacred books of Thoth-Hermes, the Puranas, the Chaldean Book of Numbers, and the Pentateuch. (5) So that, since it is the aim of our author to prove the identity of source and symbolism of all the religious teachings of the World, it is inevitable that constant reference to, and

quotations from, them must be made. This in itself makes the study of the *Secret Doctrine* a difficult matter, in that it is the cause, to a great extent, of the seeming lack of method and introduces so many apparent side-issues. But the great difficulty does not lie here, but in the different interpretations which can be put upon all these ancient writings.

The Mystery language has seven keys, symbology has seven departments, and these or at least some one or more of them must be known to some degree if the ancient scriptures are to be understood. But how many understand even one of the keys and can use it? We can to some extent apply the "three fundamental propositions" to all our studies in the *Secret Doctrine* we may also be able in some degree to make use of the law of correspondence and analogy for the elucidation of some of its propositions; but further knowledge, knowledge of the science of symbology, is required for the full solution of its problems. Hence it is most important for the student to bear this in mind, and to study with a view to acquiring knowledge of this most ancient science. The work under consideration is not the *Secret Doctrine* itself, except in so far as much that is there given out has hitherto been secret for the West; it touches only the outer fringe and lifts but a corner of the veil of the true Secret Doctrine which must ever remain hidden from the profane. At the same time, however, it gives the student clues by following which he may learn the A, B, C, of the Mystery language of the Initiates, and so take the first step toward comprehending those depths of knowledge which is in their possession, but which is also the heritage of every man.

In these preliminary articles the writer can do little more than call the attention of the Student of the *Secret Doctrine* to this most important part of his studies. An important point to notice is the fact that the Science of Symbology depends upon, and is indeed only an application of, the Law of Correspondences, and so

ultimately depends upon the "three fundamental propositions". Hence, although we have found what at first sight seem to be different keys to the study of the *Secret Doctrine*, these are in reality but different aspects of *one* key which may be applied to all the departments of nature.

Throughout the *Secret Doctrine* the attention of the student is again and again definitely called to the way in which he may arrive at an understanding of its truths, and of those contained in all the ancient religions and mythologies, in which the deepest mysteries of man and nature have found expression. If therefore he will keep this in mind and follow the hints given him he will find evidence accumulate in support of its statements on every side. In support of the above it will be sufficient to give only two quotations from the *Secret Doctrine*: others can be easily found by the student himself.

Every old religion is but a chapter or two of the entire volume of archaic primeval mysteries — Eastern *Occultism* alone being able to boast that it is in possession of the full secret, with its *seven* keys. (6)

As truly stated by Ragon, 'the ancient Hierophants have combined so cleverly the dogmas and symbols of their religious philosophies that these symbols can be fully explained only by the combination and knowledge of *all* the keys'. They can be only *approximately* interpreted, even if one finds out three of these seven systems: the *anthropological*, the *psychic*, and the *astronomical*. The two chief interpretations, the highest and the lowest, the spiritual and the physiological, they preserved in the greatest secrecy until the latter fell into the hands of the profane. (7)

The true value of the *Secret Doctrine* can only be known by those

who read it with reference to the purpose for which it was written, and it has been the writer's aim to point out the main guide-posts, which, however, are no discovery of his, but to which the *Secret Doctrine* itself is continually directing attention. So far as the method of study is concerned, this will depend largely upon the previous training and capabilities of the student, but by far the greater number of students of the *Secret Doctrine* recommend, after a general reading, study by topics, for the information on any one subject is, from the very nature and purpose of the book, scattered throughout its two volumes.

The *Secret Doctrine* is a mine of knowledge and information. Much information can be obtained by a mere reading, but its great treasures do not lie on the surface; they must be dug out, and its pearls can only be had for the diving. It is no wonder that those who look upon this latter part of the XIXth Century as the flower of the Ages should find such difficulty in reading this work, or that they should complain of its lack of method, for "this work is written for the instruction of students of Occultism" (8) and "the rejection of these teachings may be expected and must be accepted beforehand". (9)

The intelligent study of the *Secret Doctrine* requires persistence and effort, and it is well to realize this at the outset. It may be that the conclusions which the student may reach today will be modified, if not completely changed, in the future; indeed, this is inevitable if progress is to be made. For man's outlook is limited, and it must be that, as his horizon widens, new factors will arise which will modify previous conclusions; but if he can make sure of his "fundamentals" and hold to them, he will have a sure guide which will not fail him in any of his investigations of the mysteries of man and nature.

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Secret Doctrine* I, xlv (new edition, I, 28). ([return to text](#))
 2. *Ibid*, I. 20. (new edition, I, 48). ([return to text](#))
 3. *Secret Doctrine*, II. 480, (new edition, II, 458) ([return to text](#))
 4. *Ibid*, xliii (new edition, I, 260) ([return to text](#))
 5. *Ibid*, xliii, (new edition, I, 260) ([return to text](#))
 6. *Secret Doctrine*, I, 318, (new edition, I, 338). ([return to text](#))
 7. *Secret Doctrine*, I, 368, (new edition, I, 389) ([return to text](#))
 8. *Secret Doctrine*, I, 23 (new edition, I, 50) ([return to text](#))
 9. *Secret Doctrine*, I, xxxvii, (new edition, I, 21) ([return to text](#))
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The Path

THE COLOR OF THE ANCIENT ARYANS — *K. P. Mukherji*

THE INNER AND THE OUTER MAN AND THEIR COLORS

In an article somewhat curiously termed "The Red Rajputs" published in the October number of the *Asiatic Quarterly*, the following passage is quoted from the Mahabharata:

The color of Brahmans is white; of the Kshatryas red; of the Vaishyas yellow; of the Shudras black.

The above does not mean that the Brahmans were white like the Europeans, the Kshatryas copper-colored like the Red Indians, the Vaishyas yellow like the Jews, and the Shudras black like the negroes. The four castes could not differ so much in color for the simple reason that long before the Mahabharatic period intermarriages were common and the offspring admitted into that caste, generally or broadly speaking, to which the father belonged.

"Ajam ekam lohita Shukta Krishnam" say our Shastras about Prakriti, the root of the physical or material universe. "The unborn one is red, white, and black, for the *gunas* (attributes) composing it", called *sattwa*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, correspond to those colors thus:

Sattwa, white color, shining, wisdom, light;

Rajas, red color, reflecting energy, motion;

Tamas, black color, covering ignorance, darkness.

They correspond to many other things, as may be found in the Puranas, but the above will do for the present. Now in the Brahmans *Sattwa-gunam* or quality predominates, in the Kshatryas *rajas*, in the Shudras *tamas*. The color yellow in our

Shastras corresponds to gross matter, and the Vaishyas were engaged in worldly pursuits. The Brahman represents the wisdom of the nation, the Kshatryas the energy of it, the Vaishyas its material prosperity, and the Shudras obedience and order.

As said in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, anger and desire are the result of *rajogunam*, and the Inner Man becomes red when they predominate. Thus in the Shanti Parvan of the *Mahabharata* quoted in the article but not correctly translated: —

This manifested Universe is all Brahm, it was originally created by Brahma, the color was due to Karma; those twice born who forsaking their own *dharma* (or law and duty) became fond of kamic enjoyments, sharp, prone to answer, hasty and red-limbed, fell into Kshatryaship.

Varna means color as well as caste; the one is the cause of the other; the skin may be as white as snow, but if *rajo-gunam* be dominant the Inner Man will be red. Even now our astrologers say of what varna the babe is, no matter whether it is fair or dark, no matter of what caste it may be, according to the positions of the planets at the time of birth. Such varna refers to the Inner Man and not to his physical envelope.

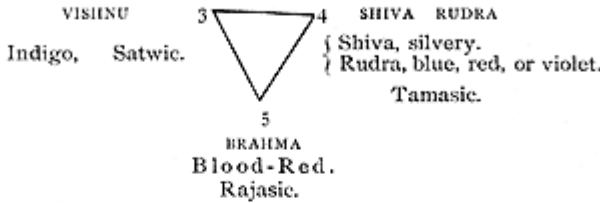
I.
NIRGUNA PLANE.

(Above the three gunas or qualities.)

- | | | | |
|---|------------|---|----------|
| 1 | MAHESWARA | 2 | NARAYANA |
| | Colorless. | | Golden. |

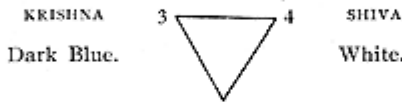
II.
SAGUNA PLANE.

(Saguna means with the gunas, Nirguna without or above them.)



III.
THE PATH OF RENUNCIATION.

(Nivritti Marga.)



THE SEVEN RISHEES FROM THE
MANAS OF BRAHMA.
Color not given.

IV.
THE PATH OF EVOLUTION,

(Purvatti Marga.)

(5) BRAHMA

THE SEVEN RISHEES CREATED OR
EVOLVED
THREE MORE RISHEES ENDING
WITH DAKSHA. THEY CREATE.
Color not known.

V.
CREATION.

BRAHMA BECOMES MANU SYAMBHAVA,
and creates men in general.

The Seven Rishees create Brahmans and devas of white color.
Daksha incarnates and becomes *Prachetas*
by falling into generation.

VI.
SEXUAL CREATION.

Prachetas Daksha creates men in general. Some of the Brahmans fall into
generation. People multiply, and are divided by a Manu into the
four castes according to their qualifications.

In the following I will try to show the distribution of colors from the beginning.

The foregoing will further show that the colors spoken of cannot

be the color of the skin. For a Western man who tries to materialize everything and thinks himself liberal-minded and scientific if he can but rise above the pigmy conception of Biblical creation said to have begun a few thousand years back, it is very difficult to perceive that the real meaning of passages in the Shastras can often be learnt after you begin to live a real Hindu life, after you learn to meditate long and intensely, after you have a growing faith in our Shastras. Love them and they will repay your patience and labor; study hurriedly, partially, and materialize the teachings, and you will find them self-contradictory, ridiculous, absurd, and what not. Make your choice, for it is said, "The Sun suffers not in splendor if all the blind unanimously say that there is no Sun".

The Path

VAST WORKS OF THE PAST

The objection is often urged against Theosophical theories that they were produced by Eastern nations, and if we are to judge by India of today these beliefs will result in stagnating human effort. But the facts do not support the objection. Indeed, if we think of the present works of man in the West and make any comparison with the older days, we must conclude that ours are the most fragile and will the sooner yield to the destroying touch of time. What modern work is to be compared to the pyramid of Ghizeh in Egypt? None in respect to any of the elements involved. Which of our huge buildings will last for more than ten thousand years? In Chicago the place where most, perhaps, the tall buildings are found in one spot, they say the foundation is really mud, and even now the tallest tower of all must come down and other buildings show signs of weakness. As light convulsion would wreck them all. And what of our records both of literature and science? All will wither, disappear, be eaten up by moth and worm, and after a time not a line be left. What do we record on our inscriptions on buildings when we make any? Only some unimportant names of builder, contractor, or official in the municipality. There are no sentences of art or science or philosophy. And even the foundation stones contain but silly remains and small things of no use to future men. Most of our energy is devoted to getting mere coin that must soon or late be lost or given up, be melted, and altogether done away with. Yet though the Egyptians, who long ago left the scene, held beliefs that we might regard as superstitious, they made buildings and inscriptions and pictures which confront us today as the mute proofs of the mightiness of a nation that rules its life by theories we do not accept.

But in India and the rest of the East is where the objection is

directed. Even there the facts are to the contrary. What of their tanks for watering towns and fields; of their great temples; of their awe-inspiring underground constructions; of those buildings cut out of the solid mountain with mathematical precision. Can these be the work of people whose beliefs tend to stagnate human effort? I think not.

The caves of Ellora and Elephanta contain immense images and carvings which would do credit to this day. The caves of Kailas are 401 feet deep and 185 feet wide. Man made these. Inside is a conical pagoda 100 feet high, with a music gallery, five large chapels, a large court, and a colonnade. Three immense elephants are there cut from the stone. An image of Lakshmi reposes with two elephants standing on their hind legs as if pouring water over her. A passage then opens right and left. Thirty feet on there are two obelisks carved, being 41 feet high and 11 feet square. Thirty feet more and you find a great pagoda carved inside and out. There are sixteen pillars, twenty-two pilasters, and five entrances. The roof is carved to represent cross beams, and each pillar is different from the other.

At Ajunta are twenty-seven cut caves, the inscription seeming to give the date of 200 years B.C. What is the temple of Solomon to all this?

Then look at India's tanks. We would call them reservoirs. That of Lingamputti is a great triangle $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles long, 1 broad at the base, and 200 years old. Bhusrapatanam tank is 13 miles in circumference; Guntoor 8 miles; Gurgi 12 miles; Shengalmalla 11 miles; Duraji 9 miles. Chambrambakam was twenty miles, and watered sixty-eight villages. Vivanam has a dam 12 miles long. At Hyderabad is a great tank about 20 square miles, watering the city.

All over the East are immense works of the past which we could

not duplicate, and which our sordid civilization would not permit us to think of "wasting" money upon. If we seek further and inquire of the works of the mind, the ancient astronomy confronts us. Were it not for it, our astronomers might now be wondering what was the meaning of the backward motion of the sun in the Zodiac, if they knew anything at all about it. It is fair, then, to say that there is no force at all in the objection to Theosophical thought as an Eastern product on the ground that it will or might inhibit effort. On the contrary, it will broaden our civilization and make us create works as great if not greater than those of the past. But we must not ignore the past, for to do so is to incur a sure if mysterious retribution, because that past belongs to ourselves and was a part of our own doing and begetting.

The Path

COMMUNICATIONS FROM "SPIRITS" — *William Q. Judge*

THEIR SOURCES AND METHODS

The complexity of this subject makes treatment of it difficult. So little is known, and challenge of power to know is so natural, that any treatment must be unsatisfactory. Those "spirits" whose existence as active entities wholly in the spiritual world is claimed by the votaries of the worship of the dead, have not told us clearly anything of lasting value. They have had in America distinctly forty years to give the information in, but disagreeing among themselves and not showing in any way a concert of mental action by way of explanation, nothing has as yet resulted from the very sphere where, if anywhere, the knowledge ought to exist. If it be true, as is asserted for them, that those who have reported are conscious, intelligent spirits, then all of them who while reporting to man have failed to lead him to a right conclusion are blameworthy. Some of these entities or intelligences or spirits or whatever they are have, however, made through their mediums assertions of fact about nature and occult physiology which are in my opinion true, but they have not been accepted. Independently speaking in the air, using trance mediums and writings, they have at various times spoken of and described the astral light; have upheld reincarnation; have sustained the teachings of Swedenborg, and in many ways indicated a complete agreement with Theosophical explanations of occult nature; they have shown that materializations of spirits cannot be possible, and that the sometimes really coagulated forms are liable to be frauds of a pious nature, inasmuch as they are not the bodies of the dead nor in any sense whatever their property, that they are over and over again simply surfaces or masses on which pictures of dead or living may be reflected,

being thus a spirit-conjurer's trick beyond our power. But they have found no favor, and the cult does not, as a whole, think along those lines. If, then, the "spirits" themselves failed to get credence, how shall I gain any? The scientific world, on the other hand, knows not these realms, and believing not in either Theosophical or Spiritualistic explanations accords no belief to the one or the other. So we will have to be satisfied with just saying what is in mind, trusting to fate and time alone.

Many factors have to be admitted as present in this question. Some of them may be described, but many must as yet remain untouchable.

First. There are the minds (*a*) of the medium, and (*b*) of the sitter or sitters or enquirers. Neither can be left out of account. At once this should show how vast is the theme, for it is well known that the mind and its powers are but little known.

Second. Occult psychological powers and faculties of all concerned. This would include the subconscious or subliminal mind of the hypnotic schools.

Third. Physical memory, which is automatic, racial, national, and personal. This is present at all times. To overlook it is simply blindness. To trace it is extremely difficult, requiring a trained mind and trained inner sense. It is that memory which causes a child to catch at a support even just at birth; it is the guide in sleep when often we do acts for preservation or otherwise; it brings up the hate that a man of one race may feel for another race after centuries of oppression or repulsion; it causes the cat, no matter how young, to arch back and expand the tail the moment a dog is near. To say that man, the one who is the last great product of all the material evolution, has not this physical memory would be folly. But I have not heard that the spirits have told of this, nor described it, nor indicated how it may be traced,

nor to what extent it acts in the simulation of conscious intelligence.

Fourth. Forces in their law and method wholly unknown to medium or sitters. These constitute the moving power, the writing force, the reflecting power, and all the vast number of hidden powerful forces behind the veil of objective matter.

Fifth. Entities of some kind or another, unseen but present, whether elementals, elementaries, shades, angels, nature-spirits, or what not.

Sixth. The Astral Light, the Ether, the Akasa, the Anima Mundi.

Seventh. The Astral Body of medium and sitter. I have purposely put this by itself, for it has its own automatic action as much as has the physical body. With it must be also noted its memory, its idiosyncrasies, whether it is new for the person in question or whether it is one that has been used for more than one life, though each time in a different body. For if it be new to the present body, its memories and powers and peculiarities will be different from those of one that has actually been through several lives. It is not so rare in fact that the astral body is an old one; many mediums have strange powers because they have several distinct astral memories due to so much prior experience in one astral body. This alone would furnish a field for study, but we have not heard of the "spirits" telling about it, though some have shown that they experience these multiform personalities.

Lastly, there is the great fact well known to those who have studied this subject from its occult side, that the personal inner self centered in the astral body has the power not only to delude itself, but also to delude the brain in the body and cause the person to think that a distinct other personality and intelligence is speaking to the brain from other spheres, when it is from the

astral self. This is for some people extremely difficult to grasp, as they cannot see how that which is apparently another person or entity may be themselves acting through the means of the dual consciousness of man. This dual consciousness acts for good or for the opposite in accordance with the Karma and character of the inner, personal self. It sometimes appears to a sensitive as another person asking him to do this, that, or the other, or exhorting to some line of conduct, or merely wearing some definite expression but being silent. The image seems to be another, acts as another, is to all present perception outside the perceiving brain, and no wonder the sensitive thinks it to be another or does not know what to think. And if the present birth happens to be one in which strong psychic power is a part of the nature, the delusion may be all the greater.

Having briefly analyzed to begin with, let us now go further.

During the history of Spiritualism, many communications have been made to and through mediums upon many subjects. Facts have been given that could not be known to the medium, some lofty ideas have also had expression, advice has emanated, prophecies have been issued, some of the questions that vex the soul have been treated.

That facts of death, kind of death, place where wills might be found have been told, unexecuted purpose of the dead expressed, personal peculiarities of the former person shown, have all been too easily accepted as proof of identity. These things are not proof. If they are, then a parrot or a phonograph may prove identity with a man. The possibilities are too many in other directions for this sort of proof to be final or even competent. The living clairvoyant may, by taking the requisite mental steps, become so absorbed in the person clairvoyantly brought up — both being alive — as to accurately reproduce all the other

person's peculiarities. Consequently the same thing done in respect to a deceased may be possible in the same way for a clairvoyant entity on the other side of death reporting to us. But, at the same time, it is the fact that the astral body of the deceased does now and then consciously have a part in such reports by reason of unfinished separation from earth and its concerns, or from gross materiality. In other cases where the astral "shell", as some call it, is involved, it is galvanized by nature spirits or by the power of living beings once men who are condemned by their own character to live and function in the denser part of the astral envelope of the earth.

The very moment we go to a medium, who always forms the condensing focus for these forces and that realm, we begin to draw to us the astral remains of all persons whom we think of or who are enough like us or the medium to fall into the line of attraction. Thus we have in the sphere of the focus those we knew and those we never heard of and who never heard of us when they were alive. Elemental sprites which act as the nerves of nature come also, and they, condensed or plunged into the human astral shells, give a new life to the latter and cause them to simulate intelligence and action sufficient to delude all who are not positively trained in these matters. And this sort of training is almost unknown as yet here; it does not suffice to have followed on the proceedings of hundreds of *seances* or hundreds of experiments; it consists in actual training of the inner senses in the living man. If the astral shape is coherent it will render a coherent report, but that is what also a phonograph will do. If it be partly gone or disintegrated it will, like a damaged phonograph cylinder, give a confused report or suddenly stop, to be replaced by another, better or worse. In no case can it go beyond facts known before to it, or those known to the inner or outer sense of the medium or sitter. And as these astral shells

form the greater part of what come to a medium, this is the reason that forty long years of dealing with them have resulted in so little. It is no wonder, then, that the "astral shell" theory has been over-worn by many Theosophists, causing Spiritualists to think that to be the only explanation which we have. A judicious fear also has contributed to the much dwelling on this theory, for with it come up all the actual and very present dangers to mediums and sitters. These galvanized things necessarily are devoid of conscience, and hence cannot but act on and from the very lowest plane of morals and life, just as may happen to be the left-over material memory of the astral person; and that will vary in accord with the essence of the former life and not with its appearance. Hence we may have the shade of Smith or Jones who seemed to their neighbors to have been good men but who in reality always had low or wicked thoughts and strong desires which law or convention prevented them from giving full expression to. In the astral world, however, this hypocrisy is absent, and the real inner character will show itself or have its effect. And in any case whatever, the material shade of the best of men will not be as good as the man tried to be, but will have all the follies and inner sinfulness of his inheritance against which he struggled when living. Therefore it cannot be that these astral remnants are beneficial to us, no matter who was the person they once belonged to. They are but old clothes, and not the spirit of the man. They are less divine than the living criminal, for he still may be a complete trinity.

But good thoughts, good advice, good teaching, high ideas, noble sentiments have also come from this other world, and it cannot be that "astral shells" have given them. If they were sifted out and tabulated, it would be found that they are not different from what living men have said of their own free will and intent. They are not new save as to means of communication. The strangeness of

method very often serves to more deeply impress them on the mind of the recipient. But yet this extraordinary means has now and again led men to give them out as something new in all time, as very wonderful, as a revelation, when the unprejudiced observer sees that they are the opposite, are old or trite, and sometimes mixed up with gush and folly, the product of either one side or the other as might happen. This has cast a stigma on the cult of Spiritualism and made the profane to laugh.

We have therefore to consider such communications which were valuable at the time or to a person, and beneficial in their effect. For were we to refuse to do so, the weapon thus forged will cut the Theosophist who so often is found to be a believer — as I am myself — in communications from Masters or Mahatmas who are no less spirits, but rather more so, because they are still in bodies of one sort or another.

The Path

SEEKING THE SELF — *Che-Yew-Tsang*

Every new mind is a new classification. Every incarnate soul presents us with a new aspect of that Self by reason of which we exist. Yet here is one who has in fact, if not in theory, set around himself a barrier. Within it certain of his fellows have been honored with admission. From them he can learn; others he can only teach. Perhaps those so highly favored are students of older date than he himself; perhaps they are scholars of recognized achievements. What indeed is to be learned from one who cannot even talk good English? Another, hearing that "within oneself the key to the mystery lies hidden", delves within his own mind in search of its secret workings. He is enough for himself, he thinks. He will expound to those unhappy seekers after the objective as much of what he has discovered as they can understand. He has not learned their language; but then how could he? Yet a third will study Nature, will roam the fields, will watch the lilies grow, will listen to the music of the wind as it croons amidst the trees. Man, he says, has become diseased, and is no longer a natural growth, but one of Nature's great mistakes. Or perhaps The Ancients alone were possessed of the occult truth. Nothing worth the hearing or the reading has been written for some two thousand years. This age is matter-sodden; the spirit has gone out of it. Then he buries himself in musty volumes of a bygone age, seeking in them the Light of lights.

Barriers all. Why such false limits to the unlimited? Is not the Self in our midst today as yesterday and forever? Is not man, corrupt or incorrupt, Its chief expression, Its long-worn vesture? And if one could judge of a city by one inhabitant, it could only be after many travels through many lands and with a perfect knowledge of race and type and history.

Wise indeed is he who finds his teacher everywhere. In stone and star and scroll, in man and child, in the present and the past — in boundless Nature. Who would exile Life from any point in space? Is there an atom that is not conscious? And is there not Motion and that which moves, both in ourselves and everywhere without? The fall of a leaf, the chance word of friend or foe — both show us the workings of forces which as the agents of law might help in the downfall of nations.

We must interpret other minds by ours; but we must learn to understand our own by those around us. Mind is something more than our own mind. Only a fool in his pride will think that *that* man at any rate can teach him nothing. There is naught existing from which we have not much to learn. Nor need we make such haste to teach. Many, like live volcanoes, perpetually pour forth a stream of smothering verbiage; not waiting to be asked, seeking but an ear into which to turn their surplus energy. Their word must be heard. Of ignorance in themselves they rarely have time to think. An answer is always ready, though not of necessity correct.

Yet it is possible to teach by proper learning. If we seek in all things their lesson, we give whilst we receive. We admit no barriers; we turn to each and all and listen, looking for the Self. It speaks. The poorest, meaning thing on earth knows something we do not know. By causing its expression, by receiving in humility some simple fact, some glimpse of truth, we teach. Whether it be from man or beast or mineral, we give strength to its inner life. We have called forth that which lay hidden; we have helped in the birth of a thought.

The true learner is a teacher of wisdom. All that he takes he bestows; all that he gives is returned to him with increase. But this give and take is not his doing; it is the movement of that Law

upon which he waits.

We have but one tireless Friend, who, though forsaken, forsaketh not; who, throughout long neglect, standeth at hand, waiting but a call to lighten our hearts of their burdens. His memory doth not fail. When thy friends abandon thee, when they ask of thee a price for their friendship thou canst not pay, this Friend stands as forever unshaken and ready. Yet, oh my brother, if in thy loneliness thou turnest to the faithful One, forget not that he standeth also by those who do not stand by thee. Behind them he is hidden. Then turn not thy face from their sight, lest thou shouldst lose the vision of this thy Comforter and Companion. His homes are not numbered. He answereth thy cry from strange places, though thou callest him from out the chamber of thy heart.

The Path

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM (1)

Student. What is Occultism?

Sage. It is that branch of knowledge which shows the universe in the form of an egg. The cell of science is a little copy of the egg of the universe. The laws which govern the whole govern also every part of it. As man is a little copy of the universe — is the microcosm — he is governed by the same laws which rule the greater. Occultism teaches therefore of the secret laws and forces of the universe and man, those forces playing in the outer world and known in part only by the men of the day who admit no invisible real nature behind which is the model of the visible.

Student. What does Occultism teach in regard to man, broadly speaking?

Sage. That he is the highest product of evolution, and hence has in him a centre or focus corresponding to each centre of force or power in the universe. He therefore has as many centres or foci for force, power, and knowledge as there are such in the greater world about and within.

Student. Do you mean to include also the ordinary run of men, or is it the exceptions you refer to?

Sage. I include every human being, and that will reach from the lowest to the very highest, both those we know and those beyond us who are suspected as being in existence. Although we are accustomed to confine the term "human" to this earth, it is not correct to confine that sort of being to this plane or globe, because other planets have beings the same as ours in essential power and nature and possibility.

Student. Please explain a little more particularly what you mean by our having centres or foci in us.

Sage. Electricity is a most powerful force not fully known to modern science, yet used very much. The nervous, physical, and mental systems of man acting together are able to produce the same force exactly, and in a finer as well as subtler way and to as great a degree as the most powerful dynamo, so that the force might be used to kill, to alter, to move, or otherwise change any object or condition. This is the "vril" described by Bulwer Lytton in his *Coming Race*.

Nature exhibits to our eyes the power of drawing into one place with fixed limits any amount of material so as to produce the smallest natural object: or the very largest. Out of the air she takes what is already there, and by compressing it into the limits of tree or animal form makes it visible to our material eyes. This is the power of condensing into what may be known as the ideal limits, that is, into the limits of the form which is ideal. Man has this same power, and can, when he knows the laws and the proper centres of force in himself, do precisely what Nature does. He can thus make visible and material what was before ideal and invisible by filling the ideal form with the matter condensed from the air. In his case the only difference from Nature is that he does quickly what she brings about slowly.

Among natural phenomena there is no present illustration of telepathy good for our use. Among the birds and the beasts, however, there is telepathy instinctually performed. But telepathy, as it is now called, is the communicating of thought or idea from mind to mind. This is a natural power, and being well-understood may be used by one mind to convey to another, no matter how far away or what be the intervening obstacle, any idea or thought. In natural things we can take for that the

vibration of the chord which can cause all other chords of the same length to vibrate similarly. This is a branch of Occultism, a part of which is known to the modern investigator. But it is also one of the most useful and one of the greatest powers we have. To make it of service many things have to combine. While it is used every day in common life in the average way — for men are each moment telepathically communicating with each other — to do it in perfection, that is, against obstacle and distance, is perfection of occult art. Yet it will be known one day even to the common world.

Student. Is there any object had in view by Nature which man should also hold before him?

Sage. Nature ever works to turn the inorganic or the lifeless or the non-intelligent and non-conscious into the organic, the intelligent, the conscious; and this should be the aim of man also. In her great movements Nature seems to cause destruction, but that is only for the purpose of construction. The rocks are dissolved into earth, elements combine to bring on change, but there is the ever onward march of progress in evolution. Nature is not destructive of either thing or time, she is constructive. Man should be the same. And as a free moral agent he should work to that end, and not to procuring gratification merely nor for waste in any department.

Student. Is Occultism of truth or of falsehood; is it selfish or unselfish; or is it part one and part the other?

Sage. Occultism is colorless, and only when used by man for the one side or the other is it good or bad. Bad Occultism, or that which is used for selfish ends, is not false, for it is the same as that which is for good ends. Nature is two-sided, negative and positive, good and bad, light and dark, hot and cold, spirit and matter. The Black magician is as powerful in the matter of phenomena as the

White, but in the end all the trend of Nature will go to destroy the black and save the white. But what you should understand is that the false man and the true can both be occultists. The words of the Christian teacher Jesus will give the rule for judgment: "By their fruits ye shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?" Occultism is the general, all-inclusive term, the differentiating terms are White and Black; the same forces are used by both, and similar laws, for there are no special laws in this universe for any special set of workers in Nature's secrets. But the path of the untruthful and the wicked, while seemingly easy at first, is hard at last, for the black workers are the friends of no one, they are each against the other as soon as interest demands, and that may be anytime. It is said that final annihilation of the personal soul awaits those who deal in the destructive side of Nature's hall of experience.

Student. Where should I look for the help I need in the right life, the right study?

Sage. Within yourself is the light that lighteth every man who cometh here. The light of the Higher Self and of the Mahatma are not different from each other. Unless you find your Self, how can you understand Nature?

FOOTNOTE:

1. See *PATH*, V. 3, pp. 75, 125, 160, 187, 187, 219, for former articles under this title. ([return to text](#))

The Path

ON THE SOURCES OF THE "SECRET DOCTRINE" — *Katharine Hillard*

It has often been my fortune to be asked upon what authority the statements in the *Secret Doctrine* were made, and I thought it might be useful to many members of the T. S. to have the few passages of the book itself that refer to its origins put into a more compact and easily-handled form. At the same time we must never forget the two points upon which H. P. B. herself laid so much stress; first, that nothing was to be accepted by the student simply and solely upon *authority*, however exalted, but only that to which his own soul testified as the truth; and second, that a large part, even of the esoteric teaching, was allegorical. Bearing these two statements in mind, we have as it were a touchstone wherewith to prove all things and to hold fast that which is good.

In the introductory chapter to Vol. I the author speaks of the "Wisdom Religion" as the inheritance of all the nations, the world over, and states that Gautama's metaphysics and secret teachings form but a very small part of the esoteric wisdom of the world since the beginning of our humanity, while he limited his *public* instructions to the purely moral and physiological aspect of the Wisdom Religion, to Ethics and Man alone. Things "unseen and incorporeal" the great Teacher reserved for a select circle of his Arhats, who received their initiation at the famous Saptaparna cave near Mount Baibhar. These teachings, once transferred from this inner circle into the outer world of China, Japan, Siam, and Burmah, soon became greatly changed and corrupted, while early in the present century *one* key to the ancient symbolism having been discovered, its outer and grosser meaning was eagerly seized as explaining everything, and the literature of phallicism threatened to usurp the place of all other symbolism. And this,

says H. P. B., is perhaps "the true reason why the outline of a few fundamental truths from the Secret Doctrine of the archaic ages is now permitted to see the light".

The main body of the doctrines given is found scattered through hundreds and thousands of Sanscrit manuscripts, some already translated, more or less badly, others still in the vernacular. These are accessible to the scholar, while a few passages, taken from oral teaching or from the Commentaries, will be found difficult to trace. However, one fact is certain, says Mme. Blavatsky, that the members of several esoteric schools — the seat of which is beyond the Himalayas, and whose ramifications may be found in China, Japan, India, Tibet, and even in Syria and South America — claim to have in their possession *all* the sacred and philosophical works, whether in manuscript or in type, in whatever language or whatever character, that have ever been written, from the ideographic hieroglyphs down. And that these works have been carefully preserved in subterranean crypts and cave-libraries in the mountains of Western Tibet and elsewhere, where there are said to be hidden collections of books far too numerous to find room even in the British Museum.

The documents have been concealed, it is true, but the knowledge itself has always been made known to the chosen few through the medium of the great Adepts and teachers. More than one great scholar has stated that there never was a religious founder who had invented a new religion or revealed a new truth. They were all *transmitters*, not original teachers, and handed on fragments of the truths they had learned, couched in the symbolism of their own special nation.

The teaching of the *Secret Doctrine* antedates the Vedas, and much of it has only been transmitted orally. The present instalment is based upon the Stanzas of the *Book of Dzyan*, a

volume written in Senzar, the secret sacerdotal tongue, once known to the Initiates of every nation. For this language, besides having an alphabet of its own (says H. P. B. in the preface to the *Voice of the Silence*), may be rendered in several modes of ideographic writing, common and international property among initiated mystics and their followers. Dan (in modern Chinese and Tibetan phonetics, Ch'an) is the general term for the esoteric schools and their literature. In old books the word "Janna" is defined as "to reform one's self by meditation and knowledge", a second, *inner* birth. Hence Dzyan (Djan, phonetically), the *Book of Dzyan*. The only original copy now in existence, says *Isis Unveiled* (vol. I, p. 1), is so very old that modern antiquarians would not even agree upon the nature of the fabric upon which it is written. Tradition says that its contents were dictated to the first men of each race by the Divine Beings whose duty it was to instruct them. The old book, having described cosmic evolution and explained the origin of everything on earth, including physical man, gives the true history of the races from the First down to the Fifth, our present race, and stops short with the death of Krishna, which occurred about 4995 years ago.

It is the original work from which the many volumes of *Kin-ti* were compiled, and not only this and the *Siphrah Dzenionta* (the most ancient Hebrew document on occult learning), but even the *Sepher Jezireh*, the book of *Shu-King* (China's primitive bible), the sacred volumes of the Egyptian Thoth-Hermes, the Puranas of India, the Chaldean *Book of Numbers*, and the *Pentateuch* itself, are all derived from that one small parent volume, upon which an enormous mass of commentaries, glosses, etc., have been written. In the *Secret Doctrine* as we have it, certain portions of the stanzas of the *Book of Dzyan* are printed, and extracts are also given from the Chinese, Tibetan, and Sanscrit translations of the original Senzar Commentaries and Glosses.

In addition we are told (I, 208) that is it from the Divine Teachers before-mentioned that infant humanity got its first notions of all the arts and sciences, as well as of spiritual knowledge, and it is they who laid the foundation-stones of those ancient civilizations that are so puzzling to our modern scholars. The Druidical circles, the dolmans, the temples of India, Egypt, and Greece, the towers and the 127 towns in Europe which were found "Cyclopean in origin" by the French Institute, are all the work of initiated Priest-Architects, the descendants of those primarily taught by the "Sons of God", justly called the "Builders".

The *Secret Doctrine* (I, 272) is the accumulated Wisdom of the Ages, but such is the power of occult symbolism that the facts which have actually occupied countless generations of initiated seers and prophets to marshal, to set down, and explain, are all recorded in a few pages of geometrical signs and glyphs. It is useless to say that the system in question is no fancy of one or several isolated individuals, but is the one uninterrupted record covering thousands of generations of seers, whose respective experiences were made to test and to verify the traditions passed orally by one race to another of the teachings of the Divine Instructors who watched over the childhood of humanity. And for long ages the "Wise Men" of the Fifth, our own, Race passed their lives in *learning, not teaching*, in checking, testing, and verifying in every department of Nature the traditions handed down to them, by the independent visions of great Adepts; that is, men who have developed their physical, mental, psychic, and spiritual organizations to the utmost possible degree. No vision of one Adept was accepted till it was checked and confirmed by the visions — so obtained as to stand as independent evidence — of other Adepts, as well as by centuries of experiences.

In fact, the history of the world since its formation and to its end is "written in the stars", that is, is recorded in the Zodiac and the

Universal Symbolism whose keys are in the keeping of the Initiates (II, 438). The records of the temples, zodiacal and traditional, as well as the ideographic records of the East as read by the Adepts of the Sacred Science, are not a whit more doubtful than the so-called ancient history of the European nations, now edited, corrected, and amplified by half a century of archaeological discoveries, and the very problematical reading of the Assyrian tiles, cuneiform fragments, and Egyptian hieroglyphics. So are our data based upon the same inscriptions *in addition* to an almost inexhaustible number of secret works of which Europe knows nothing, and *plus* the perfect knowledge by the Initiates of the symbolism of every word so recorded.

It was a correct inference of Barth from the study of the *Rig Veda*, that *this Scripture has been compiled by Initiates* (II, 45 1). The whole of the *Secret Doctrine* is an endeavor to prove this truth. The ancient Adepts solved the great problems of science, however unwilling modern materialism may be to admit the fact. The mysteries of Life and Death *were* fathomed by the great master-minds of antiquity; and if they have preserved them in secrecy and silence it is because these problems formed part of the sacred Mysteries, and because they must always have remained incomprehensible to the vast majority of men, as they do now.

Such are the statements, in a more or less condensed form, of the sources of that most extraordinary book known as the *Secret Doctrine*, taken from the two volumes of the work itself, as well as from the introductory chapters of the *Voice of the Silence* and *Isis Unveiled*.

The Path

SUPERSENSUOUS PLANES AND MIND — *James H. Connelly*

Theosophy affirms the existence of supersensuous planes in the Macrocosm, each of which bears its part in the composition of the Microcosm (man), and occultism — or, in other words, advanced science — demonstrates beyond question the intimate relations between them and the material one which is the field of our mundane experiences. Evidence of their existence is also found in a proper understanding of the operations of the mind. These may be broadly classed as imagination, perception, reception, retention, recollection, ratiocination, and impulsion. That this classification is crudely general may be admitted, but it is sufficiently definite for present purposes, which do not include an exhaustive analysis of the infinitely complex functions of the mind, a work in which even so close and careful a reasoner as Raue found himself hampered by the limitations of a volume of almost six hundred pages.

Ultra-materialists — whom it would be better perhaps to call corporealists — affirm that all thought is a product of molecular modes of motion, mere expression of activity in brain-tissue cells, and point to the discernible effects of mental action upon the gray matter of the brain as evidence in support of their hypothesis. This is as correct as it would be to say that the copper of the etcher's plate originates the picture which, in lines and dots, is bitten into its surface by the acid skilfully applied by the artist in conformity to the requirements of the ideal in his mind. The fact of the matter is that the gross matter of which the brain is composed, whether gray or white, great or small in quantity, and much or little convoluted, is of itself as little capable of originating thought, or even sensing an impression, as a stone would be, or the brain itself if the life-principle were separated

from it. But within that brain, present in every molecule and even atom of it — yet as far beyond the corporealist's discovery as the conditions of life on Sirius — is the astral brain, which is also matter, but of such tenuity in its atomic constitution that it may not be, in any way, apprehended by our gross senses.

The functions of that astral brain are perception of sensations and their translation to the mind, and the application of the conative forces resultant from such mental cognition to the direction, through the gross brain, of subservient physical impulse. What, then, is the gross brain? Simply a cellular aggregation of molecular matter having such specialized differentiation as enables it to store up, as impressions, the vibrations conveyed to it by the astral brain, holding them as latent vestiges of sensation and, when required, translating them to the lower rate of vibrations appreciable by the denser molecular matter of the body, so becoming the immediate motor force for action. The capacity for development with which it came into being was a matter of Karmic award, being prescribed by its environment, the hereditary influences upon it, and various other circumstances which it is not necessary now to particularize, all having their effect in determining its quality — as the sun, air, soil, and moisture govern the growing plant — but nothing endowing it, in any degree, with the power of starting vibrations, or — in other words — originating thought. Even the primitive forces, the capacity for mere sensory perceptions, do not belong to the gross brain but to the astral brain, in which it is not unreasonable to suppose they inhere as unconsciously-cherished remainders from the exceptionally strong range of impressions naturally resultant from preceding existences, subject to the needs and desires of the corporeal form.

Those who affirm the capacity of gross matter to generate thought assume to find support for their hypotheses in the waste, by

mental energy, of the gray tissue of the corporeal brain, but they might as well ascribe to flowing blood the cutting of the vein from which it issues. The waste is an effect, not a cause. All energy is destructive, or, to speak more accurately, is reconstructive, and "the power which builds, unbuilds, and builds again" is ceaselessly at work. Molecular disintegration is hastened by all activity in every sort of tissue, and, if a proper balance is maintained, the work of molecular rearrangement is proportionately hastened by nutrition. Some scientists now affirm that cholesterin — a fatty salt found in the bile, lungs, and brain, and for which until very recently nobody saw any particular use — is the especial nutriment of the grey matter of the brain. Will the corporealists affirm that it is the cholesterin which does the thinking; that an heroic impulse or poetic thought is flattened crystals, insoluble in water but solvable in alcohol and ether, having well defined angles of crystallization and obtainable in quantity from gall-stones? The gentlemen who study mind from the standpoint of matter know a little about the physical brain, but not all, by any means, even of that. Is there one of them who knows the use of the pineal gland — which Descartes affirmed to be "the seat of the soul" — or can account for the gray sand found in it, not present in idiots or infants, scant in old age, and most abundant in middle-age brains of notable mental vigor?

The primitive forces already spoken of manifest themselves in the earliest moments of an infant's existence and do not cease while life lasts. They all tend towards experience of and repletion with external stimuli which correspond to their nature, and all experiences of sensation thus perceived are recorded in the plastic substance of the molecular brain as vestiges which may be stirred from latency to manifestation either by repetition of the stimuli primarily causing them, by contrasting stimuli, or by a strenuous effort of the mind, consciously or unconsciously

applied, as conative vibrations, through the astral medium. Evidently the depth of such latent impressions must be proportioned to the strength and frequency of the experiences of like stimuli of which the vestiges are resultants. Hence it is but natural that the larger number of vestiges accumulated from the lower, or animal, senses — which are most productive of experiences in corporeal life — should eventually predominate in strength over those of the higher or intellectual range. And this affords an explanation of the power of Kama — or animal desire — in controlling our lives, so that a pessimistic good man has been moved to declare that "man is born to evil as the sparks fly upward". It also, if we reflect upon the extensions of this influence, enables us to comprehend the seeming mystery of the formation, during life, of the Kama-rupa, the wholly animal soul which becomes perceptible after death as an objective entity. And it makes apparent why and how men's characters are so often stamped upon their bodily features and forms. All the sensualities and vices that stain men's souls stamp themselves first in deep impressions upon the plastic brain, and thence find expression in the outward form to every part of which that brain extends its influence. It is erroneous to suppose that the brain is all lodged in the cavity of the skull. It is in the spine and the nerve ganglions, and practically throughout all the extensions of the nervous system. Virchow characterized the new-born child as "an almost purely spinal being", and Pfluger's experiments upon frogs demonstrated that consciousness of sensations, capacity to locate them, and power to direct corporeal action were all retained by the unfortunate batrachians upon which he experimented, after their skulls had been emptied of brain matter. The transference of consciousness of a still higher range from the brain to the solar plexus, under certain abnormal nervous conditions, may also be cited as an additional evidence of the diffusion of the specialized matter responsive to astral vibrations. So throughout the entire

man runs his gross brain, and coextensive with it his astral brain, energizing it, directing its formative work of giving outward demonstration, in all his physical being, of what he has made of his soul.

Perception of sensations and their retention as vestiges for stimulation of conative force at the command of recollection — which is a mandatory vibration in the mind — may then be said to be powers located in the astral brain and its tool, the gross organ. But beyond these is the higher range of faculties, ratiocination, reception of purely mental impressions — either from purely subjective concepts or by reflection from the mentality of another — and finally the power of impulsion of mental force upon others. All these must necessarily, to be made potential, find translation through the lower rate of the astral medium to the still further diminished rate of the gross brain, if eventual manifestation on the material plane is sought, but not otherwise.

That sensory perception is an attribute of the astral brain and not of the corporeal is sufficiently evidenced by its highest manifestation in the experience of the many who possess the power of "seeing on the astral plane" either normally or under the abnormal stimulus of some phase of hypnotic control. The entities seen by so-called "spiritualistic mediums", and which they mistake for spirits of the dead, are on the astral plane. Charcot, Binet *freres*, James, and many other investigators have shown the ability of a hypnotee to become a witness of things which were not within the range of physical perception and, being outside the knowledge of any person whose mentality could have reached the subject, could only have been sensed through perception of astral vibrations. And the state of *statuvolism*, or self-induced trance is simply an excitation of the astral percipiency to an abnormal degree.

These phenomena must not be confused with others, very closely related yet altogether different, in which the compelling force of one mentality exerted upon another is very clearly demonstrated. The mind of every human being, in proportion to its development, possesses individual capacity in ability to reason, to draw deductions from vestiges of perceptions at its command, or impressions of a higher range, and thus to elect for itself between good and evil. It is this which constitutes its moral responsibility and determines its evolutionary progress, whether downward under the domination of its Kamic control or upward to spiritual life. But it is likewise susceptible, in greater or lesser degree, to the vibrations projected upon its plane by other minds, affecting and in some cases even paralyzing that power of ratiocination. This is the case when it is subjected to the will of another mentality exercising upon it hypnotic control, when it is rendered mentally — and it would justly seem — morally irresponsible. It may, on the other hand, if sufficiently forceful to impel such vibrations on the mental plane, in the same way take from others their mentality temporarily and even, to some extent, permanently. Herein lies the awful danger attendant upon the practice of hypnotism, for both the "hypnotist" and the "sensitive".

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM

Student. — What is the effect of trying to develop the power of seeing in the astral light before a person is initiated?

Sage. — Seeing in the astral light is not done through Manas, but through the senses, and hence has to do entirely with sense-perception removed to a plane different from this, but more illusionary. The final perceiver or judge of perception is in Manas, in the Self; and therefore the final tribunal is clouded by the astral perception if one is not so far trained or initiated as to know the difference and able to tell the true from the false. Another result is a tendency to dwell on this subtle sense-perception, which at last will cause an atrophy of Manas for the time being. This makes the confusion all the greater, and will delay any possible initiation all the more or forever. Further, such seeing is in the line of phenomena, and adds to the confusion of the Self which is only beginning to understand this life; by attempting the astral another element of disorder is added by more phenomena due to another plane, thus mixing both sorts up. The Ego must find its basis and not be swept off hither and thither. The constant reversion of images and ideas in the astral light, and the pranks of the elementals there, unknown to us as such and only seen in effects, still again add to the confusion. To sum it up, the real danger from which all others flow or follow is in the confusion of the Ego by introducing strange things to it before the time.

Student. — How is one to know when he gets real occult information from the Self within?

Sage. — Intuition must be developed and the matter judged from the true philosophical basis, for if it is contrary to true general

rules it is wrong. It has to be known from a deep and profound analysis by which we find out what is from egotism alone and what is not; if it is due to egotism, then it is not from the Spirit and is untrue. The power to know does not come from book-study nor from mere philosophy, but mostly from the actual practice of altruism in deed, word, and thought; for that practice purifies the covers of the soul and permits that light to shine down into the brain-mind. As the brain-mind is the receiver in the waking state, it has to be purified from sense-perception, and the truest way to do this is by combining philosophy with the highest outward and inward virtue.

Student. — Tell me some ways by which intuition is to be developed.

Sage. — First of all by giving it exercise, and second by not using it for purely personal ends. Exercise means that it must be followed through mistakes and bruises until from sincere attempts at use it comes to its own strength. This does not mean that we can do wrong and leave the results, but that after establishing conscience on a right basis by following the golden rule, we give play to the intuition and add to its strength. Inevitably in this at first we will make errors, but soon if we are sincere it will grow brighter and make no mistake. We should add the study of the works of those who in the past have trodden this path and found out what is the real and what is not. They say the Self is the only reality. The brain must be given larger views of life, as by the study of the doctrine of reincarnation, since that gives a limitless field to the possibilities in store. We must not only be unselfish, but must do all the duties that Karma has given us, and thus intuition will point out the road of duty and the true path of life.

Student. — Are there any Adepts in America or Europe?

Sage. — Yes, there are and always have been. But they have for

the present kept themselves hidden from the public gaze. The real ones have a wide work to do in many departments of life and in preparing certain persons who have a future work to do. Though their influence is wide they are not suspected, and that is the way they want to work for the present. There are some also who are at work with certain individuals in some of the aboriginal tribes in America, as among those are Egos who are to do still more work in another incarnation, and they must be prepared for it now. Nothing is omitted by these Adepts. In Europe it is the same way, each sphere of work being governed by the time and the place.

Student. — What is the meaning of the five-pointed star?

Sage. — It is the symbol of the human being who is not an Adept, but is now on the plane of the animal nature as to his life-thoughts and development inside. Hence it is the symbol of the race. Upside down it means death or symbolizes that. It also means, when upside down, the other or dark side. It is at the same time the cross endowed with the power of mind, that is, man.

Student. — Is there a four-pointed star symbol?

Sage. — Yes. That is the symbol of the next kingdom below man, and pertains to the animals. The right kind of clairvoyant can see both the five- and the four-pointed star. It is all produced by the intersections of the lines or currents of the astral light emanating from the person or being. The four-pointed one means that the being having but it has not as yet developed Manas.

Student. — Has the mere figure of a five-pointed star any power in itself?

Sage. — It has some, but very little. You see it is used by all sorts of people for trademarks and the like, and for the purposes of organizations, yet no result follows. It must be actually used by

the mind to be of any force or value. If so used, it carries with it the whole power of the person to whom it may belong.

Student. — Why is the sword so much spoken of in practical Occultism by certain writers?

Sage. — Many indeed of these writers merely repeat what they have read. But there is a reason, just as in warfare the sword has more use for damage than a club. The astral light corresponds to water. If you try to strike in or under water with a club, it will be found that there is but little result, but a sharp knife will cut almost as well under water as out of it. The friction is less. So in the astral light a sword used on that plane has more power to cut than a club has, and an elemental for that reason will be more easily damaged by a sword than by a club or a stone. But all of this relates to things that are of no right value to the true student, and are indulged in only by those who work in dark magic or foolishly by those who do not quite know what they do. It is certain that he who uses the sword or the club will be at last hurt by it. And the lesson to be drawn is that we must seek for the true Self that knows all Occultism and all truth, and has in itself the protecting shield from all dangers. That is what the ancient Sages sought and found, and that is what should be striven after by us.

The Path

WRONG POPULAR NOTIONS — *William Q. Judge*

What are your proofs?" is often asked of the Theosophical student who believes in reincarnation and Karma, who holds to the existence of the astral body, and who thinks that evolution demands a place in the cosmos for Mahatmas (or great souls) as facts and ideals. "If you cannot prove reincarnation just as you would a fact in a court of law, I will not believe", says one, while another says, "Make such objective demonstrations as science does, and then you may expect me to agree with you". But in truth all these objectors accept as proven in the way they demand for Theosophy many things which on a slight examination are seen to rest as much on theory and metaphysical argument as do any of the doctrines found in Theosophical literature. The axioms of mathematics are improvable; the very word assumes that they have to be accepted. Being accepted, we go forward and on the basis of their unproved truth demonstrate other and succedent matters. The theories of modern astronomy are taken as true because by their means eclipses are foretold and other great achievements of that science made possible. But many centuries ago quite different theories of the relations and motions and structure of the heavens allowed the old astronomers to make the same deductions. Let us examine a few words and things.

THE ATOM

The atom and the molecule are very influential words. They are constantly used by people claiming to follow science, but who indulge in criticisms on the uncertainties of Theosophical speculation. Yet no one ever saw an atom or a molecule. They are accepted as facts by science — just as the spiritually-inclined accept the existence of the invisible soul — yet it is impossible to

objectively prove either the one or the other. They are deemed to be proven because they are necessary. But let a Theosophist say that the astral body exists, and Mahatmas also, because both are necessary in evolution, and at once a demand arises for "demonstration" by objective proofs.

THE SUN

The sun is the apparent source of energy, and is confidently supposed by many to be a mass of burning material. No one, however, knows this to be so. No one was ever there, and the whole set of theories regarding the luminary rests on assumptions. Many natural facts are against some of the theories. The great fact that the higher the mountain the more cold it is on top would be one, not wholly accounted for by theories as to radiation. And when we remember the great, the immense, difference between the various scientific estimates of the sun's heat, doubt increases. Seeing that electricity is now so much better known, and that it is apparently all-pervading, the ancient idea that the sun is a center of electrical or magnetic energy which turns into heat as well as other things on reaching here, becomes plausible and throws some spice of illusion into the doctrine that our sun is a mass of burning matter.

Again, the sun is seen as if over the horizon in full view every clear evening, when in fact he has been some minutes down below the line of sight. Refraction partly accounts for this, but none the less is his apparent visibility or position above the horizon an illusion.

THE STARS

Many of those that are known as fixed stars are immeasurably far away. Sirius is at an immense distance, and has been receding always many thousands of miles each minute. Others are so far

off that it takes one hundred thousand years for their light to reach here.

Yet since records began they have all remained apparently in one place and in the same relation to each other. They constitute a vast illusion. They are moving and yet they remain still. We point the telescope at one of our sister planets, and knowing that its light takes fifteen minutes or more to get to us, we must be continually directing the glass to a point in space where the planet is not, and by no possibility can we point to where it actually is. Still, for all this uncertainty, many complicated and definite calculations are based on these observations of mere illusions.

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE

These are practically used every hour of the day for the safeguarding of human life and property. But they exist only in the brains of men, for they are not in the sky or on land. They are theoretical divisions made by man, and they are possible only because the sole reality in nature is that which is jeered at by many as the ideal. But if the ancients are said to be the constructors of a great human chart in the Zodiac, the divisions of which have a bearing on the navigation of the great ocean of human evolution, the proud practical man says that you have but shown the ancients to be fanciful, superstitious, grotesque. But they were not so. Doubtless the saying recorded of Jesus about the time when we should see "the sign of the Son of Man in the heavens" will not so far from now be found to have a practical meaning in human life.

The ancient Sage was like the modern captain. The captain takes an observation of the illusionary stars and the blazing sun, thus discovering whether his ship is near or far from land. The Sage observed the Zodiac, and from the manner it and its boats were

related to each other he was able to calculate whether the human freight in the boat of human evolution was near a rock or on the free, open sea in its eternal and momentous journey.

SENSATION OF TOUCH

Every one is accustomed to say that he has touched this or that object on which his fingers may have rested. But this is not so. We do not touch anything; we only perceive and report a sensation which we call touch. If that sensation is due to actual contact between the skin and the object, then the harder we pressed, and thus the nearer we came to the object's surface, the more accurate should be the sensation. In fact, however, if we press hard we dull the sensation and turn it into one of pain for the skin. There is always a space between the skin and the surface dealt with, just as there is always a space between the molecules of each mass. If two smooth planes be pushed on to each other they will adhere, and the smoother they are the more difficult it will be to get them apart. If we could actually touch the hand to any surface so as to cover all of it with a touching surface, we could not withdraw the hand at all. All that we get, then, by what we call touch is the idea produced by the vibration and by that much of contact as is possible in the case.

CONTINUOUS SOLIDITY

Quite Theosophical is the scientist when he says that "we cannot know anything of the actual nature of matter in itself, but can only know the sensation or the phenomena". The mineral or metal called even the hardest is not solid or continuous in itself. This is now admitted by all scientific men. Even the diamond, "hardest of all", is a mass of moving molecules made up of like moving atoms. Its hardness is only relative. It is simply harder than glass because its atoms are moving at a more rapid rate. In a recent lecture in London Mr. Bell, a scientific light, told how the

edge or point of the diamond cuts the glass because the molecules in the diamond move rapidly and get in between the slower ones of the glass and thus cut it. And so it is with all other masses of matter. They are only masses of molecules in different rates of vibration; none of them solid or hard save in a relative sense. Is it not true, then, as so often held by philosophers and so insisted on by those Adepts who gave us information through H. P. Blavatsky that the world we are in is to be properly considered in a metaphysical sense and not as a mere mechanism that can be explained on mechanical principles? And in the face of all the illusions and all the speculations of life and science, why should the Theosophist be asked to make or give any different sort of proofs than those availed of by science in all its investigations? There is no reason.

The Path

THE SPIRIT OF THINGS — *C. F. Wright*

"Ideas rule the world", quoted one of Those whose influence in the Theosophical Society is not the less felt because its source is unperceived by most members. Yet there are many, even among our own Theosophists, who hold tightly to the notion that the world is held and even advanced by forms and words. From the ritualism and ceremonies of the Priesthood to the carefully rounded phrases of a Chesterfield there is scarcely a step. Both are equally useless to the development of the real man. The effort of each leads men away from the contemplation of the Spirit to the adoration of matter. Humanity has ever been led away from its freedom and recognition of the eternal principle of Life, to make obeisance to the god of form — and matter! Those in the past who said that all objectivity was Maya or illusion spoke a truth which must vibrate throughout all time, reverberating through the hearts of all who develop to the life of independence and power. For assuredly none can limit the changes in the Great Breath, whose perpetual motions in the unseen world make the varieties in this.

It is worth while to recognize this as a philosophy, and so prevent many mistakes. The world pulls this way and that, seeking her freedom in legislature and habit, oblivious to the fact that it is precisely these things which forge her chains. Belief in the necessity for Custom and Convention, sovereigns and saviours, style and good usage, is really born of the soulless: for these all limit freedom of the Spirit and propose to chain it to one idea. Hence arise disputations, and from them warfares.

Yet even recognizing this, the philosopher will not rebel against them nor seek their immediate destruction. Himself emancipated,

in the world though not of it, he will see that the world being held by forms, through them it must be aided and advanced to freedom.

Some will think it is going too far to say that the spirit of evil and stagnation is in form. But it is easy to demonstrate this truth. Every great leader, every genius, has thrown off the yoke of form-slavery, and drawn his principles of action from the free source of things. Though often disregarding and destroying things men have long believed dear and sacred, yet while he lives men follow him and love him; recognizing something of the heavenly power about him, they find strength in his freedom and delight to be in his presence and to know his thoughts. Who has not seen the spirit of life in a child? And there are none among us who upset customs more than children. Buddha, Jesus, and the true religious founders destroyed all forms. Even though we see in them the great originators of present religious forms, it is not because they desired that that should be so, but because their ideas and wisdom were clothed in matter by their followers, who, possessing little recognition of the Spirit, were incapable of drawing life from anything but externals. Poets and painters, musicians, geniuses of all kinds, are noted for their eccentricities, yet no one can doubt that they see deeper into the divinity of things than do the Philistines. Strange as it may seem, it is, after all, the power of *originality* which is indicative of possible progress in any human being. Without this the nature is in darkness, there is no light in it and no creative power.

The Theosophical Society was established on such a basis that should prevent, if possible, its ever being tied by forms. Yet how many there are who want to make it a *respectable* institution — will not help a brother unless he be of the same rank as themselves! How many, indeed, wish that H. P. B. had not had eccentricities, or had not done so much outwardly to vibrate and

shock conventional shells; or that fewer uneducated persons were in the ranks and more of those who are book-learned and well placed in Society!

Others are so caught in the web of form that they think it impossible for anyone to possess wisdom or light outside the Society's ranks. Let such know that there are many persons all over the world, outside the T. S., who have caught something of the Spirit of Wisdom just now lighting up the whole earth, and these as well as T. S. members are surely being helped by the Great Brotherhood behind. The T. S. has its own work to do. It was the originator of these thoughts in the West, and through its members they must be given to the world. And if taken up and used by others outside, a part here and a part there, sometimes imperfectly, generally unacknowledged, it is no harm, but always unconsciously an aiding the world. There are no forms here, no priesthood; each one has his own wisdom and should hasten to let the world know of it.

It is not only the Theosophical Society we work for, as a Society merely. This is a great danger to be avoided. It is for the Society only as a useful vehicle of ideas that we labor. It will fade and fall to pieces some time — and let us trust it may be destroyed long before it approaches the possibility of becoming a priesthood — but the ideas the world and our race have received through it will live and will have moulded the thought of the people almost without their knowing it. We shall be forgotten, but the thoughts we have passed on will live. Members should recollect they are not building an institution, but only erecting a temporary structure in which a little wisdom has been stored.

Many in the Society are just now used by Those "behind the scenes", to become vehicles of truth. They are intended to hand it on. Once the brain has opened to the Light only one thing can

again close it, that is, the *keeping back of wisdom from others*. Yet many receive knowledge in a flash of intuition, and instead of giving it out at some Branch meeting or to someone who may need it, they keep it hid away to burst it forth later in a carefully-written paper or lecture, so that they may receive credit for their ideas and not have them stolen by others beforehand. Their ideas will then find no ground in which to take root: they should have been given out when received. And in time such persons will, if this habit be kept up, lose the spiritual power they now possess. Moreover, the setting free of ideas in the world at the right moment has a great deal to do with the development of occult powers, however little connection between these two matters there may seem to be. It is pure personality and selfishness that make one hold back and wait until the thoughts can be given out with greater credit to himself.

Madame Blavatsky launched her wisdom into the world without any consideration of herself. Probably her thought was something of this nature: "I know my English is faulty, I know my science is not of the best, but my wisdom is true, and it must be sent forth. Others will steal my ideas and knowledge for their own glorification, but it does not matter, that is their own loss; they are also helping me in my labor."

So it is that work which must be done, and speedily lest we lose the knowledge ere we have pinned it. Let loose the ideas among the people; do not hold them till you can get glory by them. Do not wait until you can understand Sanskrit, can write classical English, have made a name for yourself in the world, before you become a worker. This is all fear of form. To be sure, the better the instrument the better the work, but the means must not be mistaken for the end. The time is short; only a few more years exist for active work. Let the ideas loose in the world at all costs; and no matter at what loss of fame to yourself. After all, on your

death-bed you will know that it is the IDEA — spiritual or otherwise — of life that you have had, and your virtue, that are the important things, not how much you have known of other men's thoughts, or how correctly you have dressed.

The Ideas live and rule, not the words that clothed them nor the imagery used for their expression. And it is well known that he who thus impersonally acts comes more and more directly in relationship with the Brotherhood of Light.

The Path

LETTERS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY: I (1)

These letters will be continued each month in the *PATH*. They constitute a correspondence carried on by H. P. B. with her Russian relatives, and are being translated into English by H. P. B.'s niece, Mrs. C. Johnston, whose maiden name was Vera Jelihovsky, and whose mother is Mme. Jelihovsky, the sister of H. P. B. who contributed under her own name to Mr. Sinnett's *Incidents in the Life of Madame Blavatsky*. As most of the letters were not dated, it will not always be possible to say whether H. P. B. was writing from America, Tibet, Egypt, or the North Pole. A great many letters are in this correspondence, and the series will be continued until all are published. They are all of wonderful interest. It must be borne in mind for a clearer understanding of her words that she was writing to relatives who did not understand her strange inner life, and many of whom held religious opinions very different from hers. Permission has been given me to add some notes, but for those I alone will be responsible.— W. Q. J.

About the year 1875 Madame Jelihovsky, who is well known both on account of her own contributions to literature and also as the sister of Madame Blavatsky, heard that H. P. B. had commenced to write in a way that would have been impossible to her a few years before. How she had acquired the knowledge that won the unanimous praise of both the English and American press was beyond all explanation. There were rumors afloat as to "sorcery" being at the root of it, and filled with forebodings and terrors Madame Jelihovsky wrote to her sister, imploring an explanation. (2) She received the following reply:

"Do not be afraid that I am off my head. All that I can say is that someone positively *inspires me* — . . . more than this: someone enters me. It is not I who talk and write: it is something within me, my higher and luminous Self, that thinks and writes for me. Do not ask me, my friend, what I experience, because I could not explain it to you clearly. I do not know myself! The one thing I know is that now, when I am about to reach old age, I have become a sort of storehouse of somebody else's knowledge. . . . *Someone* comes and envelops me as a misty cloud and all at once pushes me out of myself, and then I am not "I" any more — Helena Petrovna Blavatsky — but someone else. Someone strong and powerful, born in a totally different region of the world; and as to myself it is almost as if I were asleep, or lying by not quite conscious, — not in my own body but close by, held only by a thread which ties me to it. However, at times I see and hear everything quite clearly: I am perfectly conscious of what my body is saying and doing — or at least its new possessor. I even understand and remember it all so well that afterwards I can repeat it and even write down *his* words. . . . At such a time I see awe and fear on the faces of Olcott and others, and follow with interest the way in which *he* half-pityingly regards them out of my own eyes and teaches them with my physical tongue. Yet not with my mind but his own, which enwraps my brain like a cloud. . . . Ah, but really I cannot explain everything."

H. P. B.'s astonishment at this marvellous development of her own powers would appear to have been great, if one may judge by a letter she wrote (about 1875 to 1876) to her aunt, Madame Fadeef, with whom she had been brought up and educated:

"Tell me, dear one, do you take any interest in physiologico-psychological mysteries? Here is one for you which is well qualified to astonish any physiologist: in our Society there are a few exceedingly learned members — for instance, Professor

Wilder, one of the first archaeologists and Orientalists in the United States, and all these people come to me to be taught, and swear that I know all kinds of Eastern languages and sciences, positive as well as abstract, much better than themselves. That's a fact! And it's as bad to run up against a fact as against a pitchfork. So then tell me: how could it have happened that I, whose learning was so awfully lame up to the age of forty, have suddenly become a phenomenon of learning in the eyes of people who are really learned? This fact is an impenetrable mystery of Nature. I — a psychological problem, an enigma for future generations, a Sphinx! (3) Just fancy that I, who have never in my life studied anything, and possess nothing but the most superficial smattering of general information; I, who never had the slightest idea about physics or chemistry or zoology, or anything else — have now suddenly become able to write whole dissertations about them. I enter into discussions with men of science, into disputes out of which I often emerge triumphant. . . . It's not a joke; I am perfectly serious; I am really frightened because I do not understand how it all happens. It is true that for nearly three years past I have been studying night and day, reading and thinking. But whatever I happen to read, it all seems familiar to me. I find mistakes in the most learned articles, and in lectures by Tyndall, Herbert Spencer, Huxley, and others. If some archaeologist happens to call on me, on taking leave he is certain to assure me that I have made clear to him the meaning of various monuments, and pointed out things to him of which he had never dreamed. All the symbols of antiquity, and their secret meaning, come into my head and stand there before my eyes as soon as the conversation touches on them.

"A pupil of Faraday's, a certain Professor H., who has been christened by the voice of a thousand mouths 'the Father of experimental Physics', having spent yesterday evening with me,

now assures me that I am well qualified to 'put Faraday in my pocket'. Can it be that they all are simply fools? But it is impossible to suppose that friends and enemies alike have leagued together to make of me a savant if all that I do is to prove superficially certain wild theories of my own. And if it was only my own devoted Olcott and other Theosophists who had such a high opinion of me, it could be said: '*Dans le pays des aveugles les borgnes sont rois*' ('In a country of blind men the one-eyed are kings'). But I continually have a whole crowd from morning to night of all kinds of Professors, Doctors of Science, and Doctors of Divinity; (4) for instance, there are two Hebrew Rabbis here, Adler and Goldstein, who are both of them thought to be the greatest Talmudists. They know by heart both the *Quabalah* of Simeon Ben Jochai and the *Codex Nazarteus* of Bardesanes. They were brought to me by A., a protestant clergyman and commentator on the *Bible*, who hoped they would prove that I am mistaken on the subject of a certain statement in the Chalden Bible of Onkelos. And with what result? I have beaten them. I quoted to them whole sentences in ancient Hebrew and proved to them that Onkelos is an authority of the Babylonian school."

In the earlier letters of H. P. B. to Madame Jelihovsky the intelligence which has been referred to as "enveloping her body" and using her brain is spoken of as "the Voice" or "Sahib". Only later did she name this, or another "Voice", as "Master". For instance, she writes to Madame Jelihovsky:

"I never tell anyone here about my experience with the *Voice*. When I try to assure them that I have never been in Mongolia, that I do not know either Sanskrit or Hebrew or ancient European languages, they do not believe me. 'How is this,' they say, 'you have never been there, and yet you describe it all so accurately? You do not know the languages and yet you translate straight from the originals!' and so they refuse to believe me. (5) They

think that I have some mysterious reasons for secrecy; and besides, it is an awkward thing for me to deny when everyone has heard me discussing various Indian dialects with a lecturer who has spent twenty years in India. Well, all that I can say is, either they are mad or I am a changeling!"

About this time H. P. B. appears to have been greatly troubled, for though some members of the nascent Theosophical Society were able to get "visions of pure Planetary Spirits", she could only see "earthly exhalations, elementary spirits" of the same category, which she said played the chief part in materializing seances. She writes:

"In our Society everyone must be a vegetarian, eating no flesh and drinking no wine. This is one of our first rules." (6) It is well known what an evil influence the evaporations of blood and alcohol have on the spiritual side of human nature, blowing the animal passions into a raging fire; and so one of these days I have resolved to fast more severely than hitherto. I ate only salad and did not even smoke for whole nine days, and slept on the floor, and this is what happened: I have suddenly caught a glimpse of one of the most disgusting scenes of my own life, and I felt as if I was out of my body, looking at it with repulsion whilst it was walking, talking, getting puffed up with fat and sinning. Pheugh, how I hated myself! Next night when I again lay down on the hard floor, I was so tired out that I soon fell asleep and then got surrounded with a heavy, impenetrable darkness. Then I saw a star appearing; it lit up high, high above me, and then fell, dropping straight upon me. It fell straight on my forehead and got transformed into a hand. Whilst this hand was resting on my forehead I was all ablaze to know whose hand it was. . . . I was concentrated into a single prayer, into an impulse of the will, to learn who it was, to whom did this luminous hand belong. . . . And I have learned it: there stood over it I myself. Suddenly this

second me spoke to my body, 'Look at me!' My body looked at it and saw that the half of this second me was as black as jet, the other half whitish-grey, and only the top of the head perfectly white, brilliant, and luminous. And again I myself spoke to my body: 'When you become as bright as this small part of your head, you will be able to see what is seen by others, by the purified who have washed themselves clean. . . . And meanwhile, make yourself clean, make yourself clean, make yourself clean.' And here I awoke."

At one time H. P. B. was exceedingly ill with advanced rheumatism in her leg. Doctors told her that it was gangrened, and considered her case hopeless. But she was successfully treated by a negro who was sent to her by the "Sahib". She writes to Madame Jelihovsky:

"He has cured me entirely. And just about this time I have begun to feel a very strange duality. Several times a day I feel that besides me there is someone else, quite separable from me, present in my body. I never lose the consciousness of my own personality; what I feel is as if I were keeping silent and the other one — the lodger who is in me — were speaking with my tongue. For instance, I know that I have never been in the places which are described by my 'other me', but this other one — the second me — does not lie when he tells about places and things unknown to me, because he has actually seen them and knows them well. I have given it up: let my fate conduct me at its own sweet will; and besides, what am I to do? It would be perfectly ridiculous if I were to deny the possession of knowledge avowed by my No. 2, giving occasion to the people around me to imagine that I keep them in the dark for modesty's sake. In the night, when I am alone in my bed, the whole life of my No. 2 passes before my eyes, and I do not see myself at all, but quite a different person — different in race and different in feelings. But what's the use of talking about it? It's

enough to drive one mad. I try to throw myself into the part and to forget the strangeness of my situation. This is no mediumship, and by no means an impure power; for that, it has too strong an ascendancy over us all, leading us into better ways. No devil would act like that. 'Spirits', maybe? But if it comes to that, my ancient 'spooks' dare not approach me any more. It's enough for me to enter the room where a seance is being held to stop all kinds of phenomena at once, especially materializations. Ah no, this is altogether of a higher order! But phenomena of another sort take place more and more frequently under the direction of my No. 2. (7) One of these days I will send you an article about them. It is interesting."

FOOTNOTES:

1. Copyright, 1894. ([return to text](#))
2. It must be recollected that the "rumors of sorcery" were afloat in Russia and not in America. — W. Q. J. ([return to text](#))
3. This name was prophetic, for thus she has been often called — W.Q. J. ([return to text](#))
4. Col. Olcott and myself can testify to the continual stream of people of sorts which entered her rooms everyday. In 1875 she told me that when she had to write about evolution a large picture of scenes of the past would unroll before her eyes, together with another picture of the present time. — W. Q. J. ([return to text](#))
5. In London, in 1888, a Hindu who had met her at Meerut said to her in my presence through an interpreter that he was surprised she did not use his language then, as she had used it at Meerut. She replied, "Ah, yes, but that was at Meerut." — W. Q. J. ([return to text](#))

6. This was a proposed rule. H. P. B. accepted a thing proposed as a thing done, and so spoke of it here. But she did not carry out that rule then proposed, and never then suggested its enforcement to me. — W.Q. J. ([return to text](#))

7. These phenomena were those amazing feats of magic, hundreds of which I witnessed in broad daylight or blazing gas-light, from 1875 to 1878. — W.Q. J. ([return to text](#))

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CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM

Student. — Is there not some attitude of mind which one should in truth assume in order to understand the occult in Nature?

Sage. — Such attitude of mind must be attained as will enable one to look into the realities of things. The mind must escape from the mere formalities and conventions of life, even though outwardly one seems to obey all of them, and should be firmly established on the truth that Man is a copy of the Universe and has in himself a portion of the Supreme Being. To the extent this is realized will be the clearness of perception of truth. A realization of this leads inevitably to the conclusion that all other men and beings are united with us, and this removes the egotism which is the result of the notion of separateness. When the truth of Unity is understood, then distinctions due to comparisons made like the Pharisee's, that one is better than his neighbor, disappear from the mind, leaving it more pure and free to act.

Student. — What would you point out as a principal foe to the mind's grasping of truth?

Sage. — The principal foe of a secondary nature is what was once called *phantasy*; that is, the reappearance of thoughts and images due to recollection or memory. Memory is an important power, but mind in itself is not memory. Mind is restless and wandering in its nature, and must be controlled. Its wandering disposition is necessary or stagnation would result. But it can be controlled and fixed upon an object or idea. Now as we are constantly looking at and hearing of new things, the natural restlessness of the mind becomes prominent when we set about pinning it down. Then memory of many objects, things, subjects, duties, persons, circumstances, and affairs brings up before it the various pictures

and thoughts belonging to them. After these the mind at once tries to go, and we find ourselves wandering from the point. It must hence follow that the storing of a multiplicity of useless and surely-recurring thoughts is an obstacle to the acquirement of truth. And this obstacle is the very one peculiar to our present style of life.

Student. — Can you mention some of the relations in which the sun stands to us and nature in respect to Occultism?

Sage. — It has many such, and all important. But I would draw your attention first to the greater and more comprehensive. The sun is the center of our solar system. The life-energies of that system come to it through the sun, which is a focus or reflector for the spot in space where the real center is. And not only comes mere life through that focus, but also much more that is spiritual in its essence. The sun should therefore not only be looked at with the eye but thought of by the mind. It represents to the world what the Higher Self is to the man. It is the soul-center of the world with its six companions, as the Higher Self is the center for the six principles of man. So it supplies to those six principles of the man many spiritual essences and powers. He should for that reason think of it and not confine himself to gazing at it. So far as it acts materially in light, heat, and gravity, it will go on of itself, but man as a free agent must think upon it in order to gain what benefit can come only from his voluntary action in thought.

Student. — Will you refer to some minor one?

Sage. — Well, we sit in the sun for heat and possible chemical effects. But if at the same time that we do this we also think on it as the sun in the sky and of its possible essential nature, we thereby draw from it some of its energy not otherwise touched. This can also be done on a dark day when clouds obscure the sky, and some of the benefit thus be obtained. Natural mystics,

learned and ignorant, have discovered this for themselves here and there, and have often adopted the practice. But it depends, as you see, upon the mind.

Student. — Does the mind actually do anything when it takes up a thought and seeks for more light?

Sage. — It actually does. A thread, or a finger, or a long darting current flies out from the brain to seek for knowledge. It goes in all directions and touches all other minds it can reach so as to receive the information if possible. This is telepathically, so to say, accomplished. There are no patents on true knowledge of philosophy nor copyrights in that realm. Personal rights of personal life are fully respected, save by potential black magicians who would take anyone's property. But general truth belongs to all, and when the unseen messenger from one mind arrives and touches the real mind of another, that other gives up to it what it may have of truth about general subjects. So the mind's finger or wire flies until it gets the thought or seed-thought from the other and makes it its own. But our modern competitive system and selfish desire for gain and fame is constantly building a wall around people's minds to everyone's detriment.

Student. — Do you mean that the action you describe is natural, usual, and universal, or only done by those who know how and are conscious of it?

Sage. — It is universal and whether the person is aware or not of what is going on. Very few are able to perceive it in themselves, but that makes no difference. It is done always. When you sit down to earnestly think on a philosophical or ethical matter, for instance, your mind flies off, touching other minds, and from them you get varieties of thought. If you are not well-balanced and psychically purified, you will often get thoughts that are not correct. Such is your Karma and the Karma of the race. But if you

are sincere and try to base yourself on right philosophy, your mind will naturally reject wrong notions. You can see in this how it is that systems of thought are made and kept going, even though foolish, incorrect, or pernicious.

Student. — What mental attitude and aspiration are the best safeguards in this, as likely to aid the mind in these searches to reject error and not let it fly into the brain?

Sage. Unselfishness, Altruism in theory and practice, desire to do the will of the Higher Self which is the "Father in Heaven", devotion to the human race. Subsidiary to these are discipline, correct thinking, and good education.

Student. — Is the uneducated man, then, in a worse condition?

Sage. — Not necessarily so. The very learned are so immersed in one system that they reject nearly all thoughts not in accord with preconceived notions. The sincere ignorant one is often able to get the truth but not able to express it. The ignorant masses generally hold in their minds the general truths of Nature, but are limited as to expression. And most of the best discoveries of scientific men have been obtained in this sub-conscious telepathic mode. Indeed, they often arrive in the learned brain from some obscure and so-called ignorant person, and then the scientific discoverer makes himself famous because of his power of expression and means for giving it out.

Student. — Does this bear at all upon the work of the Adepts of all good Lodges?

Sage. — It does. They have all the truths that could be desired, but at the same time are able to guard them from the seeking minds of those who are not yet ready to use them properly. But they often find the hour ripe and a scientific man ready, and then touch his cogitating mind with a picture of what he seeks. He then

has a "flash" of thought in the line of his deliberations, as many of them have admitted. He gives it out to the world, becomes famous, and the world wiser. This is constantly done by the Adepts, but now and then they give out larger expositions of Nature's truths, as in the case of H.P.B. This is not at first generally accepted, as personal gain and fame are not advanced by any admission of benefit from the writings of another, but as it is done with a purpose, for the use of a succeeding century, it will do its work at the proper time.

Student. — How about the Adepts knowing what is going on in the world of thought, in the West, for instance?

Sage. — They have only to voluntarily and consciously connect their minds with those of the dominant thinkers of the day to at once discover what has been or is being worked out in thought and to review it all. This they constantly do, and as constantly incite to further elaborations or changes by throwing out the suggestion in the mental plane so that seeking and receptive minds may use it.

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RIGHT ACTION — J. H. F.

In defining Philosophy, Professor Ferrier said that "Philosophy is not Truth, but reasoned Truth". And although it may be objected that Truth in its widest aspect must include "reasoned Truth" or Philosophy, yet to a great extent because the West has such imperfect knowledge of the real nature of Mind and of its inner workings, Truth has come to be regarded too much simply as knowledge of facts, of such facts as can be demonstrated *scientifically*, and of their relations and sequence on this plane only. All else is regarded more or less as speculative and uncertain. It is said that we can really know only what Science can demonstrate; other things may be true, we shall be glad if they are true, but they must first be *proved* true before we can regard them seriously. And so Philosophy, the "reasoned Truth" which endeavors to get at the *how* and the *why* of things, and which in so doing passes into the realm of metaphysics, is regarded, at least in its deeper aspect, as speculative; for although it accepts the facts of Science, it transcends Science and cannot be demonstrated according to modern scientific methods. If we take Religion in its true sense, as that which binds back men to the source of all, and so binds man to man on the inner planes of being, and which must include "right action" and "right living", we may see that Philosophy is the link between Science and Religion, that it completes the one and makes possible the other.

It is not enough *to know*, we must do more, we must endeavor *to know how*, and *to know why*. And although the ultimate *how* and *why* may be beyond us, may even transcend our powers of conception, yet it should be our aim to ever approximate to that ultimate. The history of man in all ages shows that he is ever impelled to seek the solution of this problem. Now in one way,

now in another, man has sought to learn the *wherefore* and meaning of existence. The great religions of the world; the philosophies of all times; ancient and modern Science; these with their cosmogonies and theories of creation and emanation, of evolution and development, all are pages in the history of man's inner life, spiritual, moral, and mental; and could we read aright we could trace how at times he has risen till he has stood in the clear light of Truth, how too often he has sunk into the depths of shadow and illusion.

Where do we stand today in our seeking after Wisdom? What guide-posts have we to direct our course? Shall we follow the teachings of any one of the World-religions, or shall we take modern philosophy or modern science as a guide? But how can we know *which* of all these to follow? Surely we are in great perplexity, for before we can intelligently know which is the best guide we ought to study and compare all these teachings; otherwise we may make a great mistake and follow a false guide, when a little patience, a little investigation and study, would have shown us a true one. If we are to live rightly, to act rightly, we must have a right basis and we must think rightly. But it is claimed that even a slight comparative study of the great religions will reveal that their ethics are almost identical, and that if we can go deeper into this study we shall be forced to the conclusion that all had a common origin. So that while it is profitable to pursue such a course of study and if possible to add to it the study of philosophy and modern Science, yet even if this is beyond our power we need not despair nor become indifferent.

For what is it that is really necessary in order that we may act rightly? It may indeed be that to act rightly in an ultimate sense, ultimate knowledge is needed; but for each one to act rightly where he is depends upon his efforts to use the knowledge he now has, and upon his striving to reach his ideal. For each one

has an ideal of some sort, perhaps a very high and holy ideal which he cherishes in his heart of hearts, and yet because it is so high he may too often fail to even remember it. A little thought will show that we have different ideals at different times, and that these are constantly changing. This must be so even if our ultimate ideal remains the same. That action is right action for each one which is done as far as possible with reference to one's ideal. By endeavoring to act up to our ideals we test them and make it possible for us to form new and higher ideals. A man's ideal is the unconscious result of his philosophy, and, strange as it may seem, the only way to obtain a true philosophy is not so much by studying as primarily and especially by living and acting, by living and acting up to one's ideal. So let the student ponder over the words of Jesus: "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching;" and let him also meditate on the words of a far earlier teacher, Krishna; "He who is perfected in devotion findeth spiritual knowledge springing up spontaneously in himself in the progress of time."

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LETTERS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY: II

(Begun in December)

The newspapers gave accounts of certain of these phenomena and described the appearance of astral visitors, amongst others a Hindu. In sending the extracts H. P. B. comments:

"I see this Hindu every day, just as I might see any other living person, with the only difference that he looks to me more ethereal and more transparent. Formerly I kept silent about these appearances, thinking that they were hallucinations. But now they have become visible to other people as well. He (the Hindu) appears and advises us as to our conduct and our writing. He evidently knows *everything* that is going on, even to the thoughts of other people, and makes me express his knowledge. Sometimes it seems to me that he overshadows the whole of me, simply entering me like a kind of volatile essence penetrating all my pores and dissolving in me. Then we two are able to speak to other people, and then I begin to understand and remember sciences and languages — everything he instructs me in, even when he is not with me any more."

Directly *Isis Unveiled* was published, H. P. B. wrote to Madame Jelihovsky:

"It seems strange to you that some Hindu Sahib is so free and easy in his dealings with me. I can quite understand you: a person not used to that kind of phenomenon — which, though not quite unprecedented, is yet perfectly ignored — is sure to be incredulous. For the very simple reason that such a person is not in the habit of going deeply into such matters. For instance, you ask whether he is likely to indulge in wanderings inside other

people as well as me. I am sure I don't know; but here is something about which I am perfectly certain: Admit that man's soul — his real living soul — is a thing perfectly separate from the rest of the organism; that this perisprit is not stuck with paste to the physical 'innerds'; and that this soul which exists in everything living, beginning with an infusoria and ending with an elephant, is different from its physical double only inasmuch as being more or less overshadowed by the immortal spirit it is capable of acting freely and independently. In the case of the uninitiated profane, it acts during their sleep: in the case of an initiated adept, it acts at any moment he chooses according to his will. Just try and assimilate this, and then many things will become clear to you. This fact was believed in and known in far distant epochs. St. Paul, who alone among all the apostles was an initiated Adept in the Greek Mysteries, clearly alludes to it when narrating how he was 'caught up to the third heaven, whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell: God knoweth'. Also Rhoda says about Peter, 'It is not Peter but his angel' — that is to say, his double or his soul. And in the *Acts of the Apostles*, ch. viii, v. 39, when the spirit of God lifted up Philip and transported him, it was not his body that was transported, not his coarse flesh, but his Ego, his spirit and his soul. Read Apuleius, Plutarch, Jamblichus, and other learned men — they all allude to this kind of phenomenon, though the oaths they had to take at the time of their initiation did not allow them to speak openly. What mediums accomplish unconsciously, under the influence of outside powers which take possession of them, can be accomplished by Adepts consciously at their own volition. That's all. . . . As to the Sahib, I have known him a long time. Twenty-five years ago he came to London with the Prince of Nepaul; three years ago he sent me a letter by an Indian who came here to lecture about Buddhism. In this letter he reminded me of many things, foretold by him at the time, and asked me whether I

believed him now and whether I would consent to obey him, to avoid complete destruction. After this he appeared repeatedly, not only to me but also to other people, and to Olcott whom he ordered to be President of the Society, teaching him how to start it. I always recognize and know the Master, and often talk to him without seeing him. How is it that he hears me from everywhere, and that I also hear his voice across seas and oceans twenty times a day? I do not know, but it is so. Whether it is he personally that enters me I really cannot say with confidence: if it is not he, it is his power, his influence. Through him alone I am strong; without him I am a mere nothing."

There was naturally considerable fear in the minds of H. P. B.'s nearest relatives as to the character of this mysterious Hindu teacher. They could not help regarding him as more of a "heathen sorcerer" than anything else. And this view H. P. B. took pains to combat. She told them that her Master had a deep respect for the spirit of Christ's teachings. She had once spent seven weeks in a forest not far from the Karakoram mountains, where she had been isolated from the world, and where her teacher alone had visited her daily, whether astrally or otherwise she did not state. But whilst there she had been shown in a cave-temple a series of statues representing the great teachers of the world, amongst others:

"A huge statue of Jesus Christ, represented at the moment of pardoning Mary Magdalene; Gautama Buddha offers water in the palm of his hand to a beggar, and Ananda is shown drinking out of the hands of a Pariah prostitute."

H. P. B. wrote to Madame Jelihovsky (date unknown) that she was learning to get out of her body, and offering to pay her a visit in Tiflis "in the flash of an eye". This both frightened and amused Madame Jelihovsky, who replied that she would not trouble her

so unnecessarily. H. P. B. answered:

"What is there to be afraid of? As if you had never heard about apparitions of doubles. I, that is to say, my body, will be quietly asleep in my bed, and it would not even matter if it were to await my return in a waking condition — it would be in the state of a harmless idiot. And no wonder: God's light would be absent from it, flying to you; and then it would fly back and once more the temple would get illuminated by the presence of the Deity. But this, needless to say, only in case the thread between the two were not broken. If you shriek like mad it may get torn; then Amen to my existence: I should die instantly. I have written to you that one day we had a visit from the double of Professor Moses. Seven people saw him. As to the Master, he is quite commonly seen by perfect strangers. Sometimes he looks just as if he were a living man, as merry as possible. He is continually chaffing me, and I am perfectly used to him now. He will soon take us all to India, and there we shall see him in his body just like an ordinary person."

From New York:

"Well, Vera, whether you believe me or not, something miraculous is happening to me. You cannot imagine in what a charmed world of pictures and visions I live. I am writing *Isis*; not writing, rather copying out and drawing that which She personally shows to me. Upon my word, sometimes it seems to me that the ancient Goddess of Beauty in person leads me through all the countries of past centuries which I have to describe. I sit with my eyes open and to all appearances see and hear everything real and actual around me, and yet at the same time I see and hear that which I write. I feel short of breath; I am afraid to make the slightest movement for fear the spell might be broken. Slowly century after century, image after image, float out of the distance

and pass before me as if in a magic panorama; and meanwhile I put them together in my mind, fitting in epochs and dates, and know *for sure* that there can be *no mistake*. Races and nations, countries and cities, which have for long disappeared in the darkness of the prehistoric past, emerge and then vanish, giving place to others; and then I am told the consecutive dates. Hoary antiquity makes way for historical periods; myths are explained to me with events and people who have really existed, and every event which is at all remarkable, every newly-turned page of this many-colored book of life, impresses itself on my brain with photographic exactitude. My own reckonings and calculations appear to me later on as separate colored pieces of different shapes in the game which is called *casse-tete* (puzzles). I gather them together and try to match them one after the other, and at the end there always comes out a geometrical whole. . . . Most assuredly it is not I who do it all, but my Ego, the highest principle which lives in me. And even this with the help of my Guru and teacher who helps me in everything. If I happen to forget something I have just to address him, or another of the same kind, in my thought, and what I have forgotten rises once more before my eyes — sometimes whole tables of numbers passing before me, long inventories of events. They remember everything. They know everything. Without them, from whence could I gather my knowledge?"

Soon after the appearance of *Isis Unveiled* H. P. B. received invitations to write in all sorts of newspapers. This greatly amused her, and she wrote to Madame Jelihovsky:

"It's lucky for me that I am not vain, and besides as a matter of fact I have hardly any time to write much in other people's publications for money. . . . Our work is growing. I must work, must write and write, provided that I can find publishers for my writings. Would you believe that so long as I write I am all the

time under the impression that I write rubbish and nonsense which no one will ever be able to understand? Then it is printed and then the acclamations begin. People reprint it, are in ecstasies. I often wonder: can it be that they are all asses to be in such ecstasies? Well, if I could write in Russian and be praised by my own people, then perhaps I should believe that I am a credit to my ancestors, Counts Hahn Hahn von der Rothenhahn of blissful memory."

H. P. B. often told her relatives that she took no author's pride in the writing of *Isis Unveiled*; that she did not know in the least what she was writing about; that she was ordered to sit down and write, and that her only merit lay in obeying the order. Her only fear was that she would be unable to describe properly what was shown to her in beautiful pictures. She wrote to her sister: "You do not believe that I tell you God's truth about my Masters. You consider them to be mythical; but is it possible that it is not clear to you that I, without their help, could not have written about 'Byron and grave matters', as Uncle Roster says? What do we know, you and I, about metaphysics, ancient philosophies and religions, about psychology and various other puzzles? Did we not learn together, with the only difference that you did your lessons better? And now look at what I am writing about, and people — such people too, professors, scientists — read and praise! Open *Isis* wherever you like and decide for yourself. As to myself I speak the truth: Master narrates and shows all this to me. Before me pass pictures, ancient manuscripts, dates — all I have to do is to copy, and I write so easily that it is no labor at all, but the greatest pleasure."

(But the ancient manuscripts to which H. P. B. refers were not only seen by psychic means. Hodgson, the great self-exposer of the S. P. R., discovered a page of a mysterious and ancient manuscript at Adyar. This was proof to him, as it was written in

cypher, that she was a Russian spy. It was from a page of a Senzar manuscript, lost by H. P. B. and deeply lamented as lost!) In another letter of about the same date, H. P. B. wrote her sister:

"Do not believe that Theosophy contradicts or, much less, destroys Christianity. It only destroys the tares, but not the seed of truth: prejudice, blasphemous superstitions, Jesuitical bigotry. We respect men's freedom of conscience and their spiritual yearnings far too much to touch religious principles with our propaganda. Every human being who respects himself and thinks has a holy of holies of his own, for which we Theosophists ask respect. Our business concerns philosophy, morals, and science alone. We ask for truth in everything; our object is the realization of the spiritual perfectability possible to man: the broadening of his knowledge, the exercising of the powers of his soul, of all the psychical sides of his being. Our theosophical brotherhood must strive after the ideal of general brotherhood throughout all humanity; after the establishment of universal peace and the strengthening of charity and disinterestedness; after the destruction of materialism, of that coarse unbelief and egotism which saps the vitality of our country."

The Path

OUR OVERWHELMING VIRTUES — *Che-Yew-Tsang*

The superior Virtue is not seen as virtue,
and therefore it is the spirit thereof.

The inferior virtue wears the garment of virtue,
and therefore it contains not the spirit.

The superior Virtue flows of its own accord.

—*Tao-Teh-King*.

The dangers of vice have been the subject of many wise discourses. Its horrors have been painted with vivid realism, whilst glorious virtue has been held up before the eyes of men as something to be striven for and, when attained, to be most carefully preserved.

Yet no truth, however deeply true, is final in itself. Seeming ultimates are but stages in unlimited progression, and the highest virtue man can reach to now will vanish like some mist before the sunlight of his spirit in an age to come. But the future is with us today as a shadow which ever recedes as we ever approach; and virtue which is perforce imperfect may entomb us as surely as vice.

Vice contains in itself its own destroyer. Separative, it quickly disintegrates. Few men think it a final goal: they will presently be virtuous, when they are old, or in better circumstance, or have not to meet this present and unique temptation. Virtue is more tenacious. It is self-satisfied, and clings to one who has striven for it, fostered it, and who trembles at the thought of its loss. Here I speak of that peculiar virtue which is our very own. We may have vices, we may do wrong, but this virtue we have got and never will surrender. Has it not consoled us in many an hour of self-reproach, of blame which was almost deserved? More consoling

has it been to many than the errors of their neighbors.

Yet for one moment consider: much has been said of polarity, of the dualism in nature. The pairs of opposites have been catalogued at length: light and darkness, heat and cold, male and female, have been found to coexist. It has also been shown that these, though opposite in name, are far from separate in fact. How could light follow on darkness if the darkness had not contained it? How could sweetness spring from that which seemed so bitter if the bitterness held only itself? Even so the loftiest virtue embosoms a sleeping sin. "Sin", if only inasmuch as it may hinder that growth which is Nature's aim, by our attachment to a limitation; by our failure to rise to the universal through love for this so pleasing grace.

It may be Justice. We will be ideally just; we will be impartial as few, if any, have ever dreamt of being. How noble a virtue it is, and how safe a guide? An idol fit for the worship of all men, you will think, and one that we should bow to with the rest. By its aid we can judge all these events — and men, with evenness and with no fear or favor. We will calmly sit on the judgment-seat and weigh the evidence, so that no man shall say "He has a bias", but all shall admire the perfect Justice we exemplify.

I say that the soul does not know it. The soul is not concerned in this chopping and balancing of statement. It does not cry to its companions. "Let us consider this alleged misdoing by the aid of our united wisdom". Thought for the preservation of its own integrity is not allowed to close the door on this greater thought — Another's need. For the soul has a mighty generosity that flows and swells and sweeps before it any thought but this: "How can I help my brother who is now unfortunate?" That generosity is not born of the emotions; it has forgotten the meaning of tears. It springs from an understanding of Time; from long waiting upon

that law which is beyond all Justice, since it knows not doubt nor anything but unity.

Or it is Work. Someone, after many years of effort, has overcome the grosser form of the natural sloth of matter. His mind, his brain, his body, have been trained to answer to his will: every gift is utilized, every moment is turned to account. He acts, indifferent to obstacles, regardless of consequences — striving to serve. The man confides to himself he would die if he could not work. But there is a pride of action. Then if fate which is greater than he overtakes him, and he loses the labor he loves, he calls upon death to relieve him of the burden of life since now he is useless and his course is run.

But the soul, having seen this thing before, knows better. It knows that *the form* of service is not counted in the least; that every act can be a mode of one spirit of devotion. Whether maimed, or blind, or tied by chains of duty to a life of seeming pettishness, is not man still the resting-place of the Eternal? Is that so little he dare speak of uselessness? Wise indeed must he have suddenly become if he would improve upon the working of the Law! For wisdom in every age has been well content to say "Thy will be done, O Lord of Destiny!" We have so little faith: we must see — and show — some result of all our efforts. Yet is there neither first nor last in this great reckoning of life, and to hold a pleasure rightly or meet a pain is as hard a feat as to turn the stream of a nation's history.

Work can be overwhelming in more ways than one. I have read in a Hindu book of a half-fledged sage who, by his power of goodness, attempted to destroy the character of the growth of the world. His goodness was a passion, a passion that craved self-immolation, not for the sake of others but for its own sake. He had not reached that point of equilibrium where there is only

selflessness, where both selfishness and unselfishness have been laid down. In that state wrong self-immolation is not known.

Want of equilibrium is at the root of all disease, and even as there must still be those who, like this Hindu of old, seek to obtain what *they* believe to be good at the expense of right, and would purify the world at the price of acting as its executioners, so there are those who crave for work regardless whether it be their own or that of others. Another's work is usually more pleasing than that which lies so very near to us. It has a foreign flavor and promises excitement. Such do not wait to ask, "Is this my duty?" They are above such slow consideration. Yet how much confusion on all planes of being they would save themselves and others by that moment's pause! But this has been said since the beginning of things, to be said to the end, and still we have not found the Middle Path, the place of equilibrium. He who has reached it, as one of Nature's greatest scholars said, "acts but does not strive, and without striving overcomes everything".

Thus every virtue, as has been said, embosoms a sleeping sin, and the wise man beware of it, treating his virtue as a stage in his gradually-lessening ignorance, not as an aim and end in itself to be worshipped and glorified. If he could lay aside his calculated code of conduct for the more generous impulse of the soul, he would greatly be the gainer. But the soul he calls "his own", and will not therefore trust it. He has not learnt to separate the voice of his desires from that other voice which speaks to him of cold, clean truth; and therefore he calculates. His morals must be neatly docketed, ready for production as required; and although a few minutes' notice is needed at times for prompt delivery — he is only mortal.

The Immortals are not calculators. They act. They also breathe after their fashion, and without failure. And the light of the

Immortals is the light that lighteth every man who cometh into the world. Verily they who know it shall go back to their Home in peace.

The Path

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM

Student. — Are there any rules, binding on all, in white magic or good occultism? I mean rules similar to the ten commandments of the Christians, or the rules for the protection of life, liberty, and property recognized by human law.

Sage. — There are such rules of the most stringent character, the breaking of which is never wiped out save by expiation. Those rules are not made up by some brain or mind, but flow from the laws of nature, of mind, and of soul. Hence they are impossible of nullification. One may break them and seem to escape for a whole life or for more than a life; but the very breaking of them sets in motion at once other causes which begin to make effects, and most unerringly those effects at last react on the violator. Karma here acts as it does elsewhere, and becomes a Nemesis who, though sometimes slow, is fate itself in its certainty.

Student. — It is not, then, the case that when an occultist violates a rule some other adept or agent starts out like a detective or policeman and brings the culprit to justice at a bar or tribunal such as we sometimes read of in the imaginative works of mystical writers or novelists?

Sage. — No, there is no such pursuit. On the contrary, all the fellow-adepts or students are but too willing to aid the offender, not in escaping punishment, but in sincerely trying to set counteracting causes in motion for the good of all. For the sin of one reacts on the whole human family. If, however, the culprit does not wish to do the amount of counteracting good, he is merely left alone to the law of nature, which is in fact that of his own inner life from which there can be no escape. In Lytton's novel, *Zanoni*, you will notice the grave Master, Mejnour, trying to

aid Zanoni, even at the time when the latter was falling slowly but surely into the meshes twisted by himself that ended in his destruction. Mejnour knew the law and so did Zanoni. The latter was suffering from some former error which he had to work out; the former, if himself too stern and unkind, would later on come to the appropriate grief for such a mistake. But meanwhile he was bound to help his friend, as are all those who really believe in brotherhood.

Student. — What one of those rules in any way corresponds to "Thou shalt not steal"?

Sage. — That one which was long ago expressed by the ancient sage in the words, "Do not covet the wealth of any creature". This is better than "Thou shalt not steal", for you cannot steal unless you covet. If you steal for hunger you may be forgiven, but you coveted the food for a purpose, just as another covets merely for the sake of possession. The wealth of others includes all their possessions, and does not mean mere money alone. Their ideas, their private thoughts, their mental forces, powers, and faculties, their psychic powers — all, indeed, on all planes that they own or have. While they in that realm are willing to give it all away, it must not be coveted by another.

You have no right, therefore, to enter into the mind of another who has not given the permission and take from him what is not yours. You become a burglar on the mental and psychic plane when you break this rule. You are forbidden taking anything for personal gain, profit, advantage, or use. But you may take what is for general good, if you are far enough advanced and good enough to be able to extricate the personal element from it. This rule would, you can see, cut off all those who are well known to every observer, who want psychic powers for themselves and their own uses. If such persons had those powers of inner sight

and hearing that they so much want, no power could prevent them from committing theft on the unseen planes wherever they met a nature that was not protected. And as most of us are very far from perfect, so far, indeed, that we must work for many lives, yet the Masters of Wisdom do not aid our defective natures in the getting of weapons that would cut our own hands. For the law acts implacably, and the breaches made would find their end and result in long after years. The Black Lodge, however, is very willing to let any poor, weak, or sinful mortal get such power, because that would swell the number of victims they so much require.

Student. — Is there any rule corresponding to "Thou shalt not bear false witness"?

Sage. — Yes; the one which requires you never to inject into the brain of another a false or untrue thought. As we can project our thoughts to another's mind, we must not throw untrue ones to another. It comes before him, and he, overcome by its strength perhaps, finds it echoing in him, and it is a false witness speaking falsely within, confusing and confounding the inner spectator who lives on thought.

Student. — How can one prevent the natural action of the mind when pictures of the private lives of others rise before one?

Sage. — That is difficult for the run of men. Hence the mass have not the power in general; it is kept back as much as possible. But when the trained soul looks about in the realm of soul it is also able to direct its sight, and when it finds rising up a picture of what it should not voluntarily take, it turns its face away. A warning comes with all such pictures which must be obeyed. This is not a rare rule or piece of information, for there are many natural clairvoyants who know it very well, though many of them do not think that others have the same knowledge.

Student. — What do you mean by a warning coming with the picture?

Sage. — In this realm the slightest thought becomes a voice or a picture. All thoughts make pictures. Every person has his private thoughts and desires. Around these he makes also a picture of his wish for privacy, and that to the clairvoyant becomes a voice or picture of warning which seems to say it must be let alone. With some it may assume the form of a person who says not to approach, with others it will be a voice, with still others a simple but certain knowledge that the matter is sacred. All these varieties depend on the psychological idiosyncrasies of the seer.

Student. — What kind of thought or knowledge is excepted from these rules?

Sage. — General, and philosophical, religious, and moral. That is to say, there is no law of copyright or patent which is purely human in invention and belongs to the competitive system. When a man thinks out truly a philosophical problem it is not his under the laws of nature; it belongs to all; he is not in this realm entitled to any glory, to any profit, to any private use in it. Hence the seer may take as much of it as he pleases, but must on his part not claim it or use it for himself. Similarly with other generally beneficial matters. They are for all. If a Spencer thinks out a long series of wise things good for all men, the seer can take them all. Indeed, but few thinkers do any original thinking. They pride themselves on doing so, but in fact their seeking minds go out all over the world of mind and take from those of slower movement what is good and true, and then make them their own, sometimes gaining glory, sometimes money, and in this age claiming all as theirs and profiting by it.

THE OLD WISDOM-RELIGION — *J. D. Buck*

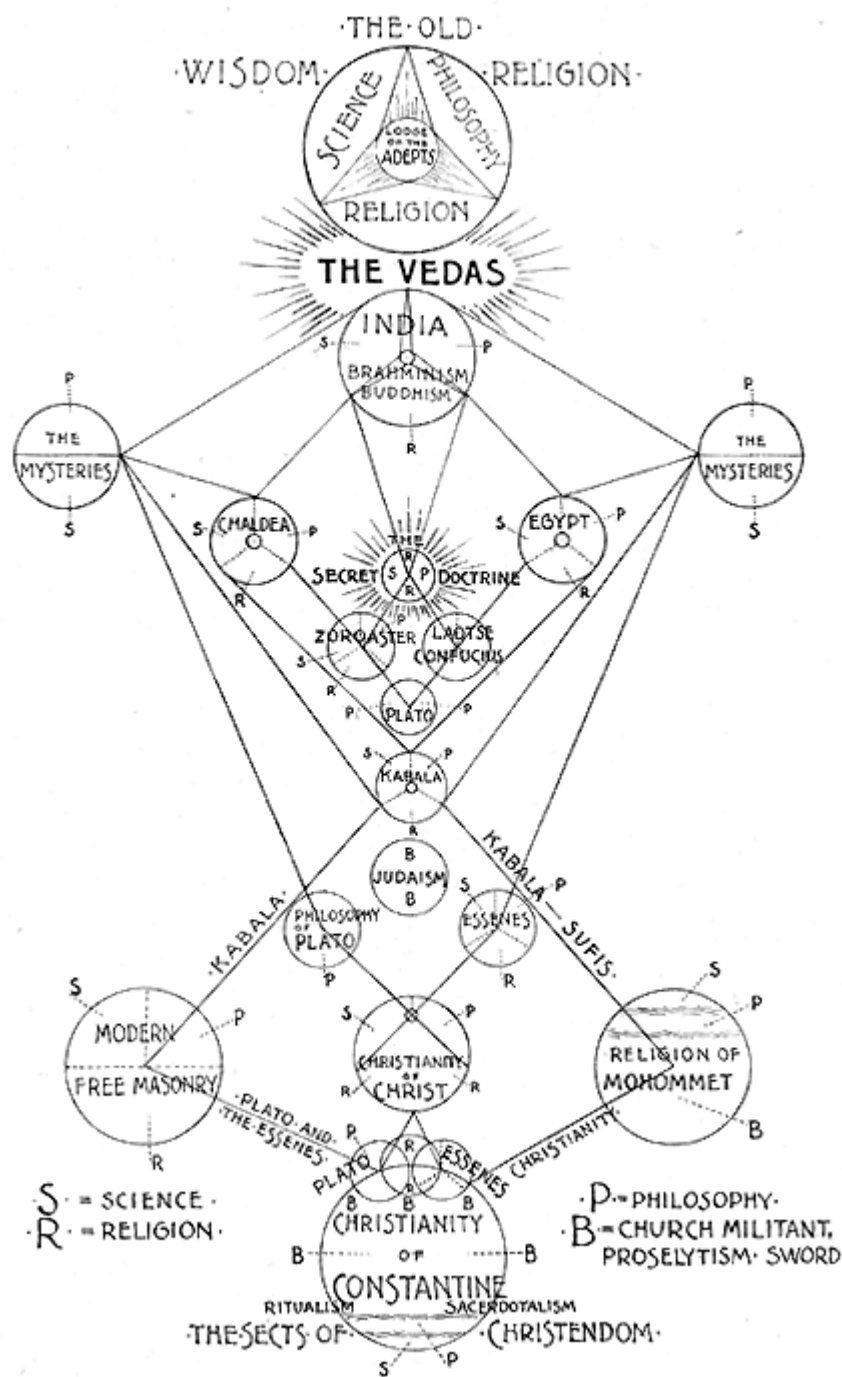
All readers of T. S. literature are aware that the terms Theosophy, Secret Doctrine, and Wisdom-Religion are generally used as synonymous. While such use of these terms is permissible, and while each of these terms may be made to convey the full meaning of the others, perhaps the real meaning of all the terms can best be shown by an object-lesson in the Wisdom-Religion. The most permanent embodiment and the most accessible form of the Secret Doctrine has always been in the form of religion, the outer forms serving only as a veil to the deeper meaning which was always represented by symbols, glyphics, allegories, and parables. The sublimest truths were ever regarded as a divine revelation to man, and therefore formed the basis of devotion and gave the forms of religious worship. The deeper mysteries completely coordinated the three departments of human action in the search after truth, viz.: Religion, Philosophy, and Science, so that there was perfect agreement between them. Science had no missing-links, Philosophy no false syllogisms or irreconcilable paradoxes, and Religion was entirely divorced from superstition and blind credulity or unreasoning dogmatism. That all such statements will be angrily denied we are quite well aware, and I am as little anxious that the general statements herein made and illustrated by the diagram shall be believed. My only desire is that they shall be *understood*, and so far apprehended that the reader may be enabled to preserve the picture in the mind for future reference. They who do this need never confound the Secret Doctrine with the outer garb or the degenerate form of any religion known to the world today.

The diagram is not meant to be historically or chronologically exact, though philosophically it is, I believe, true and exact as to

relations and sequence. It may be read from below upward, tracing our inheritance backward beyond written history, or it may be read in the reverse order. I prefer the latter method.

Let us, then, assume that there existed in the remote past a Wisdom-Religion emanating from the "Elder Brothers" of the human race who constituted a Lodge of Adepts; whose office it was to preserve and transmit to later generations the accumulated wisdom of all previous humanities. This Wisdom-Religion was a complete coordination of the Religious, the Scientific, and the Philosophical elements in human knowledge. It is therefore represented by a circle divided equally into three parts, with the Lodge in the center as a nucleus. The earliest embodiment of this ancient wisdom was in the Vedas of old India. From the Vedas and Upanishads sprang ancient Brahmanism and later Buddhism, both of which preserved the three-fold division of religion, philosophy, and science. Next in order of importance came the religions of Chaldea and Egypt, each again preserving the three-fold form. Each of these had its organized Mysteries, in which the philosophical and scientific doctrines were preserved and taught to neophytes, with which the outer religious forms taught to the masses were originally in perfect harmony. Next came the religions of Persia and China, emanating from Zoroaster, Confucius, and Laotse, still showing the three-fold form, and followed by the philosophy of Pythagoras and Plato, and then again becoming embodied in the Kabalah with which the Pentateuch and the "Oral Teachings" (afterwards the Talmud) constituted the Jewish Religion. Repudiating later Judaism, with its ceremonies, bloody sacrifices, and traditions, and in keeping with the warnings and anathemas of the Prophets, the religion taught by Jesus embodied the more direct wisdom of the Kaballa, the philosophy of Plato (the doctrine of the Logos), and the doctrines of the Essenes and Gnostics. Thus was shown a direct

descent from the old Wisdom-Religion, though giving prominence to the religious and ethical rather than to the scientific and philosophical elements. Nothing is easier than to trace this inheritance by tradition and glyphic. In Christianity under Constantine and Eusebius dogma and the sword established the reign of ecclesiasticism, superseded the religion of Jesus, and prepared the way for the dark ages. The religion of Mahommed, though a religion of conquest and blood, still through its Sufis preserved at least the traditions of a Secret Doctrine, while modern Free Masonry, coordinating the symbols from many sources (largely Kabalistic), has transmitted to modern times the science and philosophy once embodied in the Wisdom-Religion, though it has failed to recover the Key to the lost secret. Coming at last to the sects into which Christianity is today divided, ignorant theological speculations have failed entirely to discern the synthesis of the Wisdom-Religion, and while making a fetich of the name of Jesus have preserved only the ethics he taught, and so divorced his Divinity from his Humanity and became an easy prey to the materialism of modern science. Religion is the divinest part of the ancient three-fold wisdom, because it is through religion that divine truth alone reaches the toiling, sorrowing masses of humanity. Christ knew and taught the Wisdom-Religion, but Christianity today with its ironclads and standing armies is more an heir of Constantine than of Christ. Other and older religions are largely ethnic, and Christianity might indeed become in the truest sense catholic if it would go back to Christ. It is now slowly but surely being undermined by modern materialism. It might find in Theosophy a mighty ally that would enable it to defy materialism and convert the world, but it is too proud and creed-bound to do that, and so Karma awaits it.



LETTERS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY: III

The following letter was written before the foundation of the Theosophical Society. A somewhat inaccurate translation appeared in Mr. Sinnett's *Incidents in the Life of Madame Blavatsky*, but as some additions were made to the original it is interesting to see what was actually written by H. P. B. at such an early date.

"The more I see of spiritist seances in this cradle and hotbed of Spiritism and mediums, the more clearly I see how dangerous they are for humanity. Poets speak of a *thin partition* between the two worlds. There is *no* partition whatever. Blind people have imagined obstacles of this kind because coarse organs of hearing, sight, and feeling do not allow the majority of people to penetrate the *difference* of being. Besides, Mother-Nature has done well in endowing us with *coarse* senses, for otherwise the individuality and personality of man would become impossible, because the dead would be continually mixing with the living, and the living would assimilate themselves with the dead. It would not be so bad if there were around us only spirits of the same kind as ourselves, the half-spiritual refuse of mortals who died without having reconciled themselves to the great necessity of death. Then we might submit to the inevitable. One way or another, we cannot help identifying ourselves physically and in a perfectly unconscious way with the dead, absorbing the constituent atoms of what lived before us: with every breath we inhale them, and breathe out that which nourishes the formless creatures, elementals floating in the air in the expectation of being transformed into living beings. This is not only a physical process, but partly a moral one. We assimilate those who preceded us, gradually absorbing their brain-molecules and exchanging

mental auras — which means thoughts, desires, and tendencies. This is an interchange common to the entire human race and to all that lives. A natural process, an outcome of the laws of the economy of nature. . . . It explains similarities, external and moral. . . . But there exists another absolute law, which manifests itself periodically and sporadically: this is a law, as it were, of artificial and compulsory assimilation. During epidemics of this kind the kingdom of the dead invades the region of the living, though fortunately this kind of refuse are bound by the ties of their former surroundings. And so, when evoked by mediums, they cannot break through the limits and boundaries in which they acted and lived. . . . And the wider the doors are opened to them the further the necromantic epidemic is spread; the more unanimous the mediums and the spiritists in spreading the magnetic fluid of their evocations, the more power and vitality are acquired by the glamour."

Madame Jelihovsky says that "Helena Petrovna described many seances in terms of horror in consequence of the sights she was enabled to see as a result of her clairvoyance. She saw details hidden from the others present: perfect invasions of hosts of soulless remains of mortals, 'woven of fleshly passions, of evil thoughts, of vicious feelings which had outlived the body'". And H. P. B. wrote:

"It stands to reason that this mere earthly refuse, irresistibly drawn to the earth, cannot follow the soul and spirit — these highest principles of man's being. With horror and disgust I often observed how a reanimated shadow of this kind separated itself from the inside of the medium; how, separating itself from his astral body and clad in someone else's vesture, it pretended to be someone's relation, causing the person to go into ecstasies and making people open wide their hearts and their embraces to these shadows whom they sincerely believed to be their dear

fathers and brothers, resuscitated to convince them of life eternal, as well as to see them. . . . Oh, if they only knew the truth, if they only believed! If they saw, as I have often seen, a monstrous, bodiless creature seizing hold of someone present at these spiritistic sorceries! It wraps the man as if with a black shroud, and slowly disappears in him as if drawn into his body by each of his living pores."

In the year 1878, or thereabouts, a defence of modern Spiritualism was brought out by Alfred Russell Wallace. This greatly pleased H. P. B., who wrote on the subject to her sister:

"See how cleverly he proves how mistaken people are who say that we propagate ancient prejudices and superstitions; how he proves that a body of people who preach the study of man's nature, who teach the acquirement of eternal bliss as a consequence of attaining the full perfection of their moral and spiritual powers, is the chiefest enemy, not only of gross materialism, but also of all kinds of silly bigotry and myth-worship. Spiritualism is an experimental science; its development — which is the object of the Theosophical Society (1) — will make it possible to find a foundation for a true philosophy. There is only one truth, and it is higher than anything else. Theosophy is bound to destroy such meaningless expressions as 'a miracle' or the 'supernatural'. In nature everything is natural, but everything is not known; and yet there is nothing more miraculous than her powers, hidden as well as revealed. Spiritualism, *meaning the spiritual powers of man and the deeper knowledge of the psychical aspects of life*, which we Theosophists preach, will cure the old evils of religious quarrels, owing to which the faith of man in the primitive truths of immortality and repayment according to deserts is disappearing. Wallace speaks the truth when he says that Spiritualism well deserves the sympathy of moralists, philosophers, even of politicians and of everyone who desires the

perfecting of our society and our life."

H. P. B. did not spare herself when portraying the humorous side of her surroundings. The American Phrenological Society wrote and asked for her portrait and for a cast of her head, and Professor Buchanan, the phrenologist and psychometer, called on her for an interview. She describes the incident in writing to Madame Jelihovsky:

"And so this poor victim (victim in view of his awful task) was sent to me — a phrenological occultist, who came in the company of a huge bouquet (as if I were a prima donna!) and with three trunk-loads of compliments. He fingered my head and fingered it again; he turned it on one side and then on the other. He snorted over me — snorted like a steam-engine, until we both began to sweat. And at last he spat in disgust. 'Do you call this a head?', he says; 'It's no head at all, but a ball of contradictions.' 'On this head', he says, 'there is an endless war of most conflicting bumps; all Turks and Montenegrins.' (2) I can't make anything of this chaos of impossibilities and confusion of Babel. Here, for instance', he says, poking my skull with his finger, 'is a bump of the most ardent faith and power of belief, and here, side by side with it, the bump of scepticism, pessimism, and incredulity, proudly swelling itself. And now, if you please, here is the bump of sincerity for you, walking hand in hand with the bump of hypocrisy and cunning. The bump of domesticity and love for your country boxes the ears of the bump of wandering and love of change. And do you mean to say you take this to be a respectable head?' he asked. He seized himself by the hair, and in his despair pulled a considerable lock from his own respectable head, answering to the highest standards of phrenology. . . . But all the same he described, drew, and published my poor head for the amusement of the hundred thousand subscribers to the *Phrenological Journal*. Alas, alas, 'heavy is the crown of

Monomach!' (3) The aureola of my own greatness, acquired so undeservedly, is simply crushing me. Here, I send you a copy of my poor head, which you are requested to swallow without any sauce. A hundred thousand Yankees are going to feast upon it, and so I am certainly going to save a bit for my own blood!"

"Now listen to this, little brothers", she writes in her next letter, "I am sending you a great curio. Examine it, wonder at it, and improve by it. The Freemasons of England, whose Grand-Master is the Prince of Wales, have sent me a diploma, which means to say that I am raised to a high Masonic dignity, and so my title is 'Mysterious Freemason'. Ah me! next I shall probably be elected Pope of Rome for my virtues. The decoration they sent me is very beautiful: a ruby cross and a rose. I send you the cutting from the *Masonic Journal*."

Many honors were showered upon H. P. B. as a result of the publication of *Isis Unveiled*. A very ancient Society in Benares, founded before the beginning of the Christian era, called the Sat-Bai, sent her a diploma in Sanskrit, decorated with many symbols. It is remarkable that in this diploma Helena Petrovna is alluded to as a "Brother of the female sex". "Henceforward our brother Rad is entitled, owing to his great knowledge, to power over the inferior grades of ministers, couriers, listeners, scribes, and the dumb ones." H. P. B. also received a very ancient copy of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, in a mother-of-pearl and gold binding, from an Indian Prince. At the approach of the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-1878, H. P. B. wrote many articles against the Roman Catholics, because the Pope had blessed the weapons of the Turks. These articles she signed "A Russian Woman". They created such a stir that Cardinal McCloskey sent his Jesuit secretary to her, under the pretext of making the acquaintance of "such a remarkable woman, and pioneer thinker, who knew how to shake off the prejudice of patriotism and to create for herself an independent

position in an independent country". In February, 1877, she wrote to her sister:

"I told him his endeavors were in vain; that whatever I personally, as a Theosophist, might believe was no business of his at all; that the faith of my Russian fathers was sacred to me; that I shall always stand up for this faith and for Russia, and shall always write against the attacks of the hypocritical Catholics upon them as long as my hand can hold a pen, and without letting myself be frightened by the threats of their Pope or the wrath of their Roman Church, the Great Beast of the Apocalypse!"

The result of this visit was a new article by her against the head of the Western Christian Church, who blessed Musselmans that they might the better kill Christians, Slavs, and Russians. Soon after this move Mme. Jelihovsky received newspaper cuttings containing the report of H. P. B.'s real fight — but this time not with an ecclesiastic, but with a propagator of materialistic views, of European renown. She writes to her sister in her usual humorous way:

"I send you, friends, one more article of mine, which received by no means small honors here and was reprinted by several New York papers. This is the way it happened: the London scientist Huxley has been visiting here, 'the progenitor of protoplasm and high-priest of psychophobia', as I have surnamed him. He delivered three lectures. At the first, he made short work of Moses and abolished the whole of the *Old Testament*, declaring to the public that man is nothing but the great-grandson of a frog of the Silurian period. At the second he 'beat everyone', like a new Kit Kitich. (4) 'You are all fools', he says, 'you don't understand anything. . . . Here is the four-toed foot of Hipparion, the antediluvian horse, for you, from which it is evident that we, five-toed men, are closely related to it as well, through our origin.'

There is an insult for you! But at the third lecture our wise *psychophob* tried to sing it altogether too high, and so started telling fibs. 'Listen to me', he says, 'I have looked into the telescopes, I have whistled under the clouds in balloons, I have looked out for God everywhere with great zeal; and nowhere, in spite of all my researches, did I see or meet him! Ergo — there is no God and there never was any such!' It was worth these peoples' while paying him \$5,000 for three lectures of this sort of logic. 'Also', he says, 'the human soul. . . . where is it? Show it to me as I can show you the heart and the rest of the 'inwards'. Anima Muni, ether, Archos of Plato. . . . I have searched for the soul with the aid of spy-glasses and microscopes; I have observed the dying and anatomized the dead, but upon my word of honor, there is no trace of it anywhere! It is all a lie of the spiritists and the spiritualists. Don't you', he says, 'believe them.' I felt awfully sorry at all this. So sorry as even to be angry. So I thought to myself, let me go and write an article against this self-willed, self-opinionated Kit Kitich. And what do you think? I have written it. And it came out not at all so bad, as you can see by the enclosed copy. Needless to say, I immediately took this article, sealed it, and sent it through our corresponding members to London, to be delivered to Huxley with my most earnest compliments."

H. P. B. was compelled for various reasons to become an American citizen. This troubled her considerably, as, like all Russians, she was passionately devoted to her country. She wrote to Madame Fadeef:

"My dearest, I write to you because otherwise I would burst with a strange feeling which is positively suffocating me. It is the 8th of July today, an ominous day for me, but God only knows whether the omen is good or bad. Today it is exactly five years and one day since I came to America, and this moment I have just returned from the Supreme Court where I gave my oath of

allegiance to the American Republic and Constitution. Now for a whole hour I have been a citizen with equal rights to the President himself. So far so good: the workings of my original destiny have forced me into this naturalization, but to my utter astonishment and disgust I was compelled to repeat publicly after the judge, like a mere parrot, the following tirade: that I 'would renounce for ever and even to my death every kind of submission and obedience to the emperor of Russia; that I would renounce all obedience to the powers established by him and the government of Russia, and that I would accept the duty to defend, love, and serve the Constitution of the United States alone. So help me God in whom I believe!' I was awfully scared when pronouncing this blackguardly recantation of Russia and the emperor. And so I am not only an apostate to our beloved Russian Church, but a political renegade. A nice scrape to get into, but how am I to manage to no longer love Russia or respect the emperor? It is easier to say a thing than to act accordingly."

FOOTNOTE:

1. At this time a wide distinction was drawn between "Spiritualism" and "Spiritism". It will be seen from H. P. B.'s own definition that she was not speaking of "Spookology" as the object of the Theosophical Society. ([return to text](#))
2. This was during the war in 1877. ([return to text](#))
3. The coronation crown of Russia; this was said by one of the Tsars. ([return to text](#))
4. Kit Kitich, or in Academic Russian Tit Titich, is a stage character whose favorite saying is: "Who can beat Kit Kitich when Kit Kitich will beat everyone first?" He has long become the synonym of a bully, a petty, self-willed, domestic tyrant. The popular Russian dialect quite unconsciously transforms "Titus, the son of Titus"

(Tit Titich) into "the Whale, the son of the Whale" ("Kit" means "whale" in Russian); and H. P. B. used this unconscious pun to make fun of the biological evolutionist who claimed to be, in some sense, the son of the whale, and whose doctrine she found to be "very like a whale", too. But a pun, unlike a bishop, loses by translation. ([return to text](#))

The Path

HAVE FAITH — M. H. W.

When the truths of Theosophy first dawn upon the student, shedding new light on the meaning of life and of death, on the mystic word "Brotherhood" and all that it may convey, on the origin of evil, on the meaning and use of suffering and pain, a new impetus is given to effort, and for a while, perchance, it seems very easy to live the life of an ascetic. Personal griefs and losses! O how little do they count, we say to ourselves. How *can* people, on perceiving the first gleam of the light of truth, allow themselves to remain longer prisoners in the dungeons of selfishness, of ambition, of jealousy, and of wrath? How easy it is to snap the chains of conventionality and to march forth into the sunlight of peace and knowledge, never more to be drawn backward into the darkness of this illusionary world! These and kindred thoughts pass through the mind of the enthusiastic student, who would fain enter the realm of practical occultism, to whom the path now looks so easy, so comfortable, so delightful. Away with unkind sentiments towards our brothers and sisters; away with desires for material advancement; away with selfish griefs and care for the world's opinions! How easy it now seems to work for the great orphan Humanity, towards whom our hearts leap forth in sympathy!

And so for a time we are at peace with ourselves and the world. We feel our lives pledged to devoted work for others; we think it possible that, unknown though it be to ourselves as yet, we may already be accepted chelas to some high teacher. We breathe the air of spiritual purity, while we feel we have brushed from us forever the dust of material and personal interests. We think much about the Masters, those lofty souls pledged to self-sacrifice, and we feel very near them, — as, indeed, we may be for the time

being.

Days pass by in this condition with nothing to disturb the harmony, and we, though still weak, believe we are strong. Alas! a time comes when some new temptation assails us, an unlooked-for foe appears, and lo! whither has all our seeming strength departed? Where are all our stern resolves? Whence, indeed, has fled that boasted peace of mind, which we fondly thought that naught could ruffle? We had been resting in such strong faith in our Elder Brothers, and our intuition had assured us of their Radiant Presence; and in the recognition of such a Presence it had seemed impossible to be disturbed and troubled by earthly concerns. Why, then, this weakness? How could it be possible to succumb anew and so strongly to the "sense of separateness"?

Such, indeed, was the experience of one who was very young as yet in knowledge and understanding of herself. At first, wildly enthusiastic to embrace the new life of the spirit which opened before her in its possibilities, she thought to make a sudden leap from olden habits and desires, loves and hopes and jealousies, straight forward into a life of self-forgetfulness. And falling, she was very sad, very sore and bruised. She was discouraged, alas, as well, and wondered that she ever could have hoped and believed that conquest of her lower nature could be easily compassed.

Fainting and weary, she had a vision. Before her stretched a rugged mountain, reaching far, far up into the mountain, and a path led up the mountain, aye, to the very top; but so steep it was, so sharp the ascent, that she, a pilgrim on the way, was overcome by dizziness when but a few steps had been taken upward. Exhausted, she sank upon the ground. But looking up, she beheld two Brothers of the race, tall and grand-looking men, loving and tender of mien. They were standing in the pathway above her, reaching downward a helping hand to herself, just started on that

difficult journey which leads to knowledge and to freedom. They saw her fall, those Elder Brothers, and they realized that as yet her strength was not equal to climbing that rugged, steep ascent. She must rise, but a longer, slower way must be followed by her because of her great weakness. Should they leave her to take that journey alone, her whose store of energy must not be drawn upon too exhaustively, whose weakness would not allow her to mount rapidly? No, indeed, no! They turned their way downward towards her, and with a tender, pitying smile led her aside into another path hidden among the bushes and the trees, and rising more gradually and slowly upward. The way was dark, it is true, save for their Radiant Presence, the light of freedom was hidden from view in many places, and yet flashes of it illumined the path at intervals. It was restful to the poor, weak soul who had once hoped and trusted in her strength to rise more rapidly. It was comforting to know that her Guardians, the Guardians of the Race, were not impatient, but were still watching and helping, never wearying in their care and tenderness, even though the journey must be slow because of her great weakness. And she kept her eyes turned toward them and she had faith.

The Path

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM

Student: — At a former time you spoke of entities that crowd the spaces about us. Are these all unconscious or otherwise?

Sage. — They are not all unconscious. First, there are the humdrum masses of elementals that move like nerve-currents with every motion of man, beast, or natural elements. Next are classes of those which have a peculiar power and consciousness of their own and not easily reached by any man. Then come the shades of the dead, whether mere floating shells, or animated elementals, or infused with galvanic and extraordinary action by the Brothers of the Shadow. Last, the Brothers of the Shadow, devoid of physical bodies save in rare cases, bad souls living long in that realm and working according to their nature for no other end than evil until they are finally annihilated — they are the lost souls of Kama Loka as distinguished from the "animated corpses" devoid of souls which live and move among men. These Black entities are the Dugpas, the Black Magicians.

Student. — Have they anything to do with the shocks, knocks, bad influences, disintegration of soft material accompanied by noises more or less distinct?

Sage. — Yes, they have. Not always, of course. But where they are actually seen at the time preceding such occurrence, they are the agents.

Student. — Then I am to suppose that if such takes place with me I am the attracting person, the unfortunate channel through which they have come?

Sage. — No, you are thoroughly in error there. You are not such channel in that case. You are in fact the opposite, and the very

cause for the temporary defeat of that dark entity. You have mistaken the appearance, the outer manipulation of forces, for the thing itself. If you were their channel, their agent, the cause for their coming and thus making their presence possible, there would be no noise and no explosion. They would then act in and through you for the hurt of others, silently and insidiously. They approach your sphere and attempt to make entry. The strength of your character, of your aspiration, of your life, throws them off, and they are obliged, like rain-clouds, to discharge themselves. The more strong they are, the louder will be their retreating manifestation. For the time they are temporarily destroyed or, rather, put outside the combat, and, like a war vessel have to retire for repairs. In their case this consists in accumulating force for a new attack, there or elsewhere.

Student. — If, then, such loud explosions, with pulverization of wall-plaster and the like, take place, and such an evil entity is seen astrally, it follows that the person near whom it all occurred — if identification due to solitude is possible — was in fact the person who, by reason of inner power and opposition to the evil entity, became the cause for its bursting or temporary defeat?

Sage. — Yes, that is correct. The person is not the cause for the entity's approach, nor its friend, but is the safeguard in fact for those who otherwise would be insidiously affected. Uninformed students are likely to argue the other way, but that will be due to want of correct knowledge. I will describe to you condensedly an actual case. Sitting at rest on a seat, eyes closed, I saw approach one of those evil entities along the astral currents, and looking as a man. His hands like claws reached out to affect me; on his face was a devilish expression. Full of force he moved quickly up. But as I looked at him the confidence I felt and the protection about me acted as an intense shock to him, and he appeared to burst from within, to stagger, fall to pieces, and then disappeared. Just

as the disintegration began, a loud noise was caused by the sudden discharge of astral electricity, causing reactions that immediately transmitted themselves into the objects in the room, until, reaching the limit of tension, they created a noise. This is just the phenomenon of thunder, which accompanies discharges in the clouds and is followed by equilibrium.

Student. — Can I carry this explanation into every objective phenomenon, say, then, of spiritualistic rappings?

Sage. — No, not to every case. It holds with many, but specially relates to the conscious entities I was speaking of. Very often the small taps and raps one hears are produced under the law referred to, but without the presence of such an entity. These are the final dissipations of collected energy. That does not always argue a present extraneous and conscious entity. But in so far as these taps are the conclusion of an operation, that is, the thunder from one astral cloud to another, they are dissipations of accumulated force. With this distinction in mind you should not be confused.

Student. — Have not colors a good deal to do with this matter?

Sage. — Yes; but just now we will not go into the question of color except to say that the evil entities referred to often assume a garb of good color, but are not able to hide the darkness that belongs to their nature.

STEPPING-STONES — *C. F. Wright*

It would seem by the way in which many members regard the working of the T. S. that the old traditions concerning exoteric wisdom and the method by which it is taught are but lightly regarded. There is a great difference between learning and wisdom, and a little reflection on that fact would be of use to many. The Theosophical movement was intended to give men Wisdom more than anything else, and the methods which it adopts in thus training its members are those which have held good in the East and in all Occult Brotherhoods from time immemorial. The peculiar and particular difference between the method of instruction employed in Occult bodies and that of our western colleges lies mainly in that the one, while apparently saying very little, seeks to develop the intuitions, and the other, while saying a great deal, merely supplies the brain with facts. The former deals in generalities, the latter in particulars. Mr. Sinnett rightly said in his *Esoteric Buddhism* that the traditional methods of teaching in the East aimed at impressing every fresh idea on the memory by provoking the perplexity it at last relieved. This perplexity arises from an absence of a certain power in the Ego of the student to perceive the greater laws of Nature. But by dwelling on the thought that the Master puts forward, in time the student comes to develop that power and thereby to recognize a new fact in Nature. Madame Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* was written in that way, and it will always perplex students until they have reached to the development of the author of that book. She has been criticized for her want of order, and sometimes for the absence of such statements as would lead the brain-development forward by orderly processes, but she did not seek to develop the reflective powers, but rather

to awaken the perceptive ones.

Now we should remember, and always hold to in our endeavor to help the world, the occult and traditional method of teaching. In our Branches we should be sure that we are conducting them on this basis. The writer knows some persons who try to turn their Branches into clubs or literary associations, merely placing them on the level of any other like club. Then, again, he knows of others who try to turn them into semi-religious institutions, but in both of these cases there is a distinct falling away from the original lines, and we must examine ourselves very carefully to see what is the proper thing to do in the management of Branches and in public meetings in order that we may awaken the spiritual insight of anyone in the outside world.

Now there is one very simple matter by which we can know how to act, and that is by noting carefully in our minds those things which have helped us and developed us, and those things which have, on the other hand, held us back. The use of these things will undoubtedly have a similar effect upon, the generality of other persons and we should remember this. If we want to help others we should bring forward the ideas that have aided us. It does not matter if we ourselves have now gone far beyond them: they were stepping-stones to us at one time and would be helps now to other persons if rightly employed. It is not difficult to find members amongst us who are throwing aside a great many conceptions as materialistic now, that were aids to them once. The simple statement, for example, of reincarnation: that the soul is an intelligence which passes on from life to life, entering new physical bodies and coming back to the race again and again; is regarded now by many as a very crude and even materialistic statement of the truth of the matter. Yet it was a very new idea to them but a few years ago, and, moreover, they would never have advanced to their present high development had not

Reincarnation been presented to them then in that very crude and materialistic manner. Therefore, what they should do now, when speaking to others below them, is to waive aside the immense knowledge they have gained and be content to present matters in a simple and clear light to those who know less than they.

If we enquire into the reason as to why it is that many desire to present such a vast amount of information in their essays and papers at a Branch meeting or before the public, or to become very metaphysical and discourse on the Absolute and Be-ness and the like, we should see that it arises really from a subtle form of egotism. They wish to show how much they know, and it does not mean simply that they wish to show how much book-learning they have, but often how much *spiritual enlightenment* they possess; this latter making it very difficult for them to find any egotism in what they do. To present a spiritual truth in a materialistic manner, and without referring to "spirit and matter", and "good and evil", or Sanskrit terms, would seem to them almost profane. Why? Because they know better, they have passed beyond all materialistic thought! But nevertheless they should remember that there are many others who have not yet reached this pinnacle of enlightenment, and their object in getting up to speak should be, if they are Theosophists at all, not to show how much they know, but really to help. Egotism springs from a want of sympathy with the race, and if one who speaks or writes or even converses with a fellow-student or one who knows nothing of Theosophy does so merely with the idea of impressing him with the amount of his own information he cannot help him in the slightest degree. True sympathy is a desire to help another, and this again is the root of one's own possible advancement. Egotism is a desire to get as much praise as possible from others, and it therefore closes up and destroys the nature of him who

possesses it.

Always there is this difference between the egotist and the sympathetic helper of man. The one desires to tell how much he knows; the other seeks to aid men in knowing as much as he. The former tries to surprise with the amount of his learning and even spiritual wisdom, the latter always seeks to give his fellow-men instruction as to how to obtain that information and spiritual wisdom.

So, then, if we are going to develop teachers and helpers for the race, we must instruct others by picking out those things that have aided us from the mass of Theosophical literature that is given to the world, and speak of them in the simplicity in which we received them; in that way to lead others up to our own enlightenment. Many say that Madame Blavatsky made a mistake in her method of enlightening the world; yet all her "mistakes" had definite objects in them. She knew infinitely more than she said, but she did not care about saying all she knew because she was not an egotist. She desired rather to help the world than to surprise it with the profundity of her knowledge. And those persons who decry Madame Blavatsky and point to her mistakes are the very ones who but a short while past learned all that they now know of the sacred truths of life from her teachings.

Let all members, then, get rid of this egotism, and, remembering the old traditions, teach the philosophy as it was given out in the earliest T. S. days. Those things that helped you at first will help others now. It may be that in your idea that you have gone far beyond Madame Blavatsky, you have not come near to where she stood. You may have but intellectually recognized wisdom which she knew intuitively. The simple expression of the Theosophical doctrines, the teachings about Karma and Reincarnation and those about the seven principles of man and the like, in their

simplest form, should be given to the public in order that they may be aided as you have been. For it is a fact that those things that aided you will undoubtedly aid others.

Again, remember also that the philosophy more than the mere ethics is what the world needs. Telling a person to "be good" instead of showing him why he should thus act, is what is being done in every church. It is not suitable to this age. Only a week ago one member overheard a visitor to a Theosophical meeting saying as he left the hall, "Universal Brotherhood! I don't know about that! Why should I not skin a man? He'd skin me if he had the chance." Showing that what the visitor wanted was not the mere telling him to become one of a body of universal brothers, but the giving to him of a philosophy which should explain the rationale thereof.

Remember, then, to place before the world and those you come in contact with the stepping-stones which have served as helps to you, and think constantly upon this rule of life:

Do not desire to tell people how much you know or how wise you are, but rather instruct them so that they also may acquire the knowledge and the wisdom for themselves.

The Path

LETTERS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY: IV

In a letter to Madame Jelihovsky: "I have not written to you for a month, my well-beloved friend, and could you guess the cause of it? One beautiful Tuesday morning in April I got up as usual, and as usual sat down at my writing table to write to my Californian correspondents. Suddenly, hardly a second later, as it seemed to me, I realized that for some mysterious reason I was in my bedroom and lying on my bed; it being evening and not morning any more. Around me I saw some of our Theosophists and Doctors looking at me with the most puzzled faces, and Olcott and his sister Mrs. Mitchell — the best friend I have here, both of them pale, sour, wrinkled, as if they had just been boiled in a saucepan. 'What's the matter? What's gone and happened?', I asked them. Instead of answering, they heaped questions upon me: what was the matter with me? And how could I tell — nothing was the matter with me. I did not remember anything, but it certainly was strange that only the other moment it was Tuesday morning, and now they said it was Saturday evening; and as to me, these four days of unconsciousness seemed only the twinkling of an eye. There's a pretty pair of shoes! Just fancy, they all thought I was dead and were about to burn this dismantled temple of mine. But at this, Master telegraphed from Bombay to Olcott: 'Don't be afraid. She is not ill but resting. She has overworked herself. Her body wanted rest, but now she will be well.' Master was right. He knows everything, and in fact I was perfectly healthy. The only thing was I did not remember anything. I got up, stretched myself, sent them all out of the room, and sat down to write the same evening. But it is simply awful to think about the work that has accumulated. I could not give a thought to letters."

Then from India, describing her arrival:

"Olcott was exactly like Carnival *Bauf Gras*; Miss B. like a pole covered with convolvulus; W. like a bed of lilies and roses; and I myself probably like a huge balloon woven of flowers. I was ready either to laugh or to be angry. They placed us in a boat, and we were taken to the landing-stage amidst the sounds of music, where we ran up against a new solemnity: we were met by a band of local, half-naked dancing girls, who surrounded us chanting their *mantra*, and led us in state — all the time bombarding us with flowers — to a maybe you think to a carriage? Not at all, to a white elephant! Good Lord, the effort it cost me to climb over the hands and backs of naked coolies to the top of this huge animal. It still puzzles me to know how I managed not to drop out of the 'howdah' where Olcott and I were put, especially when the elephant was rising to his feet. The others were placed in palanquins, and lo! to the accompaniment of acclamations, tamborines, horns, with all sorts of theatrical pomp, singing, and a general row, they carried us — humble slaves of God — to the house of the Arya Somaj."

In a letter to Madame Fadeef, dated November, 1879, H. P. B. writes:

"Would you like to get acquainted with the programme of my inevitable monthly work? If so, here you are: *first* to see to the accuracy of every article for the next number of the *Theosophist*; *second*, to see to the translation of from two to four articles in Sanskrit or the Indian vernaculars into English; *thirdly*, to personally write the leader and some other signed article; *fourthly*, to examine all the mystical articles to prevent Olcott and other co-workers from mixing things up and from over-salting these contributions; *fifthly*, to correct, proofs, sometimes five times running; *sixthly*, to answer some three or four dozen letters

addressed to the Corresponding Secretary of the Theosophical Society; *seventhly*, to thank people who send us books for our library from all points of the compass, and to acknowledge their receipt; *eighthly*, to answer a few dozen private letters; *ninthly*, to write two or three periodical articles for the American and Indian newspapers; *tenthly*, to be present at the initiation of the new members, to enter their names, and to give them their diplomas by the dozen and more; *eleventh*, to enter the new subscribers; *twelfth*, to skim through about forty magazines and newspapers; *thirteenth*, to receive visitors every evening — as many as the hall will hold — all kinds of Brahmans, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, Parsis, Mussulmans, and Europeans, who come for scientific purposes, and with whom I have to discuss philosophy and metaphysics up to eleven o'clock at night; *fourteenth*, and above all these I sometimes have additional work to do: for instance, to post six hundred and fifty invitation cards — one of which I send to you, as you are one of our members — for a great ceremony which is to be held tomorrow evening, the 29th of November, in honor of the fifth anniversary of the Society (1879), of the opening of our library and the publishing of our magazine the *Theosophist*. You can easily imagine the pleasure of getting oneself up 'regardless' in this heat; of hanging oneself over with every kind of medal, sign, and the ribbons of different Societies, and to smile at six hundred and fifty naked, half-naked, muslin-clad and evening-dressed Brother-Theosophists. Thank God I am going away at the beginning of December to Allahabad, with a deputation of Rao-Bahadurs, which means 'Great Warriors'. I am going there with a double object, first to see Swami Dayanand, second, to get acquainted with the wife of the Resident. I have promised the Sinnetts to spend some time with them. A prospect of calls, dinners, and balls in 'high life'. My hair stands on end at the very thought of it, but it must be done. I have warned Mrs. Sinnett that I, though not a Russian spy but an American citizen, will not listen

to a single word of disrespect to Russia or to our Emperor. Just let them try, and how I will abuse their England! So let them be warned."

H. P. B.'s position as an exponent of true mysticism was recognized in India. Lord Lytton, the Governor General and the son of the author of *Zanoni*, said of her: "I know only of one author who can hold her own in mystical literature with my father. It is H. P. Blavatsky. She can well stand comparison with the author of *Zanoni* in her comprehension of abstract metaphysics." The remark was reported in the Indian newspapers, and H. P. B. wrote to her sister:

"And so now I have become the lion of the day. I am proclaimed to be a deep orientalist, a friend of science, a herald of truth which has been enslaved by centuries of prejudice. Read the newspaper cuttings which I send to you, and glory in your relation being glorified by the nations!"

In another letter:

"From Simla I wrote an article for the *Novoe Vremya*, 'The Truth about the Nephew of Nana Sahib'. I have gathered the most elaborate information about this scamp. *Golos* constantly prints letters written by this liar, as if to incite England to make war on Russia. And *Novoe Vremya* disdained to print my note. For what reason? Besides being true, it is written as a free contribution. One would think they might have believed in tin-good intention of a countrywoman of theirs, of a Russian who is at the very source of the information about this self-proclaimed and false ally of Russia — this Prince Ramchandra. His biography — perfectly false — has appeared in the June number of the Russian *Herald*, 1889. And his letters from Bagdad and Cabul, printed in *Golos*, amuse and needlessly irritate everyone here who knows the truth of the matter. (1) . . . Whilst in Simla, Olcott and Sinnett, nearly

dragging me by force, made me visit Sir A. Lyall, Chief-Secretary for Foreign Affairs; also dine with the Viceroy, and in fact go to all kinds of aristocratic gatherings; and everywhere I had to quarrel so much for Russia's sake that I got a sore throat and am sick of them all! And yet our papers won't print my articles!"

In spite of the lack of courtesy on the part of the Russian newspapers in regard to herself, H. P. B. always subscribed to many Russian magazines and papers, and having no time to read these during the day, she robbed herself of sleep during the short five or six hours of her nightly rest, in order to know what was going on in her own country. The arrival of one of these newspapers gave rise to the following psychometric experience in the autumn of 1880. Writing to Madame Fadeef, H. P. B. expressed her gratitude for a parcel of newspapers she had sent her:

"And what an interesting thing happened to me not long since. I received your bundle of *Novoe Vremyas* and went to bed a little after ten (you know I get up at five). Having taken up one of the newspapers, without choosing, just the nearest one, I stretched myself and went deep into thought about a certain Sanskrit book which I thought would help me to make good fun of Max Muller in my magazine. So you see it was by no means about you that I was thinking. And the newspaper lay all the time behind my head on the pillow, partly covering my forehead. When all of a sudden I felt myself transported into some strange and yet familiar house. The room I saw was new to me, but the table in the middle of it an old acquaintance. And there, sitting at the table, I saw you — you, my darling comrade, sitting smoking your cigarette and deeply thinking. The supper was laid on the table, but there was no one else in the room. Only it seemed to me that I caught a glimpse of Aunt going away through the door. Then you raised your hand and, taking a newspaper from the table, put it aside. I had just time to read its heading, *Herald of Odessa*, after which

everything disappeared. To all seeming-there was nothing strange in this occurrence, but here is something strange: I was perfectly sure that it was a number of the *Novoe Vremya* that I had taken up, and having noticed in my vision some slices of black bread beside you, I was suddenly seized with such a desire to taste some of it — even a wee crumb — that I felt its taste in my mouth. I thought to myself, What does it all mean? What can be the cause of such a fancy? And in order to get rid of a desire that could not be gratified, I unfolded the newspaper and began to read. When lo! it actually was the *Herald of Odessa*, and not at all the *Novoe Vremya* in my hands. And, moreover, crumbs of my longed-for rye-bread were sticking to it! And so these fragments on touching my forehead transmitted to my consciousness the whole scene as it probably happened at the precise moment of their sticking to the newspaper. In this case, crumbs of rye-bread have taken the place of a photographic apparatus. These dry pieces of bread gave me such intense delight, having transported me for a brief moment to you. I was quite filled with the atmosphere of home, and in my joy I licked up the biggest crumb, and as to the small ones — here they are, I have cut them out as they stuck to the paper and send them back to you. Let them return home with some of my own soul. This may be rather a silly proceeding, but perfectly sincere."

FOOTNOTE:

1. This extract is interesting as showing that whilst Mr. Hodgson was quite sure (among other things) that H. P. B. was a Russian spy, her own countrymen would not trust her politically because she was an American citizen and a resident in India. ([return to text](#))

THE NEW DEPARTURE — *F. Hartmann*

With the advent of the theosophical movement inaugurated by H. P. Blavatsky, an era of self-thought began. The Theosophical Society was intended to be free from any enforced belief in any opinion, creed, or dogma whatever; being based upon no other fundamental principle than the unity of the One from whom all life with its infinite variety of forms originates, and the resulting brotherhood of all human beings. Undoubtedly one of the causes which led to the rapid growth of that Society was that many people instinctively or intuitionally perceived the sublimity of that idea, even if they were not capable of grasping it intellectually at once. In fact, those who are able to conceive that a person may become interiorly illumined by the light of truth and be taught by wisdom itself, so that he may know the truth, not from mere hearsay or from the reading of books, or from information received, or from his own speculations and fancies, but from awakening himself to a higher state of self-consciousness, and living himself in that light; the number of persons who can conceive of that, seems to be still comparatively small. Especially in England, the country ridden by orthodoxy, hypocrisy, and conventionalism; where everyone looks upon everybody with contempt unless he dresses like him, feeds like him, adopts the same manners and believes the same things as he; where everything is divided off into boxes and pigeon-holed; where nobody cares what you are, but everybody wants to know to what system, club, or church you belong; the meaning of the word self-thought, self-knowledge, or Theosophy seems to be generally misunderstood, and this misunderstanding is about to invade the ranks of the Theosophical Society, bringing with it a bagful of dogmas and doctrines, threatening the freedom of that

Society and to turn it into a sect; perhaps a sect with more advanced views than those of the rest, but a sect after all, in which no one can attain freedom, but is bound to follow blindly the scent of a leader.

There is not a country in the world in which the book called "The Bible" is so much worshipped as in England, and perhaps nowhere is the meaning of its contents so much misunderstood; otherwise it would be known more generally that this freedom from dogmatism and the self-perception of truth taught by Theosophy form the sum and substance of the new "covenant" or the new dispensation. This is nowhere better explained than in Chapter viii of the epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews, where it is said: "I will put my laws into their *mind* and write them in their *hearts*, and I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying Know the Lord; for *all shall know me, from the least to the greatest*. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first one old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."

It is not said that the new dispensation is to consist in that somebody with a new set of more plausible dogmas than the old ones is to come forward and to convert the people to a belief in them; but the new covenant consists in the self-recognition of that eternal light of divine wisdom which heretofore was known only theoretically from descriptions received through the prophets and sages. No amount of theories and opinions enables a person to see; they can only serve to aid him in overcoming the obstacles which prevent him from seeing, and perhaps to persuade him to open his eyes. The new covenant consists in growing into that freedom, where no sectarian or theological crutches are required; but where the light of divine wisdom itself can illumine the heart.

The fact that this new covenant does not consist in the establishment of a new creed is also shown by St. Paul in the same letter at its beginning: "Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens: a minister of the true tabernacle [the spiritual soul] which the Lord pitched and not man . . . For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law."

Thus it is shown that it is not an earthly, mortal man who puts his laws directly into men's minds and writes them in their hearts; but it is the great luminous soul itself that sends its light into every mind and heart that is ready to receive it; — not theoretically, as was the old way and custom among the blind, by secondary information; but practically, according to the new departure by which everyone is asked to open his eyes and receive himself that light of which those who keep their eyes closed know only from hearsay. Who is he who is set on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens? Surely not a man of this earth. The Occultist knows that the right hand of God means his power, because the right hand is the symbol for doing good, and the power of the divine man is divine love; while only that love is divine which is universal and identical with divine self-knowledge; for "love" in its true sense means the recognition of Self (Atma) in another thing, while divine love recognizes itself in everything.

This divine love or self-knowledge is *Theosophy*, of which it is plainly said in the Bible (*I Corinth.*, II, 7); "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect, yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world that come to nought; but we speak the wisdom of God [the inner man] in a mystery (*theou sophian*), which God ordained before the world (*pro ton aionon*) unto our

glory", and it must therefore be plain to every rational mind that this Divine Wisdom cannot be explained and proved to those who have no comprehension for it, nor can the nature of Divine Love be demonstrated to those who keep their hearts closed against it by self-love, conceit, and mutual incriminations. Such persons, enveloped as they are in the veil of spiritual ignorance (Tamas), will not be able to understand the nature and purport of the new dispensation.

Those of the Theosophical Society, and out of it, who are still clamoring for a creed, needing, as a stick upon which to lean, the opinion of some leader believed to be a reliable authority, belong to the *outer* circle, to the pronaos of the temple. No matter how many pledges they have signed and how many ceremonies they have performed, they have not entered into the sanctuary into which none with his eyes shut is admitted. Praiseworthy as their object may be in studying the theories regarding immortal life, while they are not yet able to experience it practically they ought not to imagine that having become well versed in these theories they have attained self-knowledge, but know that a description of food does not appease hunger, while he who eats receives the benefit of it even without a description, so all the theories about the origin of man and his development into a divine being have only the object of inducing him to follow the true path, while only he who walks upon that path and practically develops into a divine being will obtain real self-knowledge and arrive at his destination.

To the *inner* circle will belong those who, not satisfied with mere theories nor with blindly following the sounding horn of a leader, succeed in opening their own spiritual eye and receive themselves the light which shines for leaders and for followers alike. Having awakened to the realization of the inner life of the soul, they are thereby initiated into that inner life and receive the

new dispensation, which cannot be enforced upon them by any outward pledge, interpretation, or ceremony. All that the outward man (the personality) does out of his own perverted self-will and without the inner impulse from the divine man (Mahatma) within, is worthless and foolish; even his pledges are the result of folly and selfishness, for he makes his promises for the purpose of obtaining a selfish end and pledges himself to do that which he has not the power to accomplish. But the spiritually awakened man, knowing his own Master and having become united with him, even for a moment, is during that moment filled with the understanding and the power of the Master, and what he does in such circumstances is not done by him personally, but through him by the Master, as a conscious but selfless instrument of the Master's will, and the proof that he has acted as an instrument for the Master can be found nowhere except by and within himself.

This is the doctrine that has been taught in the Vedas, the *Bhagavad Gita*, and the *Bible*, by the ancient Rosicrucians and mystics of all ages. Theosophical students have often admitted its possibility, but comparatively few seem to believe that it can be practically carried out. This, then, is the new departure which we would propose for the Theosophical Society; that we should seek to outgrow the old dispensation and enter the new; that the question should not be whether we are loyal to Jones or to Smith, but whether we are loyal to immortal Truth; that we cease to dispute as to whether the description given of the light by Smith or the one given by Jones is correct, but ourselves tear away the veil of selfishness and ignorance which shuts us out from the perception of light. This is the new departure, that everyone should seek to know the Master within himself, and become himself that Master over the delusion of "self"; when he will be able to know the reflection of the image of the Master in others as well as himself. Not by mere science and clever speculation, nor

by gush and sentimentalism, is true freedom attained. There is no other way to it except through the awakening to the knowledge of eternal truth.

The Path

LETTERS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY: V

H.P.B. was exceedingly ill in the early part of 1881, and all the doctors agreed that she would have to be cauterized in the back. She tried to keep out of bed in spite of it, though her back was in a terrible condition; but whether in bed or out of it she kept continually at work. She wrote in momentary despair:

"Oh God! what a misery it is to live and to feel. Oh, if it were possible to plunge into Nirvana! What an irresistible fascination there is in the idea of eternal rest! Oh, my darlings, only to see you once more, and to know that my death would not give you too much sorrow."

In many of her following letters she showed she was ashamed of this little weakness. Her convictions were too deep, says Madame Jelihovsky; she knew too well that even in death it is not everyone who realizes the longed-for rest. She despised and dreaded the very thought of a willful shortening of suffering, seeing in it a law of retribution the breaking of which brings about only worse suffering both before and after death. In case H.P.B. should suddenly be taken ill, she always left instructions with Col. Olcott, or one of her secretaries, to inform her family of the fact. On this occasion they were greatly astonished, not long after hearing of her suffering, to learn in the beginning of August, 1881, that she had suddenly started for Simla in northern India, on her way further north. From Meerut she informed her family in her own handwriting that she was ordered to leave the railways and other highways, and to be guided by a man who was sent to her for the purpose, into the jungles of the sacred forest "Deo-Bund"; that there she was to meet a certain great Lama, Debodurgai, who would meet her there on his way back to Tibet from a pilgrimage

to the tree of Buddha, and who was sure to cure her. She writes:

"I was unconscious. I do not remember in the least how they carried me to a great height in the dead of night. But I woke up, or rather came back to my senses, on the following day towards evening. I was lying in the middle of a huge and perfectly empty room, built of stone. All round the walls were carved stone statues of Buddha. Around me were some kind of smoking chemicals, boiling in pots, and standing over me the Lama Debodurgai was making magnetic passes."

Her chronic disease was much relieved by this treatment, but on her way back she caught a severe rheumatic fever. Her illness was in no slight measure due to her distress at the murder of the Tsar Alexander II. On hearing of the Emperor's death she wrote to Madame Jelihovsky:

"Good heavens, what is this new horror? Has the last day fallen upon Russia? Or has Satan entered the offspring of our Russian land? Have they all gone mad, the wretched Russian people? What will be the end of it all, what are we to expect from the future? Oh God! people may say, if they choose, that I am an Atheist, a Buddhist, a renegade, a citizen of a Republic, but the bitterness I feel! How sorry I am for the Imperial family, for the Tsar martyr, for the whole of Russia. I abhor, I despise and utterly repudiate these sneaking monsters — Terrorists. Let every one laugh at me if they choose, but the martyr-like death of our sovereign Tsar makes me feel — though I am an American citizen — such compassion, such anguish, and such shame that in the very heart of Russia people could not feel this anger and sorrow more strongly."

H.P.B. was very pleased that the *Pioneer* printed her article on the

death of the Tsar, and wrote to her sister about it:

"I have put into it all I could possibly remember; and just fancy, they have not cut out a single word, and some other newspapers reprinted it! But all the same, the first time they saw me in mourning many of them asked me, 'What do you mean by this? Aren't you an American?' I got so cross that I have sent a kind of general reply to the *Bombay Gazette*: not as a Russian subject am I clothed in mourning (I have written to them), but as a Russian by birth, as one of many millions whose benefactor has been this kindly, compassionate man now lamented by the whole of my country. By this act I desire to show respect, love, and sincere sorrow at the death of the sovereign of my mother and my father, of my sisters and brothers in Russia. Writing in this way silenced them, but before this two or three newspapers thought it a good opportunity to chaff the office of the *Theosophist* and the *Theosophist* itself for going into mourning. Well, now they know the reason and can go to the devil!"

On being sent a portrait of the dead Emperor in his coffin, H.P.B. wrote to Madame Fadeef on the 10th of May, 1881:

"Would you believe it, the moment I glanced at it something went wrong in my head; something uncontrollable vibrated in me, impelling me to cross myself with the big Russian cross, dropping my head on his dead hand. So sudden it all was that I felt stupified with astonishment. Is it really I who during eight years since the death of father never thought of crossing myself, and then suddenly giving way to such sentimentality? It's a real calamity: fancy that even now I cannot read Russian newspapers with any sort of composure! I have become a

regular and perpetual fountain of tears; my nerves have become worse than useless."

In another letter to Madame Fadeef, dated 7th March, 1885 H.P.B. shows how perfectly she was aware of what was taking place in her own family, and how strong her clairvoyance was, mentioning amongst other things a conversation between her two aunts that had taken place on the day on which she wrote from India:

"Why does Auntie allow her spirits to get so depressed? Why did she refuse to send a telegram to B. [her son] to congratulate him when he received the decoration of St. Anne? 'No occasion for it; a great boon indeed!' she said, did she not?"

And in another letter she reproaches Madame Fadeef:

"You never mention in your letters to me anything that happens in the family. I have to find out about everything through myself, and this requires a needless expenditure of strength."

Madame Fadeef was a subscriber to the *Bulletin Mensuel de la Societe Theosophique*, published in Paris, but frequently did not read it until long after it had been received by her. On the 23d March, 1883, H.P.B. wrote to her asking her to pay especial attention to the ninth page of the number issued in Paris on the 15th March. This issue had been received by Madame Fadeef some time previously, and on looking at the uncut number, at H.P.B.'s suggestion, she found that on the page mentioned by H.P.B. there was a large mark in blue pencil as it seemed. The passage so marked referred to the prophecy of the Saint Simonists that in 1831 a woman would be born who would reconcile the beliefs of the extreme East with the Christian beliefs

of the West, and would be the founder of a Society which would create a great change in the minds of men.

The Path

COMETS — *William Q. Judge*

The probable genesis, the constitution, the movements, and the functions of comets have engaged the greatest attention of astronomers.. They very often appear to defy laws which apply to other celestial bodies. That the laws governing the heavenly bodies are not all known must be admitted upon very little reflection. Two things alone would raise doubts as to whether modern astronomers are acquainted with all those laws. The first is that although the great fixed stars are known to be moving at enormous rates — for instance, that Sirius is receding from us with great velocity every moment — yet for ages they all appear to stand in the same relative positions, and are therefore called "fixed" stars in comparison with the planetary bodies nearer to us, which move with apparently greater rapidity. The other is that some of the planets having one moon seem to have a different law prevailing over them, in that one of the moons will move in a direction opposite to the others. There are, in the first volume of the *Secret Doctrine* (first ed., pp. 203-209), two paragraphs which indicate some of the views of the Adepts in respect to comets.

"Born in the unfathomable depths of space, out of the homogeneous element called the World-Soul, every nucleus of Cosmic matter suddenly launched into being begins life under the most hostile circumstances. Through a series of countless ages it has to conquer for itself a place in the infinitudes. It circles round and round between denser and already fixed bodies, moving by jerks, and pulling toward some given point or center that attracts it, trying to avoid, like a ship drawn into a channel dotted with reefs and sunken rocks, other bodies that draw and repel it in turn: many perish, their mass disintegrating

through stronger masses and, when born within a system, chiefly within the insatiable stomachs of various suns. Those which move slower and are propelled into an elliptic course are doomed to annihilation sooner or later. Others moving in parabolic curves generally escape destruction, owing to their velocity.

Some very critical readers will perhaps imagine that this teaching as to the cometary stage passed through by all heavenly bodies is in contradiction with the statements just made as to the moon's being the mother of the earth. They will perhaps fancy that intuition is needed to harmonize the two. But no intuition is, in truth, required. What does science know of comets, their genesis, growth, and ultimate behavior? Nothing — absolutely nothing! And what is there so impossible that a laya center — a lump of cosmic protoplasm, homogeneous and latent — when suddenly animated or fired up, should rush from its bed in space and whirl throughout the abysmal depths in order to strengthen its homogeneous organism by an accumulation and addition of differentiated elements? And why should not such a comet settle in life, live, and become an inhabited globe?"

It is to be observed here that the same war which we see going on upon this plane goes on upon the cosmic planes also, it being stated that when a nucleus of matter begins life it does so under the most hostile circumstances. On this plane, the moment the soul leaves the body the never-ceasing life-energy begins to tear the particles apart and separate them into smaller lives. And it is known that the theory is held by the Adepts that during life one set of cells or points of life wars against another set, and that what we call death results from the balance being destroyed, so that the mass of cells which work for destruction, of any

composition in nature, gaining the upper hand, immediately begin to devour the other, and, at last, turn upon themselves for their own destruction as composite masses. That is to say, not that there is one distinct quantity of cells which are destroyers, opposed by another distinct quantity which are conservers, but that the negative and positive forces in nature are constantly acting and reacting against each other. The equilibrium, or natural state, is due to the balancing of these two opposite forces. The positive is destructive, and if that force gains the upper hand it converts all those cells over which it has control for the moment into destroyers of the other, negative, cells. Hence a negative cell might at some time become a positive cell, and *vice versa*. After the balance is destroyed, then the positive forces accumulate to themselves more cells under their influence, and then again a division of the two forces takes place, so that a portion of the positive become negative, and in that way, continually dividing and subdividing, so-called death, as known to us, takes place.

It has not been understood what comets are, but these paragraphs indicate that the opinion of the Adepts is that they are the beginning of worlds, *i.e.*, that we see in comets the possible beginnings of worlds. The sentence beginning the quotations — "Born in the unfathomable depths of Space", etc. — means that, a laya center being formed, the homogeneous mass of matter is condensed at that point, and, the energy of nature being thrown into it, it starts up, a fiery mass, to become a comet. It will then either pursue its course in evolution, if it is accumulating to its matter from other masses, or will be drawn into them for their aggrandizement. The hint is thrown out that the parabolic moving masses, owing to their velocity, escape destruction because they are able to evade the attraction from greater masses.

In the second paragraph quoted a clue is given to those who would be likely to think that this theory could not be consistent with the other, *viz.*, that the moon is the mother of the earth. It is intended to be shown in the paragraph that the starting-up, as before suggested, of a mass of matter from the laya center is due to the energy propelled into that center from a dying globe, such as the moon is. This having been begun, no matter what may be the wanderings of the fast-moving mass, it will at last come back to the place from which it started, when it shall have grown to a greater maturity. And this is indicated in the last statement — "Why should not such a comet settle in life, live, and become an inhabited globe?"

This theory is as useful, consistent, and reasonable as any that materialistic science has invented in respect to comets or any other heavenly bodies, and, being perfectly in accord with the rest of the theories given out by the Adepts, there can be no objection raised to it, that it violates the general system which they have outlined.

The Path

LETTERS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY: VI

By the end of 1883 H.P.B. had resolved to go to Europe. Just about this time the members of her family in Odessa were in great trouble. General R. A. Fadeef, the brother of H.P.B.'s mother, was dying. They were all of them so overcome by sorrow and by continual watching over him, whilst on the other hand they knew of H.P.B.'s intention to start for Europe, that for a long time not one of them wrote to her. Only a few days after the funeral they thought of informing her about their common misfortune. But their letters reached Madras when H. P. B. had already left that city, and were sent back to Europe after her departure. Meanwhile she spent some time in Bombay and let her family know that on the 7th of February, 1884, she had arranged to embark on board the "Chundernagore". She wrote:

"I am starting depressed by a terrible foreboding. Either uncle is dead or I am off my head. The night before our leaving Adyar I dreamed of a scene which happened exactly twenty years ago in Tiflis, in 1864, when I was so ill, as you remember. I was lying on a sofa in the hall dozing, and on opening my eyes I saw Uncle bending over me with so much sadness and pity in his face that I jumped to my feet and actually burst into tears, just as I have done when this scene repeated itself all over again in dream. And about five days ago, in a railway carriage, I was alone in the compartment at about two o'clock a.m. I was lying down but not sleeping, when suddenly between me and the window through which the moon shone very brightly, I saw someone standing. The lamp was covered, but all the same I recognized him at once. It was Uncle, pale, thin, dishevelled. Lord, how I started forward, and then heard in

answer to my cry his voice as if vanishing in the air, 'Farewell to you, Helena Petrovna' — and then everything disappeared. I refused to believe myself. My heart was breaking: I felt I was to believe, but tried not to do so. And then a third time, again when awake: I was not asleep, having great pain in my leg, but shut my eyes in the effort to doze. Half-lying in an arm-chair, I saw him once more before me. But this time as he formerly used to be, twenty years ago. He was looking at me with an amused twinkle in his eyes as he used to do. 'Well', he says, 'and so we have met once more.' 'Uncle', I cried, 'Uncle, for goodness sake tell me you are alive!' 'I am alive', he answered, 'more than at any other time before, and I am shielded from suffering. Do not give way to sadness, but write to *them* not to make themselves wretched. I have seen father and all of them, all of them.' The last words sounded as if going away, becoming less and less audible, and his very outline became more transparent and at last disappeared altogether. Then I knew for certain he was no more in this world. I knew he was ill all this time, but it is so long since I heard from you. But then he chose to come personally and say good-bye to me. Not a single tear in my eyes, but a heavy stone in my heart. The worst of it is that I do not know anything for certain."

H.P.B. got her mail at Suez, and only then learned from the newspapers and her relations' letters that she had been perfectly right.

H.P.B. stayed in Nice with the Countess of Caithness before going on to London. Whilst there, she received numerous invitations to stop with people in England, and replied to these letters in a sort of circular. It reads as follows (translated from the Russian):

"Having received the cordial invitations of . . . and others, I am deeply touched with this proof of the desire to see and to make the acquaintance of my unworthy self on the part of both new and old friends in England. But I do not foresee for myself any possibility of struggling with my fate. I am ill, and feel myself to be much worse than in Bombay and even more so than in the open sea. In Marseilles I spent a whole day in bed, and am still in bed, feeling as if I were on the point of breaking into pieces like an old sea-biscuit. All that I hope to be able to do is to mend my weighty person with medicines and will-power, and then drag this ruin overland to Paris. And what would be the use of my going to London? What good could I do to you in the midst of your fogs mixed up with the poisonous evaporations of the 'higher civilization'? I have left Madras *a mon corps defendant*; I should not have gone at all if I had not been compelled to make up my mind on account of my illness and the orders of the Master. . . . I feel sick and cross and wretched, and gladly would I return to Adyar if I could. . . . Lady Caithness is an incarnation of all that is good: she does everything possible to rest me and to make me comfortable. I must wait here till the weather is more settled. When the March winds are over I shall go to Paris to meet the delegates of the European Branches of the T.S., but I very much fear it will be torture for me. Am I fit for such civilized people as you all are? But in seven minutes and a quarter I should become perfectly unbearable to you English people if I were to transport to London my huge, ugly person. I assure you that distance adds to my beauty, which I should soon lose if near at hand. Do you think I could listen with equanimity to discussions about Sankaracharya being a Theist, and that Subba Row does not know what he is talking about; or to still more striking

statements about Raj Yogis, to the crippling of the Buddhist and Adwaita teachings even in their exoteric interpretations? No doubt as a result of all these trials I should burst a blood-vessel. Let me die in peace if it is not given to me to go back to my familiar Lares and Penates in my dear Adyar!"

H.P.B. despatched letters daily to Odessa, where at that time both her aunts and her sister lived, imploring them not to deprive her of a last meeting with them on this earth, with all the passion she always felt in regard to her family. It was like the affection of a child.

"My dear, my sweet one, don't you bother about money. What is money? Let it be switched! Katkoff is bombarding me with telegrams. One of them was sent to me here by post from Madras. Twenty-nine words! I expect it cost him at least 500 francs, and when I wrote to him from here he sent another asking for my articles. He must be wanting them badly if he asks for them at such cost. So we shall have money. I expect you must have been greatly impressed with all the flatteringly magnificent articles about me in the newspapers, in the *Pall Mall* and others. They praise me entirely out of all proportion. In spite of all my uncouth and far from presentable figure with my swollen legs, I am getting to be *a la mode!* Reporters from all parts simply give me no rest."

Next from Paris in 1884:

"If for no other reason, come for the sake of the fun and see how I am worshipped as a kind of idol; how in spite of my tearful protests all sorts of Duchesses, Countesses, and 'Miladis' of Albion kiss my hands, calling me their 'saviour' — who has torn them from the abyss of Materialism,

unbelief and despair — *sic!* You will see for yourself how they carry on about me. You will probably go to at least one of the meetings, to one of the *Seances Philosophiques de la Socie'te Thcosophique d'Orient et d' Occident* in the princely halls of the Duchesse de Pomar. You shall see there the *elite de la socie'te et de l' intelligence de Paris*. Renan, Flammarion, Madame Adam, and lots of the aristocracy from the Faubourg St. Germain. . . . And besides, we really do not want any of them at all, but for God's sake do not always change your mind: do not kill me. Give me this greatest and only happiness in the end of my life. I am waiting and waiting and waiting for you, my own ones, with an impatience of which you can have no idea. ... I have run away from my cosmopolitan friends and interviewers, and other prying torturers, leaving Paris for a few days for Anghein, Villa Croisac, belonging to my dear friends Count and Countess d'Adhemar. They are real friends, caring for me not only for the sake of phenomena — which be bothered. Here I have a whole *enfilade* of rooms at my own and at your service. But if you wish we can easily live in Paris, coming here only for a few days. The Countess is a charming woman: she has already prepared rooms for you, and insists upon your staying with her. It's only a quarter of an hour from Paris, past St. Denis, and the station is nearly at the entrance of the chateau. Don't be afraid of being in their way. Their house is a huge one. She is a very rich American, so nice and unpretentious. Her husband also, though a great aristocrat and a crusted legitimist, is very simple in his ways."

In spite of this, Madame Fadeef and Madame Jelihovsky preferred to stay with H.P.B. in Paris, where they spent six weeks together. Many interesting things happened. Mr. W. Q. Judge was at that

time staying in the same house with them. When the time came for the party to break up, H.P.B. started for London some two hours before her sister and aunt left for Russia. The latter accordingly saw her off at the Gare du Nord, with a large party of friends and acquaintances. To use Madame Jelihovsky's own words:

"H.P.B. was very unwell, being hardly able to move her swollen feet which gave her awful pain. Most probably I was not the only one to nourish angry thoughts against her all-powerful Mahatmas — if they actually were so kind as described — thinking that they might help her, relieving her suffering, were it only in part, now that she had a long trip and the sorrow of parting with us before her. As usual she stood up for them, assuring us that though they do not think it a good thing to relieve people's suffering (the latter being the lawful reaction on each separate person), yet her own particular Master had often helped her, saving her from mortal illnesses. I walked, supporting her under the arm, to the platform, when suddenly she drew herself up, and glancing over her shoulder exclaimed: 'What is that? Who touched me on the shoulder? Did you see a hand?' No one had seen any hand, and we all stared at each other in astonishment. But how great was our surprise when Helena Petrovna smiled, and, pushing my arm aside, walked ahead firmly and briskly as I had never lately seen her do. 'So now', she said, 'this is an answer to you, Vera; you have been abusing them for their lack of desire to help me, and this moment I saw the hand of the Master. Look how I walk now.' And in fact she walked all the time on the platform, quickly and quite easily. Though she had to change the railway carriage twice, she got in and got out each time without visible effort, assuring us that her pain

had entirely gone and that it was long since she had felt herself so well physically."

The Path

A BASIS FOR ETHICS — *Katharine Hillard*

One of the books which were most read and talked of last year was Mr. Kidd's work on *Social Evolution*. His theory, expressed in the fewest possible words, was that in nature we could find no basis for ethics, that the keynote of natural and of human progress was self-interest, as shown in the struggle for existence, that this might and does become an enlightened self-interest and make for the preservation of the species in the end, but for the origin of true altruism we must look to something outside man and the physical universe, an impulse towards doing good to others which could only spring from a divine and what Mr. Kidd calls "an ultra-rational sanction", in a word, some religious conviction.

Close upon the heels of Mr. Kidd's book came Drummond's *The Ascent of Man*, marked by all the fascinations of easy and brilliant style for which this author is so noted, and equally characterized by his well-known fancifulness and tendency to run off the track of scientific thought into the boggy wilderness of the fantastic. Mr. Drummond says of Kidd's theory (and I think the objection is well-taken), "Practically, as a vindication of the dynamic power of the religious factor in the Evolution of Mankind, nothing could be more convincing. But as an apologetic it only accentuates a weakness which scientific theology never felt more keenly than at the present hour. . . Does not Mr. Kidd perceive that anyone possessed of reason enough to encounter his dilemma, either in the sphere of thought or of conduct, will also have reason enough to reject any 'ultra-rational' solution? That is, if our mind is of a character to be convinced, with Mr. Kidd, that altruism does not belong to human nature, but is foisted upon it, as it were, by some outside religious sentiment, will not that mind naturally

repudiate the idea that any such God outside the machine can exist?" And furthermore Mr. Drummond remarks: "The first essential of a working religion is that it shall be congruous with Man; the second, that it shall be congruous with Nature.

Whatever its sanctions, its forces must not be abnormal, but reinforcements and higher potentialities of those forces which from eternity have shaped the progress of the world."

In all probability, most of us would not interpret this sentence as Mr. Drummond would, but from either point of view it is an admirable statement. His own theory, as distinguished from Mr. Kidd's, is briefly this: That we find the germ of altruism in the struggle for the existence of others, as shown primarily in the maternal instincts of animals, which develop in some orders into the display of affectionate and protective impulses and actions in the father also, and finally into those associations for mutual protection which have for their object the preservation of the species rather than of the individual. In fact, he is rather inclined to agree with Prof. Mantegazza of Italy, another charming but not very trustworthy writer, who expounds the optimistic doctrine that "the whole of nature is one hymn of love". But is not this very association to which Drummond refers, an action prompted rather by fear of a common enemy than any desire to assist in the preservation of other lives? In that very valuable little book on *The Evolution of Sex* by Geddes and Thomson, its authors seem to have taken the desirable middle course by affirming with Littré, Leconte, and others, "the coexistence of twin streams of egoism and altruism which often merge for a space without losing their distinctness, and are traceable to a common origin in the simplest forms of life. . . . There are two divergent lines of emotional and practical activity — hunger, self-regarding egoism, on the one hand; love, other-regarding altruism, on the other. . . . The actual path of progress is represented by action and reaction between

the two complementary functions, the mingling becoming more and more intricate." And the diagram our authors give to illustrate their idea is, curiously enough, in the figure of the caduceus, used, too, as you will remember, by Prof. Crookes.

Here we have, then, the theories of three different thinkers as to the basis of ethics; Mr. Kidd placing it altogether outside of human nature and human reason; Prof. Geddes finding it in the twin stream of egoism and altruism whose sources are in the nutritive and reproductive functions of the body; and Prof. Drummond adding to this the theological conception of the assistance of a personal God. He says, however, as I have already stated, that the first essential of a working religion is that it shall be congruous with man; its second, that it shall be congruous with nature. Strangely enough, this theologian seems to entirely overlook the fact that in the spiritual oneness of man and nature should we seek the true basis of ethics, an idea faintly shadowed forth in the "ideal unity" which stands at the top of Prof. Geddes's diagram.

The Theosophist would maintain that the problems continually confronting the evolutionist will only be solved when the triple nature of man's evolution is fully recognized, and he is treated as a being unfolding in three directions, the physical, the psychical or mental, and the spiritual. To look for the origin of soul-functions among the organs of the body is like trying to trace the source of a mountain streamlet to a salt-marsh. Those animal instincts called altruistic reach out a very little way and in a very few directions, and even these would be classed by the Theosophist as belonging to that "animal soul" which birds and beasts share with human beings. Side by side, then, with the evolution of the body must run the evolution of the soul, and as the spiritual is always the same, and only its medium develops, it may be figured as the staff of the caduceus around which the twin

serpents wreath their coils. The sensations of the body arise in the body and govern its acts; the emotions of the soul, the thoughts of the mind, belong to the other side of the double nature; but both, as well as all the universe, live and move and have their being in the great ocean of Spirit.

To become convinced that we are all descended from a common ancestral form can never make a very deep impression upon our hearts; a brotherhood based upon so remote and so purely physical a relationship will hardly affect the behavior of man to man. But once get rid of the heresy of the belief in the separateness of soul or *self* from the One Universal, infinite Self, and the command to love thy brother as thyself seems to appeal to the heart of all, and we have a basis of ethics, not founded on the transient and illusory side of man's nature, but on the true and the real. If mankind is one great organism, as we believe it to be, built up of countless individual lives as our bodies are built up of countless individual cells, how evident it becomes that the welfare of one is the welfare of all, and that an injury to the least of these must have its reactionary effect upon the whole system. This idea is beautifully set forth in Mr. Coryn's admirable essay on *Prana*. "Before evolution began," he says, "one soul . . . shot itself out into the rays we call men, a duality in consciousness of the material and the spiritual. All men follow diverse paths, and go through diverse paths and rough places, that this soul *in them* may perfect itself in all experiences. . . . Humanity is one Self. At the beginning it was one; it now seems many, but at the end, when the minds of men are tuned together (a process already indicated by the growing sensitivity of many to the unspoken thoughts and feelings of others), humanity will be one vast organism in perfect harmony, and every unit, still thinking itself a unit, will yet feel with every other, giving, nevertheless, its individual color to all it takes into its consciousness. . . . Except by

assuming the reality of this one life in us all, there is no possible means of accounting for sympathy with pain. . . . Every feeling of sympathy", concludes Mr. Coryn, "is absolute proof of one life-spirit in men . . . And this is not a mere metaphysical idea, but it is the only guide of life worth having."

If we take, then, our unity in Spirit as an actual and living fact, we shall find an ethical system based upon it to be equally congruous with nature and man, thus fulfilling Prof. Drummond's ideal of "a working religion". For even the man who from the dictates of "an enlightened self-interest" endeavors to fill his part in the world to the best of his ability, contributes something to the elevation of the race. For that depends, of course, upon the perfecting of the individual, and every effort, however small, in the direction of right raises the general average of humanity. Such a person works only upon the lower planes, but the impulse towards the higher will gradually impel him onwards, till in some succeeding incarnation he shall work from the plane of soul rather than from that of body.

Nor should the sympathy that springs from our true unity cause us only to feel with another's pain; it should make us also rejoice in another's happiness. Their joy should be our joy as well as their sorrow our sorrow, and if we can only think of all mankind as one, then the thought of the many parts of that great Unit that are happy and prosperous and free from pain should do something to cheer us when we are lonely or sad or suffering. Some of us are having a good time; let us fix our mind on those that rejoice, and not on a temporary ache in a little finger. Jonathan Edwards thought that part of the happiness of the saints in heaven was made up of their contemplation of the miseries of the damned. Our "working religion" would teach that could the souls in hell bring themselves to realize the happiness of the souls in heaven, they would be no longer among the damned, but the flames that

beset them would turn to fragrant roses, wet with the dews of Paradise.

The basis for ethics, then, given by Theosophy, is the idea of universal brotherhood founded upon the conviction of our spiritual unity, and therefore having its impulse from within rather than from without, the cultivation of right thought, that from it may spring spontaneously right speech and right action, and thus, in a sense far deeper than is dreamed of by the churches, the promise of Jesus shall be fulfilled: "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven, and all these things shall be added unto you".

The Path

LETTERS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY: VII (1)

A few days after leaving Paris H.P.B. wrote to Madame Fadeef from London, where she was staying with Miss Arundale:

"My dear, my precious Nadeja Andreevna! For many years I have not cried, but now I have cried out all my tears on losing sight of you two. I thought my heart would burst, I felt so faint. Happily, some kindly French people in the same compartment as myself brought me some water at the next station and took care of me as best they could. At Boulogne Olcott came to meet me, and was nearly ready to cry himself on seeing how ill I was. He was also greatly put out by the thought that you and Vera might think him heartless for not having come to fetch me in Paris. But the poor old body never knew I was so unwell. You know I am always shaky. I spent a night in Boulogne, and next morning five more of our Theosophists came from England to look after me. Amongst them two good friends, Captain B. and his sister Lady T. I was nearly carried to the steamer and off it again, and triumphantly brought to London. I can hardly breathe, but all the same we have a reception this evening, to which probably about fifty of our old acquaintances will come. English people in their totality are not fickle; they have lots of constancy and loyalty. At Charing Cross, Mohini and K. nearly frightened to death all kinds of English people by falling down before me as if I had been an idol. It made me positively angry, this tempting of providence.

"My dear, this new parting from you is so bitter for me, and yet it is a consolation to have seen each other and to have

learned to know each other better. I tell you, friend, life has nothing better than the consolation and happiness of the deep affection for things and people we have loved from childhood. This kind of thing can never die: it will have eternal life in eternity. Long, long after I had gone I saw you three together — you, Vera, and Madame de Morsier. She writes me she *was* with you until the moment your train left. This woman has a good heart, for the sake of which we must forgive her moody temper."

From London, between May and August, 1884:

"I shall never get well here. It's not life I lead here, but a sort of mad turmoil from morning till night. Visitors, dinners, evening callers, and meetings every day. Our Olga X. assures me she feels a sort of adoration for me, and daily brings some of her friends to see me. She has already brought me the whole of celebrated London, except the great Minister Gladstone, who, according to the *St. James Gazette*, both fears and admires me — 'is afraid of as much as he admires her'! To my mind this is simply a kind of glamor. . . . On the 21st July there was a meeting — *conversazione* as they are called here — in honor of Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott, held in the Prince's Hall. At first they printed five hundred invitation cards, and then there was such a rush for them that they had to add nearly as many again. Madame X. wrote asking for two tickets in the name of our Ambassador, and personally brought the Ambassadors of France, Holland, Germany, Turkey, Prince H. of Roumania, and nearly the whole of the staff of her devoted friend Gladstone. Lastly, Hitrovo, our Consul General in Egypt, who came here on business. . . . I leave it to your own imagination to fancy the following picture: a huge hall, ladies in low dresses, *costumes de gala*

of all nations — and I sitting in the place of honor, a kind of kingly throne out of a ballet performance, in my black velvet dress with a tail three yards long (which I hate), and Sinnett and Lord B. and Finch, the President of the London Lodge T.S., bringing and introducing to me, one by one, all who want to make my personal acquaintance. And of such there happened to be — I am trying not to exaggerate — about three hundred people. Just fancy, smiling and shaking hands with three hundred ladies and gentlemen during two hours. Oof!! Lord and Lady H. asked me to dine with them next day. After such an evening: just think of it! Cross, the Secretary for India, sat down beside me and complimented me to such an extent on the love of the Hindus for me that I simply got frightened: they might put a political coloring even on this! Besides all sorts of European notabilities, they introduced to me a heap of black and yellow Princes, Maori, Javanese, Malay — I don't know who. Professor Crookes and his wife sat behind my arm-chair like a pair of adjutants, pointing out to me no end of their colleagues of the Royal Society, celebrated *savants* in physics, astronomy, and all kinds of 'Dark Sciences'. Now, darling, do you see, do you feel, the working of Karma? English Science, intelligence, and aristocracy paying honors to me which I do not deserve in the least. Master declared to me beforehand it would be so, and now I am perfectly miserable getting lots of visits and invitations, especially after Sinnett's speech in Prince's Hall. He struck an attitude and began to oratorise: 'Ladies and gentlemen! Before you you see a woman who has accomplished a world-wide work. She alone thought out and executed a colossal plan, the creation of a whole army of cultured people whose duty it is to fight against Materialism and Atheism as much as against superstition

and an ignorant interpretation of the teaching of Christ (that is to say, against the one hundred and thirty-seven sects, Shakers, Quakers, howling Salvationists revelling in darkness) which is the shame of the Christian world. . . . Ladies and gentlemen of cultured England, behold the woman who has shown the world what can be accomplished by the power of will, steadfastly pursuing a certain aim, and by a strongly realized ideal. All alone, ill, without means, without patronage, without help of any kind, with the sole exception of Col. Olcott, her first convert and apostle, Madame Blavatsky has planned to unite into one intellectual whole a universal brotherhood of all nations and of all races. She has accomplished this undertaking; she has overcome animosity, calumny, the opposition of fanatics, and the indifference of ignorant people. . . . Even our liberal Anglo-Indian government mistakenly arose against her humanitarian mission. But happily it realized its mistake and stopped in time.' And so on and on in the same strain. The applause was deafening. I tried to blush for modesty's sake, but got pale instead for want of air. I nearly fainted, for I am still very weak; though my legs from that moment in the railway station have stopped aching altogether.

"What am I to do with all these letters, evidently intended to arouse my pity, from all these admirers who are so very much in love with me? Half of them I can answer only in thought. But amongst them are many whom I really love and pity, as for instance our poor Solovioff. It's not long since I have come to London, but I have already got two such pitiful letters. The only thing he asks of me is to care for him and not forget him. He says he has never loved anyone outside of his family as he loves poor old me. Also

our dear J. D. Glinka: do you know what she has done? She has printed five hundred copies of the document and the letter of Prince Dondukoff clearing me from the calumny of Mdlle. Smirnoff, and has sent them to all who are doubtful about the matter. . . But, God bless my enemies! Now listen to a curious story: M. A. Hitrovo, our Consul in Egypt, called on me and asked me among other things: 'By the way, did you get our telegram, signed collectively by all the crew of the frigate *Strelak*? We sent from Suez to Port Said an expression of our gratitude to Radha Bai (2) for her kindly affection and remembrance of her compatriots'. I listened silently without understanding a word. 'But don't you remember', he says, 'I, as Consul, had to see off the Ambassador to China, and so was on board the frigate which you met in the Suez Canal'. Only then I remembered. Don't you recollect I told you in Paris about a joke I played in Suez, on the 3d of March if I am not mistaken. Our steamer of the *Messagerie* had to tie up in order that a big Russian frigate might pass on its way to China. So I took my visiting-card and wrote on it, 'A Russian woman who during many years never saw a Russian face sends a hearty greeting and deep salutations and her wishes for a pleasant voyage to all the Russians, beginning with the Commander and the officers and ending with the Marines. God protect Russia and her Czar!' — signed Radha Bai. And on the other side I wrote my real name and my Adyar address. We put this card into a tin box and flattened it. Then when the frigate was in line with us, Olcott very deftly threw the tin over into a group of officers and soldiers, and I shouted 'A letter to the Commander'. It was handed to him immediately, and under our very eyes he read it out. All the officers took off their caps to me, waving them to my address, and the crew shouted 'Hurrah!' I was

awfully pleased. 'We were all very much amused by your invention', said Hitrovo, 'and very much touched by your note. The Ambassador and all the officers immediately agreed to wire you their gratitude to Port Said'. And fancy, isn't it vexing, it was never delivered to me. ... I told Hitrovo I should insist upon its delivery, as a souvenir."

Herr Gebhardt came to fetch H. P. B. from London, and took her over to Elberfeldt, anxious that she should have proper care and rest, as well as tonic waters and massage, which had been ordered by many doctors who had agreed that her brain was the only sound organ in her body. H.P.B writes:

"I travelled as if I had been a queen. Everywhere I had cabins and railway carriages all to myself, and Gebhardt, who came to fetch me in London, never allowed me to pay a penny for anything. We were about fifteen Theosophists travelling together, and here I have also found a large party of German Theosophists waiting for me. The President of the new German Branch, Dr. Hubbe Schleiden, Baron von Hoffman and his wife, du Prel, a certain dignified Countess Spreti with her husband and Aide-de-Camp — for he is a General — Captain U. I may well say with Madame Kourdukoff (3) that I have found here a company of lords, counts, and princes, all of them very decent people — and all Theosophists of ours. Besides them there was the celebrated painter, Gabriel Max (don't you know?), with his wife and his sister-in-law, and Madame Hammerle from Odessa; and Solovioff writes that he will not fail to come. What if you come also?"

Next came the Coulomb disturbance. In regard to this Madame Jelihovsky writes: "H.P.B. stayed nearly two months in Germany and was thinking of settling in Europe for good — a step greatly

recommended by the doctors. But at this time began a tragedy, preparations for which had been made long previously by the enemies of her work. The *Christian College Magazine* of Madras issued a series of letters purporting to be signed by her and to be written to a certain French woman, Madame Coulomb. This Madame Coulomb, with her husband, had kept a hotel in Cairo some years before, and Helena Petrovna had stayed in it during the existence of her Spiritualistic Society which never succeeded. Unfortunately for her, she met them again, many years later, in India, when they were in abject misery and want, and kind-heartedly sheltered them in her house. In H.P.B.'s absence Madame Coulomb quarrelled with all the occupants of the house, and consequently thought of finding some other situation for herself. Then Madame Coulomb was offered a very profitable transaction. Someone was sent to them by a certain missionary, explaining to them that in destroying this heretical Society they would act as good Christians — and besides would earn a goodly sum of money. This the Coulombs tried to earn as all now know. H.P.B. writes:

"Everything has changed. A hostile wind is blowing on us. What cure, what health is possible for me? I have to go back quickly to the climate that is fatal to me. It can't be helped. Were I to pay for it with death, I must clear up these schemes and calumies because it is not me alone they harm: they shake the confidence of people in our work, and in the Society, to which I have given the whole of my soul. So how can I care for my life? . . . They write to us that in Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta all the street walls are covered with thousands of placards: 'Fall of Madame Blavatsky; her Intrigues and Deceits Discovered' — and so on and so on. But on the other hand there are more than a thousand people who have arisen in my defence. Not

letters alone, but telegrams costing thousands of rupees have been sent to the *Times* of London. As to India, the war there is more than a newspaper war. About two hundred native students have crossed out their names from the registers of this Christian College whose journal has printed these wonderful letters of mine. To be fair to truth, I must say that with the exception of two or three government papers in India, everyone is on my side. Even here some people have shown themselves real friends to me. Madame N. brought Mackenzie Wallace to see me; he has lived in Russia, and has written such an excellent book about Russia and speaks Russian so well. He is going to be sent as a Secretary to the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin. He gave me a letter of introduction to Nubar Pasha of Cairo, requesting him to help me in finding information about the Coulombs. Above all it is necessary to show up these rascals."

FOOTNOTE:

1. Copyright, 1895. ([return to text](#))
2. "Radha Bai" was H.P.B.'s Russian *nom-de-plume*. ([return to text](#))
3. Madame Kourdukoff is the heroine of a well-known Russian comic poem, a mixture of Russian, French, German, and English. ([return to text](#))

HERMES AS UNIVERSAL SOURCE

The opening chapter of Iamblichus on *The Mysteries*, translated by Taylor from the Greek in 1821, is devoted chiefly to showing that true inspiration has but one source, however various the channels.

"Hermes, the God who presides over language, was formerly very properly considered as common to all priests; and the power who presides over the true science concerning the Gods is one and the same in the whole of things. Hence our ancestors dedicated the inventions of their wisdom to this deity, inscribing all their own writings with the name of Hermes. If, therefore, we participate in a portion of this God, adapted and commensurate to our powers, you do well to propose your theological doubts to the priests as friends, and to make those doubts known to them. I also very properly conceiving that the epistle sent to my disciple Ambo was written to me, shall give you a true answer to your inquiries. For it would not be becoming that Pythagoras and Plato, Democritus and Endoxus, and many others of the ancient Greeks, should have obtained appropriate instruction from the sacred scribes of their time, but that you who are our contemporary and think conformably to those ancients, should be frustrated of your wish by those who are now living and who are called common preceptors. I therefore thus betake myself to the present discussion; and do you, if you please, conceive that the same person to whom you sent the letter returns you an answer. Or, if it should seem fit to you, admit it to be me who discourses with you in writing, or some other prophet of the Egyptians, for this is

of no consequence.

"Or, which I think is still better, dismiss the consideration whether the speaker is an inferior or superior character, but direct your attention to what is said, so as readily to excite your mind to survey whether what is asserted is true or false."

The Path

PROOFS OF REINCARNATION: I — *J. A. Anderson*

Before taking up the subject of Reincarnation, it will perhaps be well to dwell for a few moments on Incarnation. That is to say, we ought to establish the premise that the human soul is incarnated in a body before we deal with the question as to whether or not it reincarnates. In attempting this, it is necessary to enter somewhat deeply into the domain of philosophy, to establish a basis for our conceptions as to the nature and origin of the human soul, and to determine its relation to that body in which we assert it incarnates. Without however attempting to explain the nature, functions or powers of the Absolute, it is certain that this presents itself to our conception as a Triad of aspects, or hypostases which we recognize as Consciousness, Force and Matter. These hypostases are eternal, and eternally associated. There can be no consciousness isolated from matter and force, nor matter nor force apart from consciousness, nor from each other. Evolution can only consist in the changes in the relations between these hypostases, for all its vast processes which constitutes and *IS* the Manifested Universe must leave the Absolute untouched and unchanged by their infinite correlations and permutations.

There must be evidently an infinite gradation in the relative amounts, so to speak, of consciousness, force and matter associated in and as the Universe. The rock for example will have less consciousness and force, and a great preponderance of matter. The human soul will have more consciousness and force, and very much less matter — understanding in each instance potent as opposed to latent states. The latent potentialities in every instance are equally infinite for each of these hypostases, and this is the philosophical basis for attributing all the infinite diversity of the Manifested Universe to an Absolute Unity for its

origin. Infinite Potentialities can only arise in an Infinite Unity — an axiom.

If, then, we can prove the human soul to be an entity independent of and superior to its body, we at once obtain a very important clue to guide us in the study of those infinite correlations among the three hypostases of the Absolute. It becomes evident that entities occupying superior states can clothe themselves with matter already ensouled by entities less advanced, which at once throws a great light upon the philosophical reason for evolution as enabling entities more advanced to associate themselves with those less so, and thus because of their common origin and essence to emulate or bestow a portion of their own power upon these. If we are inclined to shy at this construction of *emanation*, then let us simply say that the very presence of the higher entity quickens into activity the dormant potentialities of the lower — a fact we constantly observe in nature, and which is at the basis of all attempts to educate and expand the minds of the masses. So that the scheme of evolution, apparently heartless when viewed from the purely materialistic aspect of the survival of the fittest, becomes the very embodiment of Supreme Love and Divine Compassion when illumined by the Wisdom of Theosophy.

Is, then, materialism correct in assuming that the consciousness displayed by the human soul is but a mode of force; a form of molecular vibration; a production of the chemical and molecular activities of the body, arising because and out of these activities, and ceasing with the death of the body? In other words, has man a soul?

Let us briefly examine this question. If the soul were the production of the activities going on in the body, then it ought to present the same conscious phenomena at every period of its existence. But we find, strangely and unaccountably from any

scientific standpoint, the fact that life is broken entirely in twain by the mysterious phenomenon of sleep. The very familiarity of this process renders us unable to appreciate its exceeding mystery. One-third of man's entire existence is passed in a condition which would be utterly impossible were his soul the product of the molecular activities of his body, because during sleep all of these go on unchanged. The heart beats as strongly, and respiration goes on even more regularly. In fact, it is well known that sleep refreshes and restores the body; puts it in a better condition to perform its functions than before it had this necessary rest. Then, if all the functions proceed, and many of them even better, during sleep, why is that consciousness or intellection alone suspended? There can be but one answer — that man's soul is not his body, but is an independent, thinking being, using that body until it (so to speak) wears out its power to respond to thought; and then, without ceasing to be, with no possibility of perishing, the soul retires to those, to us, subjective realms which lie beyond the molecular side of nature and permits its body to rest. This theory, and this alone, explains why we sleep. Certain so-called abnormal conditions of consciousness also establish — and fully establish, to any reasonable mind — the further fact that the soul is not, and cannot be, the body. Some of these are trance, hypnotism, and allied conditions. Hypnotism in particular entirely demolishes the materialistic theory. For it is a fact that if a person is hypnotized his soul is freed to such an extent that it becomes very greatly superior to its condition before this was done. Hypnotize an ignorant boor, and, if the hypnotizer does his work properly, there will arise out of that chaos of ignorance, which represents the boor in his ordinary condition of mentality, a magnificently philosophical Ego, an Ego possessed of a thousand times more knowledge than the boor is able to express; thus proving that even the lowest and most ignorant have behind them a comparatively infinite amount of

wisdom and knowledge. Theosophy asserts that evil acts and thoughts in former lives have caused them to create for themselves, or incarnate in, such bodies that they are unable to display those traits or make use of that wisdom which is their heritage by right of having won it in former ages. Hypnotism, then, proves that there is an Ego, a higher, almost infinitely wiser Ego, buried in the most ignorant breast, which would be utterly impossible were the soul merely a sort of conscious steam given off because of the molecular activities of the body.

Further, if the soul were not independent of the body then would memory be impossible. It is a well-known, scientific fact that to its uttermost atom, the body completely changes within seven years. Many of the tissues change in a very much less time than this. The gray matter of the brain for instance will completely change and rebuild itself anew in a very few months. But, resting upon the proposition that the entire body changes only every seven years, then if the real soul, the Ego, were the product of the molecular activities of that body, beyond seven years no man could remember. It would be an impossible thing. Man in this case would be a simple center of consciousness having no hold upon the past and no conception of the future. This fact that his body completely and entirely changes at least every seven years is a most important one to bear in mind, when studying not only the phenomena of reincarnation, but all conscious phenomena. It has not been nor can it be explained by any materialistic hypothesis.

Without however needlessly wearying ourselves with the repetition of facts and logical deductions which may be found in every domain of scientific or philosophic investigation, we may rest here and declare that the human soul is an Ego, having its origin upon a higher plane of the differentiated Cosmos; a plane where thought is the key-note, and reason or ideation dominates all other forms of consciousness, and where consciousness itself

dominates the matter and force aspects of the One Absolute. Its body is a synthesis of entities in whom these other aspects of the Absolute are dominant, and with whom the Ego is thus associated under the law of Divine Compassion. This association also affords the Ego opportunity to increase its own store of wisdom through its experiences upon those lower planes of consciousness which it is entitled to approach by means of its synthesising these lower entities with the sense organs which constitute its body.

Reincarnation, then, means the repeated return of the soul to earth, or to the molecular plane of existence, by rebirth in new physical bodies. This rebirth occurs under the law of Cause and Effect — the one absolute law which links the Infinite to the finite, and makes a finite possible. By some unexplained and perhaps unexplainable action of this law, all existence in the manifested universe proceeds under a further law of cycles. Every phenomenon of nature absolutely without exception obeys this latter law, although the majestic sweep of many of these renders verification difficult because of the brevity of human life. In consciousness its action is to produce alternate objective and subjective states; in matter alternating forms, and in force alternating correlations. Under it the human soul proceeds upon its evolutionary journey — for reincarnation or reembodiment is the very process and method of evolution, — occupies a body for a time, casts it off, retires to subjective realms, and reappears in due time in another body.

If then we find indisputable evidence that the human soul is an Ego, having its origin upon a higher plane of the Cosmos, and that it has incarnated in its present body, is it not logical to infer that it has done so before and may do so again? That which nature has done once can she not repeat? Is Incarnation such a strange, wonderful freak of nature that it may not be repeated except by creating a new soul each time? The fact that we find ourselves

incarnated beings, using bodies to which we are infinitely superior, is proof positive to a reasonable, logical mind that reincarnation is possible. For through all the processes of evolution it is the soul which evolves. This is the key-note to the dispute between Theosophists and materialists. Materialism claims that it is the form which evolves; and Theosophists declare that it is the soul; and that as the soul, using thought as the expression of its force, evolves, creating the myriad forms which we see in nature, these appear in response to that inner force. What is there to guide evolution if there be not some permanent entity upon, or at least taking its origin in, a higher plane of nature? Upon this molecular plane there are certain molecular forces. These play among molecules, having neither the power to choose this direction nor that. If there were not something superior to these molecular forces, guiding, controlling them, and thus causing the production of the myriad forms in nature, there would be no nature. Would winds ever blow flowers into existence? Will the change of the seasons, the frost and the thaw, produce the fruit, the flying eagle, or the thinking man? What an absurdity! The designer, modeller and creator lies deeper in the heart of nature than any entity having its normal existence upon this molecular plane. And how can evolution proceed unless this same entity returns? Man may acquire all the wisdom and knowledge possible to his race under the particular environments in which he incarnates, but if he die never to return to earth again, how is his soul to evolve? His life may help others, but he himself profits no more by it. For him there is no further progress; the store of wisdom which he has gathered as the result of his experiences is lost forever, both to himself and to the race, unless he himself conserves it and returns to earth, for it is impossible to conserve that personal store by any other method. And this is true of every entity in nature. The slow change of form and modification of function is always in response to the

necessities of a permanent, evolving, inner entity. They are due to causes which the entity brings over with it; things for which it has experienced the need in past lives and which find fruition in the present one. And this not only applies to man, but to the insect, the vegetable, to the entities bound up in the rock. Because nature is but embodied consciousness; and every entity is a partaker and a worker in that grand scheme of evolution which does not single out, as the theology of today would teach us, man alone, and leave the rest of creation to an eternal annihilation. There is not an entity however humble but is a part of the throbbing heart of nature, working its way toward the divine state which man occupies; and no entity so low but that it may in the eternities of duration arrive at the highest stage of which the human mind can conceive.

(Concluded next month)

The Path

THE PRINCIPLE OF DUALITY — *Katharine Hillard*

As soon as we become conscious of existence we are at once confronted by the principle of duality, in that which is within us and that which is without, or the Me and the Not-me. The infant must gradually learn the idea of separateness, learn to distinguish that which is part of himself from that world beyond him, that his eager clutches cannot grasp. In fact at every moment of his life he is confronted with those "pairs of opposites" of which the Eastern philosophy tells us that the universe is composed. The Pythagoreans are said to have hated the duad, or the binary as it was also called, because it was to them the origin of differentiation and therefore of contrasts, discord, and the beginning of evil. It was that imperfect state into which the first manifested being fell when first detached from the Source of all Being. It was the point from which the two roads of Good and Evil bifurcated, and all that was double-faced or false the Pythagoreans called "binary," because to them *One* was alone Good, and Harmony, because from one alone no discord can proceed. And as the Monad was one and an odd number, the ancients called the odd numbers the only perfect ones, and considered them all as masculine and perfect, while even numbers were regarded as imperfect and were given only to the *terrestrial* and *infernal* deities. So that Virgil in his eighth eclogue asserts: "Unequal numbers please the Gods." (S. D. II. 602.)

But if we put aside these conceptions of the Greek and Latin races and go back in thought to the origin of all things, we cannot get away from the conviction that with the commencement of manifestation duality must begin. The moment we try to imagine the dawn of the universe we formulate the conception of *life*, and life is inconceivable without motion, which is change, either of

place or condition, — is the action of attraction and repulsion, of the out-breathing and the in-breathing of the "Great Breath." Evil is the shadow of Good as Darkness is the shadow of Light, and everywhere throughout creation the opposite poles of positive and negative maintain the balances of universal law, and regulate the order of the heavenly bodies, or round a dew-drop on a blade of grass.

But as time went on and the earlier spiritual teachings came to be overlaid with grosser and more material ideas, the two equal and coordinate aspects of the Divine, that we call ordinarily Spirit and Matter, began to be considered as Good and Evil, and represented not complementary but antagonistic forces. Instead of the beautiful symbol of the Greek Caduceus bringing to men's minds the thought of the twin serpents of evolution encircling the Tree of Life, it had for them only the significance of everlasting struggle, of never-ending discord.

And this antagonism of forces that alone can set the universe in motion and preserve it in life, took the form in ancient Persia of the opposition of Deity and Devil, who were originally one in nature as in name. The exaltation of Ormuzd, the Spirit of Good, says Mr. Cox, in his *Aryan Mythology*, "carried the greatness of Ahriman (the Spirit of Evil) to a pitch which made him the creator and the sovereign of an evil universe at war with the Kosmos of the Spirit of Light. ... It was a dualism which divided the world between two opposing self-existent deities, while it professedly left to men the power of choosing whom they should obey."

With this Persian dualism the Jews came into contact during their captivity in Babylon, and the author of evil, the tempter, soon began to appear in strong opposition to the beneficent Father and God.

But Mr. Cox points out that while the Jewish mind readily

absorbed this idea of the conflicting hierarchies, the one heavenly, the other diabolical, it nevertheless drew no sharp distinction between spirit and matter and had little definite idea of either the fact or the conditions of a life after death. It was left for Christianity to couple a distinct assurance of personal immortality with a profound belief in the devil and all his angels. Upon this rock did the early Christian fathers build their Church, for if we eliminate from their system of faith, the element of diabolical power, the whole fabric falls to pieces.

But when we go back to the original teachings of the *Zend Avesta*, that even as early as the days of the Babylonian captivity had become so corrupted, we find the principles of Good and Evil but the spiritual equivalents of Light and Darkness, Pain and Happiness; and as these were supposed to be exactly balanced against each other, so are their spiritual correlations. "Those old Spirits *who are twins*," says the *Zend Avesta*, "made known what is good and what evil in thoughts, words and deeds. Those who are good distinguish between the two; not so those who are evildoers."

If we turn to the pages of the *Secret Doctrine* we shall find all these ideas amplified and set forth with all that wealth of illustration for which that book is so remarkable, and on page 416 of vol. i, we seem to find the kernel of the whole thing in these words: "In human nature evil denotes only the polarity of matter and spirit, which principles are one *per se*, inasmuch as they are rooted in the Absolute. In Kosmos the equilibrium must be preserved. The operations of the two contraries produce harmony, like the centripetal and centrifugal forces which are necessary to each other, — mutually interdependent- — in order that both shall live. If one is arrested, the other will immediately become self-destructive."

But the principle of duality is not only shown in all the "pairs of opposites" that make up the universe, but also in the rhythmic changes of its periods of activity and repose. This Law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, of ebb and flow, is absolutely universal, and therefore governs not only the sweep of the stars through the heavens, the changes of the surface of the earth, the physical phenomena of health and disease, of animal and of human life, but is also the foundation of what we have learned to call the law of action and reaction in the thought of man. Every real student of literature and art, as well as of philosophy and religion, will recognise this principle as the cause of all the changes in painting and in poetry that have so diversified their character even within the last three or four hundred years. Take the Elizabethan era for instance, when our poetry reached its climax of perfection, for then physical life and physical luxury, the worship of beauty as it appeared to all the senses, had stimulated the emotional nature to its utmost and passionate strength and perfect music were the outcome of this stimulus. Then the ebb came, passionate strength degenerated into license and vice, the Puritan reaction towards virtue and the severest restraint began, and beauty became a term of reproach. The Restoration set the pendulum swinging towards license again, but feebly, for the abandonment to passion is not strength but weakness. Then came the artificial era of Pope and his fellows, when nature was tabooed and everything was done by rule. After the artificial came the natural back again, and the wave of reaction set in motion by Rousseau and the influences of the French Revolution gave us Wordsworth and the Lake School, with its range from the simplicity of grandeur and nobility to the simplicity of childishness. Another reaction, and the worship of beauty in form and color — especially color — began with the Pre-Raphaelite painters and poets, and Swinburne and Rossetti swept us away in a flood of bright tints and soft melody, while

Tennyson expressed the triumph of artistic feeling and Browning the reaction against it. Now the influx of poetry that came into the world with the poets born mostly in the first quarter of our century, has died out: nearly all the great singers are dead; and the reaction gives us the triumph of form, dainty lyrics that pride themselves on the accurate observance of rule and on keeping the exact measure of the *triolet*, the *ballade*, the *rondeau*.

And we might go through the same sort of analysis in every department of thought, for everywhere through the universe the principle of "action and reaction" prevails. Old Geoffrey Chaucer realised this great truth when he wrote some five hundred years ago, those wise words:

"Hearken this counsel for thy secureness:
Upon thy glad day ever have in mind
The unknown woe of harm that comes behind."

Not that we should always be looking forward to a possible misfortune, but that we should realize that there is nothing stable in this world where everything is most literally in a state of change and transition. "Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall," for it is on our "glad day," when everything looks bright to us, when our powers seem strongest, our position most secure, that we are nearest to "the unseen woe of harm that comes behind."

And of course the reverse of the picture is equally true, and the darkest hour of night precedes the hour of dawn. Dark hours must come to all of us, when our bodily strength fails and our mental powers are clouded, when all relation to the spiritual world above us seems cut off, and we drift like idle weeds upon a midnight sea. But even then the tide is turning, and if we only keep our hearts faithful to the right, the sun will shine for us again and the faint light of dawn broaden into the perfect day.

The Path

LETTERS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY: VIII (1)

Writing from Suez, on November 30th, 1884, H.P.B. says:

"I sit in an hotel 'by the sea and wait for the weather.' (2) In plain words I am waiting for our steamer, which is now busy crawling along the canal. We arrived here direct from Cairo by rail, having spent ten days there, which counts for much these days. That they mean much you will see for yourself by the long telegrams from the London newspapers which I send to you. I am beginning to be convinced that I actually am a celebrity when so much money is paid for telegrams about me. The correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* came personally to interview me, and asked my permission to let his readers know of my discoveries as to the antecedents of Mon. and Mme. Coulomb, and as to my own 'movements.' In the telegrams as you see they are styled 'blackmailers' and 'fraudulent bankrupts,' hiding from several *ordres d'arret*. You will also see that in Alexandria and Cairo I was 'received very warmly by the Viceroy and the cream of society.' And so I really was. You cannot imagine how much was made of me. As soon as Hitrovo learned that I had arrived, he invited us to his house and immediately began all sorts of dinners, lunches, picnics, till the very sky was hot. Our Russian compatriots, Hitrovo, Abaza, Tschegloff, gentleman-in-waiting, and the ex-Madame Beketoff, *nee* Princess Vera Gagarin and now Countess de la Salla — all of them such nice, kindly people that I do not know how to thank them for their services and their kindness. And even on the part of the foreigners, I was astonished, not with their extreme amiability — to amiability I am used — but

with their real cordiality and simplicity of manner. Next morning I went with Mrs. Cooper-Oakley to see the Nubars, taking with me the letter of Mackenzie Wallace, and as soon as my card was sent in, Nubar Pasha in person came to meet us nearly to the street door. He led us into the Palace, brought his wife and his daughter, Madame Tigran Pasha, and they were all so kind to us, we might have been old friends. Certainly I ascribe it all to the letter of my dear Olga Alexeevna (Madame N.). Madame Nubar Pasha is an Armenian, a well-educated and well-read woman, speaking French like a Parisian, a real *grande dame*. We lunched and dined with them twice. At their house I made the acquaintance of a dear Russian soul, Countess de la Salla. Her husband is an adjutant to the Khedive, but he is more like a healthy, nice-looking Russian lad than an Italian. She knew me by hearsay and also as 'Radha Bai,' and when she heard that I was the niece of General Rostislav Fadeef, she positively fell on my neck and kissed me. Uncle used to go to their house as an intimate friend, and she was so attached to him that she had tears in her eyes when she asked me for particulars of his death. She took me up, and began to take me from one aristocratic house to another, proclaiming to all that I am a 'celebrity,' a 'wonderful woman,' an authoress, a savant and what not. She took me to the *Vice-Reine*, as the wife of the Khedive is called here, assuring me that it was absolutely necessary. There in the Khedive's Harem I found a crowd of visitors, most of them English women, wives of the notabilities who are now reigning over Egypt. My old, but not kindly acquaintance from India, Lady B., who was always an enemy to the T.S., fairly stared at me, finding me on a sofa side by side with their *Vice-Reine*; and the Countess de la Salla immediately wanted to know if she was a Theosophist! and declared

that she herself had joined the Society and was 'awfully proud of her diploma!' *Un coup de theatre!* Then she took me to the niece of Ishmail Pasha, the late Khedive; to his son's wife, Princess Hussain. Both these Princesses and the wife of the Khedive have a European education, are Parisian in speech — *des emancipees*. The *Vice-Reine* is positively a beauty, a most charming face, but it is a pity she is too stout. The de la Sallas have got up a dinner-party for me, inviting about fifty of the local aristocracy, both French and English, as well as our diplomatic corps. All the Russians are especially delighted with my having turned an English clergyman, the Rev. C. Leadbeater, into such an ardent Theosophist. As if he were the only one! Why amongst our members we have even got Bishops.

"Well, and now I am starting for Madras to fight the pseudo-Christian missionaries. God's will be done; and 'if He does not give us up the pig wont eat us.' (3) Good-bye my dear, my loved ones: maybe forever, but even this would not matter. Happiness is not to be gained on earth. Here we have the dark entrance-hall alone, and only on opening the door into the real living place, into the reception-room of life, shall we see light. Whether in Heaven, in Nirvana, in Swarga is all the same: the name does not matter. But as to the divine Principle it is One, and there is only one Light, however differently it may be understood by various earthly darknesses. Let us wait patiently for the day of our real, our best birth. Yours until that day, until Nirvana and forever."

H.P.B. left India in April, 1885. She was desperately ill at the time, and there was so much confusion over her departure that she was not even given her clothes to take with her. She gave Colonel Olcott her word of honor that she would not say where she was

living until the worst of the storm had blown over, and she kept her word. With Babajee and Mary Flynn she travelled to Naples, and there lived in entire seclusion for some months. Whilst there, she put in preliminary order her materials for the *Secret Doctrine*. Madame Jelihovsky writes that she herself sometimes did not like the idea of certain people in Tibet apparently monopolizing all the wisdom in the universe. H. P. B. would reply that they did not monopolize such wisdom; she spoke of the existence of these particular Great Souls because she knew of their existence, but others no doubt existed in other parts of the world who were equally wise and equally great.

"In every country and in every age there were and there will be people, pure of heart, who, conquering their earthly thoughts and the passions of the flesh, raise their spiritual faculties to such a pitch that the mysteries of being and the laws governing Nature and hidden from the uninitiated, are revealed to them. Let blind men persecute them; let them be burned and hunted from 'societies acknowledged by law;' let them be called Magi, Wise Men, Raj Yogis or saints — they have lived and they still live everywhere, recognized or unrecognized. For these people who have illumined themselves during their life-time, there are no obstacles, there are no bodily ties. They do not know either distance or time. They are alive and active in the body as well as out of it. They *are*, wherever their thought and their will carries them. They are not tied down by anything, either by a place, or by their temporary mortal covering."

When the three months' residence in Naples had nearly expired, H.P.B. thought of going to Germany, where, as she wrote, they at least had warm stoves and double windows in the winter, and where it was possible to be comfortable indoors. She also vigorously defended the "Adyar Theosophists" for having left her

in such sore straits in Naples, and protested that they had done all that was possible for her under the circumstances; and to prove that the Society itself was loyal to her, she sent her relatives hundreds of letters from Branches and people in India, England, and "especially in America," protesting against her retirement. She had resigned her office of Corresponding Secretary at Colonel Olcott's urgent entreaty, as he had been greatly alarmed over the Coulomb attack.

All her letters at this time breathed peace and rest, even gladness, caused by the many proofs of sincere friendship from such people, she wrote,

— "as Solovioff. (4) I am travelling with him in Switzerland. I really cannot understand what makes him so attached to me. As a matter of fact I cannot help him in the least. I can hardly help him to realize any of his hopes. Poor man. I am so sorry for him and all of them."

FOOTNOTES:

1. Copyright. 1895. ([return to text](#))
2. A Russian proverb. ([return to text](#))
3. A Russian proverb. ([return to text](#))
4. Who afterwards became her bitter enemy, as all his prayers to be taken as a Chela were utterly rejected. ([return to text](#))

PROOFS OF REINCARNATION: II — *Jerome A. Anderson*

(Continued from June, p. 88)

The formal proofs of reincarnation may be classified as phenomenal, philosophical and ethical; each of which will be briefly presented in its proper connection. Beginning with the phenomenal proofs, the greatest phenomenon, and the one to which, because of its familiarity, we pay the least attention, is the infinite diversity of human character. There is no possible explanation, no reasonable hypothesis, which can account for the fact that in a humanity amounting to over a billion souls, now upon this earth, there are no two alike. If man be but his body, or if he has been on earth but once, all must have entered matter subject to similar forces. Then how is it possible for such infinite divergences to exist? All live in similar environments, eat similar food, are subject to similar variations, and yet, from the very first moment of life, each diverges from the others. Is there anything in matter, or material processes, to account for this? And, further, are there any innate powers in the human mind itself to explain it, unless we accept the hypothesis of reincarnation, and declare that souls starting out innocent, ignorant and inexperienced have, by an infinite number of differing experiences, responded by diverging into these infinitely variant by-paths of character? And this is a true explanation. Reincarnation — the return of the same entity *plus* the sum of the effects of the experiences — is the only method by which the conservation of mental energy, or force, is possible, and if there be law and order, and not chaos and chance, in the Cosmos, mental energy is as truly conserved as are the forces on the molecular planes of nature. Under the action of this conservation, each man brings over the character which he himself made, and which, for the reasons above, must be

infinitely variant. And character is the one thing which changes little from the cradle to the grave, although the whole object and aim of evolution is its modification. The child who comes into the world grasping and selfish — do we not know that he will go through life grasping all within his reach? The infant born with a generous, loving disposition — is not this the promise and prophecy of the maintenance of those traits throughout its subsequent life? Is not the truism that the child is the father of the man born of universal experience? Character lies deep; it is profound, eternal; it is very, very slowly modified. It is the task of eternity to make it symmetrical; to round out and develop divine, noble, godlike characters. Only by a supreme effort of the human will, maintained throughout years of conscious struggling, can it in one life be materially changed. So true is this that physiognomy, phrenology and chieromancy — half sciences, it is true — and all of the means by which man's physical form depicts his inner nature, depend upon the fact that our characters do not change. It is this fact, also, which proves so strongly that this stubborn, unbending element of our nature comes over life after life, following like an avenging or rewarding Nemesis throughout all our incarnations.

As illustrating the importance of character, let us study for a moment its aspects of genius and idiocy — the light and the dark possibilities of our nature. There is no fact — no hypothesis, even — which accounts for genius, or which explains why from the very moment of birth a soul should display these wonderful faculties which constitute genius, except the one fact which does completely and entirely explain it — reincarnation. Materialism seeks to do so by "antenatal influence": saying that a combination of entirely fortuitous circumstances happening during the brief months of inter-uterine life are sufficient to produce results affecting and entirely changing the subsequent life. The

explanation is so impotent as scarcely to need refutation. Napoleon was an instance. Here was a man, born in the humblest possible condition of life, rising until he dominated empires and sent kings from their thrones at a single word; rising from obscurity to the very pinnacle of human power; a man who, in those strange, abnormal conditions into which he sometimes passed, would cry out to his Marshals, "I am Charlemagne. Do you know who I am? I am Charlemagne." The military genius of this man, materialism declares, was entirely due to the fact that his father was a soldier and his mother was a camp follower! Can absurd reasoning be carried farther? Napoleon, no doubt, as he himself declared, was Charlemagne reincarnated, and before that was, perhaps, Hannibal, as one of his biographers has shown how profoundly his character resembles that of the great Carthaginian. Genius can only arise through reincarnation or chance. Is this world governed by chance? If it is, then genius, like everything else, must arise by chance, but not otherwise. But, if there be law dominating this universe, if fire burn, if gravitation attract, if there be any guarantee of stability in the universe whatever; then we must rule out chance: for if it operate in one instance, it must in all. Either this world is governed by law or it is governed by chance; they cannot be co-rulers, and when the operation of so many immutable laws is demonstrable we may safely relegate chance to the realms of superstition. That source of the power which enables the child musician to compose harmonies with musical laws which it has never learned; which renders the mathematical child able to solve problems which baffle the powers of adult minds; which makes the child poets, child artists, child philosophers and so on, can only be fully and entirely explained by the fact that such souls have evolved and brought over those powers from former lives. The soul which builds wisely brings over from its past; the soul which was an idler brings over from its past; and herein is the explanation of

genius and of its obverse, idiocy. A soul which draws down veil after veil of matter over its spiritual perceptions, which dwells in infamy, lives only for the material and sensual, is again descending into matter; and it can descend so far as to entirely lose its hold upon its own divine nature. Such a one will finally reappear on earth an idiot just as surely as the man who constantly adds to his faculties by work and study will return in time a genius. Genius represents the fruition of work along a particular line. It is the promise and prophecy of the glorious powers which are possible to every man. When a soul comes to earth a perfected musician, it means that that soul has rounded out the musical side of its nature. When another comes a philosopher, it means that that soul has struggled in philosophical directions. And for one who has rounded out certain faculties, the possibilities of rounding out opens in an infinite number of directions; and herein we have the possibility of advancement throughout infinite eternities. The musician can later become a philosopher; the philosopher, a musician; and so on. Each one, when he has completed a certain line, is then ready to follow some other. Herein is the true explanation why as a child one will show himself to be a mathematical prodigy, and in after life care nothing for it, but work in some other direction. It is because the necessities of that soul are requiring it to seek another line of action, to so eternally endeavor to complete a character which has in it infinite possibilities.

Further phenomenal proofs are the appearance of the form in response to the inner need, already dwelt upon. There is no power in external nature to cause the neck of the crane, for example, to extend itself two or three feet because this has become necessary to its existence. How can the winds, the sunshine, or any physical force cause this thing to happen? We must have the inner entity evolving, and the necessities of that

inner entity in its changing environments causes the phenomenon. All modifications of form are so caused. They are the response to the inner necessity alone, and prove conclusively that it is an inner entity which is slowly winding its way up the eternal spiral of evolution. There is also no power in the seed, or the root, or the bulb, to reproduce the form of the old plant. Yet they do it. From whence comes this power? The fact that the molecules of the root or the bulb change and are renewed even more swiftly than those of the human body proves that there is, even in the vegetable and animal kingdoms, something which is evolving, something around which the form is built. Theosophy declares that at the base of every animal or vegetable form is an "elemental soul" — a potential soul, rather — which has not yet reached the state in which it is capable of expressing thought. These entities are all evolving; and herein is the reason, and the only reason, why the seed, affording the point of contact with this material plane, enables that entity to come back and rebuild for itself the old form. The tulip dies down completely at the end of the year, and the next summer grows up and reproduces the same flower to the most minute speck of color. What has preserved the form of the flower during this interval of apparent non-existence? This fact alone explains it, that its inner entity has rebuilt its old form. No scientist nor philosopher has put forward any tenable hypothesis to explain why two eggs, of almost precisely the same appearance, will develop the one into the mouse and the other into the elephant. There is no reason, no explanation, for any of these puzzles except we accept the fact that beneath the surface phenomena there is taking place the evolution of entities, and that each of these reincarnates, or reembodies itself, upon the completion of its own cycle. This is exemplified before our eyes, were we not too blind to see. For in the animal kingdom a portion of the cycle or reincarnation is actually carried on without leaving the physical plane, as in the

metamorphosis of insects. The caterpillar goes into a subjective existence, remains there wholly unresponsive to external stimuli, entirely rearranges the matter of its body by the mysterious power of its inner entity, or soul, passing first into the chrysalis, and then into the soaring butterfly. What greater contrast can there be than the repulsive caterpillar transformed into the beautiful butterfly? Nature is always ready to prove herself a kind, loving, reasonable teacher, if we but study her methods. And here we have reincarnation shown us in its every detail, because the lower entity, swinging through its cycle, has not descended into subjective realms sufficiently to entirely conceal the process from our view.

There are other phenomena which are of the nature of testimony. Many sane, truthful people remember having lived before. I hold myself the written testimony of a lady who recalls the past of a little sister who died before she was born, and who on this account was supposed to be "crazy," and was laughed at because she would repeat incidents of a life that had ceased before her birth.

Direct knowledge of having lived before comes at times to all. Has not everyone had a strange feeling of having done this or that thing which he happens to be doing, before? It is simply the breaking through the brain of the consciousness of a previous existence which is confused, so feeble is that consciousness, with what one is now doing. The present act is intermingled with the consciousness of a previous existence, causing the uncanny, because unexplained, sensation.

But the clearest and the most convincing proofs that reincarnation is true are those reasons which may be termed philosophical. Philosophy is the highest exercise of the human mind; the rationalising process of the human intellect. There can

be no higher proof than philosophy; no higher Court of Appeal than this supreme function, this godlike attribute of the human soul. Therefore, if reincarnation can be shown to be reasonable, logical and philosophical, we have offered the very highest possible proof that it is true. The two grandest discoveries of modern science, by means of which it has made its greatest strides into the unknown, are its generalizations of the conservation of energy, and the indestructibility of matter. By these it proves that there is no such thing as the annihilation of either matter, force or consciousness, for science by no possible method can demonstrate that consciousness can be, or ever has been, separated from matter or force. The three, as pointed out, are eternally associated, and if the law of conservation of force be true, then this law applies to the conservation of conscious force; and there is no escape from that conclusion. If heat will change into electricity, and electricity into light; if it is impossible to destroy a certain mode of force so that it will not reappear in another state, then how absurd to assert, in a law-governed Cosmos, that the highest form of force, intellectual energy, can be annihilated? It is impossible, illogical, absurd. That conscious energy which the human soul displays, and the mode of which constitutes character, must be conserved, or the conservation of all force and energy is a chimera. That intellectual energy is conserved during life cannot be denied; that it is conserved life after life has been shown to be the only explanation of differing characters. It cannot be conserved except by this method. If death dissipates all the energies of the soul, if all that each has gained by experience perishes at death, then is the law of the conservation of force violated. There is no escape from this position. Either force is conserved or it is not. Science asserts that it is conserved, and proves it upon the material plane. Theosophical philosophy asserts that it is conserved upon the mental plane, and proves that this is true by the logical and

philosophical proofs pertaining to this plane. It shows that character is plainly the conservation of the force generated by thought and act in the past; that man is under the same laws, dominated by the same divine energies, which guide and control the entire universe. We must not in our blind vanity dissociate ourselves from nature, nor fancy that we are governed by special laws or dispensations.

If force, then, is conserved, intellectual force is conserved; if matter is indestructible, then the material vestments of the soul are also indestructible. Theosophy declares that there is no consciousness which has not its material vehicle, of some degree, and that these thinking souls of ours are associated with a material form or vehicle which is equally eternal, and which must persist throughout eternity, if the soul persists.

Perhaps the highest and most unanswerable proofs that reincarnation is true are ethical. If there be justice in this Cosmos, or in human destiny, then must it be true; because by no other method is justice possible. Otherwise, from the cradle to the grave we are met by injustice, in a thousand ways and forms. One child is born an Australian Blackamoor; another, heir to the British throne; one soul comes to diseased, drunken, vicious parents, foredoomed to a life of infamy and misery; another to the purest, most intellectual, most loving and holy mother and father. If the soul comes to earth for the first time, and has had no part in creating the conditions that surround it at birth, then is this world a very chaos of injustice. But Theosophy teaches that each soul comes to its own; and the fact that these terrible injustices do surround men at birth can be explained only through accepting the fact that each one has so lived in the past as to have created that character which makes it impossible to come to other parents. We are Blackamoors, white, red, poor, degraded, generous, loving or whatever we may be, because we have

created those characters in the past; and just as truly as that one acid poured into one hundred alkaline bases unerringly seeks that and that alone for which it has the greatest affinity, so will the human soul seek those parents who have for it the greatest sum of attractions, and to whom in most instances it is already bound by the karmic ties of past associations. Unless this is true, our mental powers, our thoughts, our conception of nature, our entire relation to this molecular plane of existence are modified by bodies to which we come by chance.

How can the Christian reconcile justice with the fact of God's sending an innocent soul — one which he created for this special occasion — to a mother whose husband is a drunkard or a criminal, or to one who has no husband? All such things are wickedly unjust if such a soul has no voice in the matter. Reincarnation reconciles these birth differences; throws a light upon the problems of life, and shows that all injustice is only apparent, and has originated within ourselves. No other hypothesis explains or reconciles life and the existence of evil. There is infinite injustice in the world unless we admit the fact that we have created those circumstances in the past which control our present lives, and are now suffering the just deserts of our past actions.

And at death we find the greatest of all injustices. Babies who die we are told go to heaven. They have done nothing to earn heaven, but by the mere chance of death, at a day, a month, or a year, go to an eternal happiness, while sisters or brothers, born of the same parents, under the same environments, having the same tendencies, yielding to temptations surrounding them, must go to an eternal hell. And either heaven or hell predicates an infinite result as the effect of a finite cause! How absurd, how illogical, to claim that it is possible in one brief, finite existence, to set up infinite causes! One short life determines everything; eternal

destinies hang upon finite causes! This from the religious standpoint. From that of Materialism men live, love, suffer and die, to end in annihilation!

There is no hypothesis, then, which holds out any reasonable and logical hope for the human race except that of reincarnation. It teaches that energy generated in any life cannot be lost or destroyed; that a victory gained is forever won. It holds out to us the promise and prophecy of infinite potentialities. It sets no limit to the heights to which we can climb. And while thus giving to man a glorious hope in the future, it also throws the light of love, compassion and justice about his present, and so enables him to face his godlike destiny, unterrified by death and undismayed by life.

The Path

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES IN LIFE — *William Q. Judge*

That view of one's Karma which leads to a bewailing of the unkind fate which has kept advantages in life away from us, is a mistaken estimate of what is good and what is not good for the soul. It is quite true that we may often find persons surrounded with great advantages but who make no corresponding use of them or pay but little regard to them. But this very fact in itself goes to show that the so-called advantageous position in life is really not good nor fortunate in the true and inner meaning of those words. The fortunate one has money and teachers, ability, and means to travel and fill the surroundings with works of art, with music and with ease. But these are like the tropical airs that enervate the body; these enervate the character instead of building it up. They do not in themselves tend to the acquirement of any virtue whatever but rather to the opposite by reason of the constant steeping of the senses in the subtle essences of the sensuous world. They are like sweet things which, being swallowed in quantities, turn to acids in the inside of the body. Thus they can be seen to be the opposite of good Karma.

What then is good Karma and what bad? The all embracing and sufficient answer is this:

Good Karma is that kind which the Ego desires and requires; bad, that which the Ego neither desires nor requires.

And in this the Ego, being guided and controlled by law, by justice, by the necessities of upward evolution, and not by fancy or selfishness or revenge or ambition, is sure to choose the earthly habitation that is most likely, out of all possible of selection, to give a Karma for the real advantage in the end. In this light then, even the lazy, indifferent life of one born rich as

well as that of one born low and wicked is right.

When we, from this plane, inquire into the matter, we see that the "advantages" which one would seek were he looking for the strengthening of character, the unloosing of soul force and energy, would be called by the selfish and personal world "disadvantages." Struggle is needed for the gaining of strength; buffeting adverse eras is for the gaining of depth; meagre opportunities may be used for acquiring fortitude; poverty should breed generosity.

The middle ground in all this, and not the extreme, is what we speak of. To be born with the disadvantage of drunken, diseased parents, in the criminal portion of the community, is a punishment which constitutes a wait on the road of evolution. It is a necessity generally because the Ego has drawn about itself in a former life some tendencies which cannot be eliminated in any other way. But we should not forget that sometimes, often in the grand total, a pure, powerful Ego incarnates in just such awful surroundings, remaining good and pure all the time, and staying there for the purpose of uplifting and helping others.

But to be born in extreme poverty is not a disadvantage. Jesus said well when, repeating what many a sage had said before, he described the difficulty experienced by the rich man in entering heaven. If we look at life from the narrow point of view of those who say there is but one earth and after it either eternal heaven or hell, then poverty will be regarded as a great disadvantage and something to be avoided. But seeing that we have many lives to live, and that they will give us all needed opportunity for building up character, we must admit that poverty is not, in itself, necessarily bad Karma. Poverty has no natural tendency to engender selfishness, but wealth requires it.

A sojourn for everyone in a body born to all the pains,

deprivations and miseries of modern poverty, is good and just. Inasmuch as the present state of civilization with all its horrors of poverty, of crime, of disease, of wrong relations almost everywhere, has grown out of the past, in which we were workers, it is just that we should experience it all at some point in our career. If some person who now pays no heed to the misery of men and women should next life be plunged into one of the slums of our cities for rebirth, it would imprint on the soul the misery of such a situation. This would lead later on to compassion and care for others. For, unless we experience the effects of a state of life we cannot understand or appreciate it from a mere description. The personal part involved in this may not like it as a future prospect, but if the Ego decides that the next personality shall be there then all will be an advantage and not a disadvantage.

If we look at the field of operation in us of the so-called advantages of opportunity, money, travel and teachers we see at once that it all has to do with the brain and nothing else. Languages, archaeology, music, satiating sight with beauty, eating, the finest food, wearing the best clothes, travelling to many places and thus infinitely varying impressions on ear and eye; all these begin and end in the brain and not in the soul or character. As the brain is a portion of the unstable, fleeting body the whole phantasmagoria disappears from view and use when the note of death sends its awful vibration through the physical form and drives out the inhabitant. The wonderful central master-ganglion disintegrates, and nothing at all is left but some faint aromas here and there depending on the actual love within for any one pursuit or image or sensation. Nothing left of it all but a few tendencies — *skandhas*, not of the very best. The advantages then turn out in the end to be disadvantages altogether. But imagine the same brain and body not in places of ease, struggling for a good part of life, doing their duty and not in

a position to please the senses: this experience will burn in, stamp upon, carve into the character, more energy, more power and more fortitude. It is thus through the ages that great characters are made. The other mode is the mode of the humdrum average which is nothing after all, as yet, but an animal.

The Path

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

There is a very great difference between the Theosophical Movement and any Theosophical Society. The Movement is moral, ethical, spiritual, universal, invisible save in effect, and continuous. A Society formed for theosophical work is a visible organization, an effect, a machine for conserving energy and putting it to use; it is not nor can it be universal, nor is it continuous. Organized Theosophical bodies are made by men for their better cooperation, but, being mere outer shells, they must change from time to time as human defects come out, as the times change, and as the great underlying spiritual movement compels such alterations.

The Theosophical Movement being continuous, it is to be found in all times and in all nations. Wherever thought has struggled to be free, wherever spiritual ideas, as opposed to forms and dogmatism, have been promulgated, there the great movement is to be discerned. Jacob Boehme's work was a part of it, and so also was the Theosophical Society of over one hundred years ago; Luther's reformation must be reckoned as a portion of it; and the great struggle between Science and Religion, clearly portrayed by Draper, was every bit as much a motion of the Theosophical Movement as is the present Society of that name — indeed that struggle, and the freedom thereby gained for Science, were really as important in the advance of the world, as are our different organizations. And among political examples of the movement is to be counted the Independence of the American colonies, ending in the formation of a great nation, theoretically based on Brotherhood. One can therefore see that to worship an organization, even though it be the beloved theosophical one, is to fall down before Form, and to become the slave once more of that

dogmatism which our portion of the Theosophical Movement, the T.S., was meant to overthrow.

Some members have worshipped the so-called "Theosophical Society," thinking it to be all in all, and not properly perceiving its *de facto* and piecemeal character as an organization nor that it was likely that this devotion to mere form would lead to a nullification of Brotherhood at the first strain. And this latter, indeed, did occur with several members. They even forgot, and still forget, that H. P. Blavatsky herself declared that it were better to do away with the Society rather than to destroy Brotherhood, and that she herself declared the European part of it free and independent. These worshippers think that there must be a continuance of the old form in order for the Society to have an international character.

But the real unity and prevalence, and the real internationalism, do not consist in having a single organization. They are found in the similarity of aim, of aspiration, of purpose, of teaching, of ethics. Freemasonry — a great and important part of the true Theosophical Movement — is universally international; and yet its organizations are numerous, autonomous, sovereign, independent. The Grand Lodge of the state of New York, including its different Lodges, is independent of all others in any state, yet every member is a Mason and all are working on a single plan. Freemasons over all the world belong to the great International Masonic Body, yet they have everywhere their free and independent government.

When the Theosophical Society was young and small, it was necessary that it should have but one government for the whole of it. But now that it has grown wide and strong, having spread among nations so different from each other as the American, the English, the Spanish, the Swedish and others in Europe, and the

Hindu, it is essential that a change in the outward form be made. This is that it become like the Freemasons — independent in government wherever the geographical or national conditions indicate that necessity. And that this will be done in time, no matter what certain persons may say to the contrary, there is not the slightest doubt.

The American Group, being by geographical and other conditions outwardly separate, began the change so as to be in government free and independent, but in basis, aspiration, aim and work united with all true Theosophists.

We have not changed the work of H.P.B.; we have enlarged it. We assert that any person who has been admitted to any Theosophical Society should be received everywhere among Theosophists, just as Masons are received among Masons. It is un-theosophical to denounce the change made by the American Group; it is not Theosophy nor conducive to its spread to make legal claims to theosophical names, symbols and seals so as to prevent if possible others from using them. Everyone should be invited to use our theosophical property as freely as he wishes. Those who desire to keep up H.P.B.'s war against dogmatism will applaud and encourage the American movement because their liberated minds permit; but those who do not know true Theosophy, nor see the difference between forms and the soul of things, will continue to worship Form and to sacrifice Brotherhood to a shell.

The Path

LETTERS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY: IX (1)

H.P.B. was in perfect raptures over the climate and scenery of Switzerland. All her life she adored nature. "I have never breathed so freely. I can even walk as I have not been able to walk for ten years past."

At this time all the sad troubles of the past year appeared to Helena Petrovna not in a black but in a humorous light. She wrote to Madame Jelihovsky in September, 1885:

"My faithful Theosophists won't let me alone. They invite me to London. They want me to put myself at the head of the European Theosophical Society; and to edit my *Theosophist* from there. And the Hindus are also piling letters on me, telling me I must come back to India, threatening poor Olcott with a mutiny without me. In their eyes he is only the realizer of my inspirations, and I am the chief priestess and Pythia. Have you read about the Psychists (the members of the S. P. R.) and their meeting in London, publicly accusing me of having created Theosophy, of having invented the Mahatmas, and of having played all kinds of tricks — all with the only aim and object of political intrigue for Russia, which paid me for it?! Even such enraged Conservatives and Russophobes as Mr. Sinnett and Lord Borthwick were disgusted with such meaningless rubbish. The only foundation for their accusation is that during my arrival in India some Anglo-Indian papers stopped abusing Russia, as they had been doing up till then. There is some truth in this. Some of the editors of the best papers, as *The Indian Mirror*, *Amrita Bazaar Patrika*, *The Hindu*, etc., are Theosophists and my

personal friends, and so they knew very well that every word uttered by them against Russia cut me to the heart — especially if it is Englishly unjust. And so they abstained from it, and for this I was promoted into a paid official spy. Oh Lord, I recognize my usual fate! *D'avoir la reputation, sans en avoir eu la plaisir!* And if I only had the consolation of having been of some use to dear Russia: but such was not the case; only negative, trivial results."

"I understand," wrote H.P.B. in another letter, "that the Psychical Research Society could not help separating from us. Though at the beginning it warmed itself in the nest of the Theosophical Society, like the thievish cuckoo warming its progeny in someone else's nest — at the time, as you remember, when Myers so constantly wrote to you, (2) and also requested me to write to you asking you to act as his Russian correspondent. It would be too dangerous for Myers, as he makes a point of not separating himself from European Science, to proclaim honestly and fearlessly what are no tricks and no lies but the result of powers not known to European scientists. He would have against him all the greatest social peers of England, the clergy and the corporations representative of Science. As to us Theosophists, we have no fear of them, as we swim against the stream. Our Society is a kind of constant poke-in-the-eye for all the bigoted Jesuits and pseudo-scientists. As for me, being a Russian, I am a regular scapegoat for them all. They had to explain my influence in some way or another, and so they wrote an indictment — a whole book by a former colleague and friend, Myers. It begins with the words: 'We proclaim Madame Blavatsky the grandest, the cleverest, the most consummate impostor of the age!' And in truth it looks like it! Just think of it: I arrive all alone in

America; choose Olcott, a spiritualist, and begin work on him as a kind of prologue, driving him mad without any delay! But from an ardent follower of Spiritualism he becomes a Theosophist; after which I, though unable at the time to write three English words without a mistake, sit down and write *Isis*. Its appearance produces a *furor* on one side and gnashing of teeth on the other. Here I invent the Mahatmas, and immediately dozens of people take to believing in them, many see them — there begins a series of phenomena under the eyes of hundreds of people. In a year the Society counts a thousand members. Master appears to Olcott ordering him to migrate to India. We start, baking new Branches like hot loaves on our way, in London, in Egypt, in Corfu. At last in India we grow to be many thousands. And, mind you, all these are my tricks. Letters of the Mahatmas simply pour from all the points of the compass, in all languages; in Sanskrit, in Indian dialects, in ancient Telugu — which is little known, even in India. I fabricate all this and still alone. But after a short time I very adroitly make confederates out of those whom till then I had deceived, leading them by their noses; I teach them how to write false letters in handwritings which I have invented and how to produce jugglers' tricks. When I am in Madras, the phenomena happening in Bombay and Allahabad are produced by my confederates. Who are they, these confederates? This has not been made clear. Take notice of this false note. Before Olcott, Hubbe-Schlieden, the Gordons, the Sinnetts, and other people of standing, Myers politely excuses himself, acknowledging them to be only too credulous, poor dupes of mine. Then who are the deceivers with me? This is the problem which my judges and accusers cannot explain anyhow. Though I point out to them that these people must necessarily exist: otherwise

they are threatened with the unavoidable necessity of proclaiming me an out-and-out sorceress. How could it be otherwise? In five years I create an enormous Society, of Christians, Hindus and Buddhists. Without going anywhere, being constantly ill, sitting as if rooted at my work, the results of which are evident — I, an old Russian 'gossip,' spreading nets over thousands of people who without any signs of insanity believe in my phenomena; as also hundreds of thinkers and learned people who from being materialists became visionaries — how *can* people help seeing in me the 'greatest impostor of the age'?

"In the enumeration of my sins, it is openly proclaimed: 'You naive Anglo-Saxon Theosophists, do not believe that Madame Blavatsky's influence in India only reaches you; it goes far further. When she came back to Madras, about eight-hundred students, not Theosophists at all, presented her with an address of sympathy. Her influence is immense. Nothing would be easier for her than to instil hatred towards England in the hearts of the Hindus, and to prepare the soil slowly but surely for a Russian invasion.' So this is what they fear, is it? A Russian spy indeed! no spy at all, but a regular conqueror. You may be proud of such a sister.

"It is no longer my business, but the business of all Theosophists. Let them fight for me; as for me, I am sitting quietly in Wurtzburg, waiting for Nadya's (Madame Fadeef's) promised visit, and won't stir from here. I am writing a new book which will be worth two such as *Isis*."

About the same time she informed her friends that the phenomena of her clairvoyance and clairaudience, which took place many years ago in New York, were taking place again and

were considerably intensified. She said she saw "such wonderful panoramas and antediluvian dramas," had such clear glimpses and vistas into the hoary past, maintaining she had never *heard or seen better* with her inner faculties.

About this time the half-restored health of Madame Blavatsky came to grief again. The worry of her final rupture with V. S. Solovioff, whom she had taken for a true disinterested friend until then, and the death of a beloved cousin of hers were partial causes of it. Her sister writes concerning it: "V. S. Solovioff did not succeed in his earnest wish to 'ruin' Madame Blavatsky, but by this new scratch at her sore heart he certainly succeeded in shortening her life." The result of all was a day's swoon.

"I have frightened them all, poor people," writes H.P.B., "I am told that for half an hour I was like one dead. They brought me back to life with digitalis. I fainted in the drawing room, and returned to consciousness when undressed in my bed, with a doctor at the foot of my bedstead, and Mlle. Hoffman crying her eyes out over me. The kind hearted Hubbe-Schleiden, President of the German Society, brought the doctor personally from town, and my kindly ladies, wives of the painters Tedesco and Schmiechen, and Mlle. Hoffman sat up all night with me."

FOOTNOTES:

1. Copyright, 1895. ([return to text](#))
2. He wrote so often asking questions about H.P.B. that Madame Jelihovsky's family got wearied and almost gave the postman directions not to deliver the letters! ([return to text](#))

MIND AS THE THEATRE OF HUMAN EVOLUTION: I — *J. D. Buck*

Man is essentially a Divine Being, and his ultimate perfection is the aim and end of all evolution. The divine potency promises human perfectibility. Evolution is the process of its attainment. Men differ only in the stage of their evolution. They are in essence one; the process of evolution differs only in details and in time, circumstance, and place, in order that individuality may be presented. Self-consciousness is derived from, and finally again merges into, universal consciousness. The beginning and the end are the same with all, the details of the journey only differ. The potency of divinity and the diversity of nature are the two poles of the life-current along which man journeys, and of the spiral up which he climbs. The pivot around which the life-wave cycles in man is the Mind. Dividing the seven principles in man, or, strictly speaking, the seven planes or aspects of the One Eternal Divine Principle — into two groups, we have an upper triad that is changeless and pure, and a lower quaternary that is transient and perishable. Speaking symbolically, it is the presence of the upper triad in the lower quaternary that gives man his humanity. Previous to this man is only an animal. Losing this he sinks bodily and permanently to the animal plane. If we unite the human intelligence to the ferocity of the beast, evolution ceases and atavism rules supreme. Margrave, Mr. Hyde, and Jack the Ripper are illustrations. It is the presence of the lower quaternary in the upper triad that merges man in divinity. This is precisely the meaning of the "Fall" and the "Redemption" of man. It is not a foolish fable, nor an irreconcilable paradox, but an epitome of human evolution with its descending and ascending arcs. Its plan is a complete philosophy: Its process an exact science: Devotion to its pursuit and obedience to its behests are the essence and acme

of all religion. Jesus and Buddha, all the Avatars of all the Ages, are illustrations. The battle-field of human evolution is the Mind. When the triad touches the animal quaternary the circuit is closed, a spark flashes out and the dawn of reason and intelligence begins. That which follows is the "fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil." The fruit of the tree of Life is withheld. That awaits man at his goal, not at his beginning. This fact of the mind as the battle-ground of evolution, as the field of all human endeavor, has been recognized in all ages. "As man thinketh, so he is." "My mind to me a kingdom is." "I think, therefore I am." "All that I am is the result of what I have thought." These and many more are the flashes of intuition radiating out from the inner consciousness of man, the waking of the lower sense to the higher truth. Theosophy transforms these flashes of light into full-orbed spheres and fortifies them with a complete philosophy and an exact science, so that with chart and compass man no more sails an unknown sea, but guides his journey at will.

But what is the mind that is thus the theatre of man's ceaseless evolution? Modern materialism masquerading in the garb of Science tells us that "Mind is a property of Matter;" a result of aggregation, combination, differentiation and the like. But Materialism does not tell us how Matter thinks, or becomes conscious, or how aggregations of molecules come to possess or to manifest qualities absent from the molecules themselves. In fact, they describe phenomena and point to results, but tell us nothing as to real causes or essential nature.

If my body is conscious, or my brain thinks, it is on another plane, a lower degree. I think, and act, and manifest consciousness through them: they are my servants, and even their aggregate is not me, they are mine. Name all their qualities and phenomena; classify all their properties, and I am still the "Catagorical

Imperative." They are conscious, each on its own plane and in its own degree, but I am conscious of consciousness, I alone dominate the aggregate. "I, am I." What then is the mind? But first, what is the Ego, the *I am*? To use the expression of Descartes — "My self-consciousness and all that is contained in it, that is my true Ego." Aristotle had postulated a nutritive, a scientific, a motive and a thinking soul, but Descartes restored the unity of the spiritual being. But according to Theosophy the true Ego is more than the sum of individual self-consciousness, because that expansion of animal consciousness into human self-consciousness as one stage of evolution is, nevertheless, a limitation, and the next stage of evolution removes the very limitation that, while it makes man human, prevents him from being a God in the platonic sense. This philosophy never for a moment loses sight of the Divine nature of man, and perfection as his final goal. While, therefore, the Ego is the centre of man's consciousness and while it represents the sum of all his experiences, we must not overlook its derivation on the one hand, nor its destiny on the other. Otherwise evolution would have no meaning, and, accepting self-consciousness as a fact, experience could only result in elaboration and differentiation. We should be involved in a vicious circle, and doomed to ring the changes of an endless series of complications in experience. Instead of this, as plane after plane has been passed, so plane after plane stretches before us as evolution proceeds. The circle of experience, instead of being a hollow sphere that hems us in, is a spiral that leads us upward and onward.

It is in the upper triad that the real Ego abides, while "my self-consciousness and all that is contained in it" results from the union of the upper triad with the lower quaternary. Mind and self-consciousness are the result of this union. The immediate organ of these is the human brain, while the entire physical

structure stands as intermediate organs and tributary to the self-conscious centre. The existence and consciousness of the Ego, then, is our starting-point. The Ego is limited by the body which it inhabits, and by its environment. Consciousness *per se* is the sum of all evolution of the Ego up to the human plane, and self-consciousness is the crown of all previous evolution but is derived from the higher Ego. We thus become conscious of consciousness, *i.e.*, self-conscious. That which is the crown of all subhuman evolution and which determines the human endowment, is but the starting-point of the next evolutionary stage, the crown of which will be Divine, or Universal Consciousness. When man has conquered his environment and adjusted all his volitional impulses to all external conditions and sequences, he will have attained to a degree of knowledge and power that is superhuman and hence Divine.

In answering the question "What is mind?" we thus have in view man's origin, nature and destiny, and the whole philosophy of his ceaseless evolution. We have shown the mind to be the theatre of man's evolution because it is the seat of his self-consciousness, in which he gains experience or knowledge of good and evil. The bodily avenues of sense and feeling relate him to the world about him in the varied experiences of life. Man is potentially a mirror or epitome of the universe, and his varied experience converts the potentiality into actuality. It is thus that his ideas become realities and the Divine Ideal is at last attained. Man's experiences are the phenomena of his daily life represented in terms of self-consciousness. As this progressive series of daily experiences, changing and evanescent, are individual and not universal, the mind is the theatre of their display. The mind is not, however, a passive screen but the living-phantasmagoria with Imagination to create, with reason to combine, adjust, weigh and measure; with judgment or desire to discriminate and with will to execute. The

mind is therefore, not only the theatre for all these varied experiences but the succession and the sum of all our states and conditions of consciousness. It is in this final synthesis that the mind is united with the Ego. It is thus with the moving panorama of events and experiences of the daily life of the individual that man realizes his ideas, and it is thus again that "Ideas move the world." These human ideas are feeble and imperfect caricatures of Universal and Eternal Ideals. Thus it is that the human gropes its way to the Divine.

It is the Light of the Logos, the spark of Divinity dwelling in the Higher Ego that thus lures man on, and pushes him toward his final destiny. The physical brain is but a senseless clod; matter cannot think; but illuminated by this divine light, this sphere of man's self-consciousness functioning through the physical brain, converts the world into terms of experience and slowly transforms the lower quaternary — the man of flesh and blood — into the higher triad, the Divine Man.

(Concluded next month)

The Path

ETERNAL LIFE AND ETERNAL PUNISHMENT — *W. E. Copeland*

Perhaps no other words are more frequently on the lips of Christians than the words which head this article. And yet without the aid of Theosophy they cannot be correctly interpreted. The word translated "eternal" or "everlasting" is a Greek word, *aionios*, and should be translated "age-lasting." Without a study of Oriental literature or of Theosophy, it is impossible to know what this word means. The Orientals — and we must always remember that Jesus was an Oriental and was speaking to Orientals — firmly believed in the doctrine of cycles, of births, deaths and re-births as applying not only to men but to Universes or *Kosmoi* as well. The Hindus called an *aeon* or age a "Manvantara" or "Manifestation." They tell us of the day of Brahm, when there is a Manvantara, when Brahm objectivizes himself, and a night of Brahm, when the Manvantara ends, all manifestation ceases, and the objective becomes subjective, disappearing into the Absolute; to be followed as it had been preceded, by other days and nights of Brahm. These appearances, lasting millions of years but having a beginning and an end, are the (*aeons* spoken of in the New Testament, and will not bear the translation either of "eternal" or of "everlasting." When we remember that in the time of Jesus the doctrine of reincarnation was very generally accepted and evidently was believed by Jesus himself, we can the more readily perceive the meaning of everlasting punishment. It is age-lasting, and ends with the Manvantara, because with the close of the objective period there will be no more bodies into which to be reborn, and no longer an earth on which to live the physical life.

Age-lasting life and age-lasting punishment shall end, so far as Jesus has anything to say about time; but life has in it a quality

wanting in punishment or in death. The punishment ends with the age, but the life must continue through the sleep of Brahm, as the life of a seed or of a plant continues through the winter with no conscious manifestation; but as with the summer manifestation begins, so when a new *aeon* or Manvantara begins, then the life starts a new series of manifestations on a higher plane of consciousness.

But that entity which has not come into the full light, has not risen to the plane of divine consciousness, or in Scripture language "does not know God," which leads the selfish life of separateness thinking only of the objective life, — such a one under the law of Karma reaps what it sows, and must be reincarnated again and again through the *aeon*, receiving suffering disappointments, what seem to us punishments; and these experiences will last during the *aeon*. The earth-bound soul afflicted by the ever-changing earth-life, suffers during the *aeon*; but with the disappearance of that which caused the sorrow it ceases to suffer and, with a new cycle of manifestation, starts again to reach the plane of divine consciousness which all human beings will sometime reach.

Just as there is mineral, vegetable, animal, and human consciousness, so there is spiritual, angelic, and divine consciousness; as there are planes of consciousness below the human, so are there planes above. When we have risen to those above we are independent of time and space: then have we come to know that love of God which is in Christ, from which Paul says "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature can separate us."

DEVACHAN — *Robert Adger Bowen*

A Paradise indeed, this state of man:

 Filled with the rarest gold the spirit knows.

 The soul's high aspirations and the glows

Too pure to burn save in blest Devachan.

A wondrous moontide, brooding for a span

 Between the troublous days and all their woes,

 Where bloom immortal longings felt by those

Who dimly here Life's solemn mystery scan.

Oh! whither now is fled the sting of Death?

 Oh! where is now the victory of the grave?

 Gone, gone the horror and the aching dread!

While sweet as comes the moonlight's tender breath

 Where midnight waters sleep without a wave,

 Sweeps o'er the soul a joy serene instead.

THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF DEVACHAN: I — *Joseph H. Fussell*

Very few of us accomplish in life all that we wish. We propose to ourselves to do much that is noble, we have high aspirations and hopes. We give much thought to these, laying out plans and building castles in the air. This of course affects our lives and actions to some extent. In some cases it very largely affects them, but in the majority there is some great obstacle to fulfilment; either the conditions of life are unfavorable, or our duties to others dependent on us require all our energies. It is but a dream, a mere dream, to too many. Does it follow however that our castle building, our hopes and aspirations, are futile? We cannot answer this question unless we know something of the true nature of man and of the planes of being on which he acts.

It will be sufficient for our purpose to consider man as a threefold being, or to view him under three aspects:

- (1) the real man, the soul, the essential nature of man, the experiencer and actor;
- (2) the mind or middle nature of man;
- (3) the physical body or external nature, including in this the passions and desires.

We may look upon (2) and (3) as being planes of manifestation of the soul, or as being vestures in which the soul is clothed, or as instruments it uses to gain experience.

If we think seriously on the matter it is not difficult to understand that the physical body with the passions and desires does not constitute the real man, for we know that it is possible to train, control, and use these. This implies an actor above or behind the physical body to whom the latter is an instrument. It is more

difficult to realize that the mind is also an instrument, and that it is not the mind itself which controls the body but that the real man stands even back of the mind and uses it and can train it for greater and greater use as an instrument. The mind is an instrument by means of which man may control his lower external nature. We can understand too that the physical body is a vesture, vehicle, or sheath for the soul or real man, but it is more difficult to understand that the mind, using the term in a general sense, is also a sheath or vesture. It is through these mental and physical vestures that the soul gains experience on lower planes of being.

We use the physical vesture in all our relations with external nature and in the ordinary actions in everyday life; generally speaking, we may say that the physical vesture is that which is used during life on the physical plane. Many people, not stopping to think about the matter, imagine that all life, *i.e.*, that between birth and death, is spent on the physical plane. But is this really so? We might ask if they ever used their minds to such an extent that they forgot, for instance, that it was dinner time, or that they did not hear some one speak to them. Or, we might ask if they ever dreamed, or where they were when they were fast asleep, not even dreaming. If we consider the matter it becomes clear that a great part of life is not spent on the physical plane, but on some other plane, and that the soul uses some other vesture or instrument than the physical body for gaining experience on this plane. This other plane is the mental plane, the plane of thought, imagination, will, aspiration, and of ideals. The vesture that the soul uses on this plane we may call the mental vesture.

Now let us ask ourselves another question: What is it that makes life joyful and happy or hard and miserable? Is it the possession of external things, wealth, position, fame, or does it not rather depend on the *mental* attitude? This question does not require

any detailed discussion and we may answer immediately that it is the mental attitude that colors and changes the whole of life. The reason of this is that man is essentially a thinking being, who in the present stage of evolution has reached that point where his most important and peculiar sphere of action is the mind. Man has risen above the animal stage of evolution, in which he was happy and contented with objects of sense and with mere externals; by becoming man he became a thinker, a dreamer, and, no longer satisfied with mere animal existence, he questions himself and nature, seeking to know the riddle of life. If on the one hand we were mere animals or on the other had complete control over our animal nature we would use all the animal functions of our physical bodies according to nature; we would eat for instance only when hungry — in order simply to satisfy hunger, and we would be satisfied always with the simplest kind of food. But we are no longer animals, and the great majority of us have not yet conquered our animal natures. The two natures in us, the physical and the mental, get sadly mixed up, and we do not eat and drink only to satisfy our needs but take an aesthetic pleasure in our eating and drinking, *i.e.* the mind enters into the simplest and most external things of life. I do not say this is all wrong, but it is part of the discipline of life to attain to the right proportion in regard to these two natures.

No action originates on the physical plane, the seed of all action is on the mental plane; action on the physical plane is an effect of some cause on the mental plane. But we know that thoughts do not immediately take effect in action on the physical plane, in fact the thought energy may remain stored up for years or for a lifetime and never result in action during the present life.

Because of this and because of ignorance of the true relation between thought and act the majority of people have come to consider that, after all, the plane of action, the physical plane, is

the real plane, and the other is a mere illusion; they say it only exists in thought, in the mind, thus making thought and the mind an illusion. So, too, they consider the waking life as the only real life. When they go to sleep and perhaps dream they know on waking that they have lived through the night because they are alive today and remember their life of yesterday, but sleeping is not real life to them, because they do not do anything when they are asleep and the dreams they have are only dreams; they vanish into thin air as soon as they awake. This is no proof however that we do not really live and gain experience during sleep, it simply is a proof that such people are not able to coordinate the two states of consciousness, the waking and the sleeping. It does not prove anything else. It is not possible here to consider all the evidence and arguments that during sleep the soul is active on another plane of consciousness and in a world entirely different from this; not a world of dream and illusion, but a world of real experience and development. Our waking life oscillates between two poles, (*a*) physical activity with a minimum of mental activity, and (*b*) a maximum of mental activity, mental abstraction, with a minimum of physical activity. Normally, during sleep, the physical activity is also a minimum, but can we say that the mental activity is a maximum? In one sense, yes, but not in the sense of activity of the merely intellectual and reasoning powers for which the brain is an instrument. According to many writers on Theosophy, ancient and modern, these are only the lower powers of the mind. The higher powers are very difficult to describe, but some idea may be obtained from a consideration of the state of pure mental abstraction, sometimes called "brown study." In such a state the mind ceases to reason, to cogitate, but passes into what is called contemplation, a state of knowledge of the attainment of knowledge.

From the standpoint of everyday life such a state appears to be one of inactivity because the brain is not active, but it is really a state of higher activity, of finer vibrations, too fine indeed for the brain in its normal state to respond to. In the dream state the brain is to some degree active but generally not under control, the soul having for the time being partially loosened its hold of the physical body: most dreams are not due to direct action in the brain but are the result of reflections, generally very imperfect, from the higher and true thought plane. In deep, dreamless sleep the soul loosens its hold still further of the physical organism and may leave it for a time, although still magnetically connected with it, and hence to some extent being still influenced by the physical plane.

We can now go a step further. After death the soul leaves the physical body and the physical plane altogether and — not considering any intermediate planes — passes into Devachan. It is impossible to describe states of consciousness; they must be felt and experienced. But if we try to understand the relations between those states that we experience in earth-life we may to some extent *infer* what the devachanic state is like. That is, we may make it more real to us, and in this way attain to a clearer comprehension of the various statements in regard to Devachan which have been made by theosophical writers and so accept these statements, not merely on authority, but because of their reasonableness.

One of the first points to be noted is that the soul in Devachan is entirely out of the influence of earth-life and of the physical plane; the soul no longer has a physical vesture or a physical brain which it may use as an instrument. It is clothed only in a mental vesture and its plane of consciousness will therefore be a step beyond all those we have so far considered. In ordinary and intense thought activity, in dreaming, and dreamless sleep, the

soul is still connected to some extent with the physical body and therefore liable in varying degree to the influences of the physical plane. But in Devachan it passes beyond all these, and, because of its being freed from this lower plane becomes thereby more open to influences from higher planes. Devachan is a mental plane, and the vesture of the soul when in it is a mental vesture. Hence in order to understand more clearly the nature of Devachan we must study our own minds and the laws of thought.

(To be continued)

The Path

LETTERS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY: X (1)

The following letter belongs properly to an earlier part of the series. It was written from Bombay in the autumn of 1882:

"My blood is transformed into water; it oozes out and forms bags. For this I have to thank, *primo*, Bombay heat and dampness, and *secundo* my eternal irritations, bothers and troubles. I have become so nervous that the light step of Babula's bare feet gives me palpitations of the heart. I have forced Dudley (the Doctor) to tell me that I may die any moment from any kind of fright, without which I could live a year or two more. As if it were possible with the life I lead! I have twenty frights a day, not one. I have put the whole business into the hands of the Masters. M ___ wants me to start at the end of September. He has sent me one of his Chelas from the Nilgiri, to take me with him. Where, I do not know exactly, but probably into some place in the Himalayas."

After this there was a long lapse in the letters, and then H.P.B.'s sister got a few lines from her, dating from Darjeeling, saying that she had nearly died; that she certainly would not be among the living if it had not been for the miraculous intervention of her Master, who had taken her off to the mountains and brought her back to life again by means of a few passes, when she was to all intents and purposes a corpse. Madame Jelihovsky often asked H.P.B. in after days for further particulars of this mysterious episode in her life. "How did she happen to find herself unconscious and ill in some unreachable and perfectly impassible mountains in the Himalayas? Who took her there? Where did she spend the time of her convalescence? How, again, did she return

to civilization?" She always answered that firstly she could not remember everything, and secondly she was not allowed to tell everything. Madame Jelihovsky writes, however, that, if not at this time then at some earlier epoch, she is perfectly certain that H.P.B. visited Lhasa, and that she had also been to the chief religious centre of Thibet, where among several hundred Lamas lives the Teshu Lama, the spiritual head of the Buddhists, whom they consider the reincarnation of Buddha. Madame Jelihovsky is also certain that at some time or other her sister had been in the Kuen Lun mountains. H.P.B. always told her that the two Mahatmas whom she knew personally were very different, both in character and in their mode of living; that the Mahatma K.H. was much more accessible, and lived with his sister and nephew in Kuen Lun; that Mahatma M., her personal teacher, had no fixed residence, was much more serious and stern, was always on the move, going wherever he might be most needed at the moment. The former talked and laughed at times like any ordinary person; the latter never, being very laconic. He is the older of the two.

When H.P.B. returned she was almost perfectly healthy and strong, and, to the great astonishment of the doctors, began her work again. On the seventeenth of December, 1882, H.P.B., Col. Olcott and others moved to Adyar. She wrote to Mme. Fadeef:

"It is simply delightful. What air we have here; what nights! And what marvellous quiet! No more city noises and street yells. I am sitting quietly writing, and now and then gaze over the ocean sparkling all over as if a living thing — really. I am often under the impression that the sea breathes, or that it is angry, roaring and hurling itself about in wrath. But when it is quiet and caressing there can be nothing in the world as fascinating as its beauty, especially on a moonlit night. The moon here against the

deep dark-blue sky seems twice as big and ten times brighter than your European mother-of-pearl ball. Farewell."

Her sister and niece visited her at Ostende in 1886. This is what she wrote to them soon after they left:

"I shall take myself to task now that I am alone; and instead of a restless wandering Jew I shall turn myself into a 'hermit crab,' into a petrified sea monster, stranded on the shore. I shall write and write, — my only consolation! Alas, happy are the people who can walk. What a life to be always ill — and without legs, into the bargain . . ."

After her great illness in Ostende in the Spring of 1887, she wrote to her sister:

"My darling, do not be frightened: once more I have disappointed the snub-nosed one. (2) Some people have pulled me through. Such wonderful things happen to me. You write, 'How can you be so careless!' As if I have caught cold through carelessness. I never rose from my armchair, never left the room, sitting as if chained to my *Secret Doctrine*; I have made everyone work at it: the Countess, Dr. Keightley, the cousin of the one you saw in Paris. He came as a delegate from London, to invite me to go there — and I put him to work! Don't you see how it was: about ten days before my illness the London Society began to call out vehemently for me — they wanted me, they said; could not do anything without me. They want to study occultism, and so burn with the desire of depriving Ostende of my beneficent presence. Before then I got heaps of imploring letters, but kept silent. Be off with you! I thought to myself, let me alone to write my book quietly. Not at all: they sent a deputation for me. Dr. Keightley tells me, 'We have taken a

beautiful house with a garden, we have got everything ready for you and we shall transport you in our arms. Do be persuaded!' And so I was about to make up my mind. The Countess began packing; her intention was to pack me up first, then to go to Sweden and sell her property, in order to live with me, never leaving me — and all of a sudden I dropped down! Such is my planet of destiny, it appears. And besides, here is another wonder for you: On the 27th of March we were to start, and on the 17th I went to sleep in my armchair after dinner, without any reason. You know this never happens to me! I went into a very deep sleep, and suddenly spoke to her, as she told me afterwards, for I do not remember anything myself: 'Master says you must not go away because I shall be mortally ill.' She shouted, 'What are you saying?' I awoke and also shouted with astonishment, 'What are you screaming about? What has happened?' *Tableau!* Two days after we nearly forgot all about it, when I received a letter from a certain London member, whom I never saw before in my life — Ashton Ellis, a doctor of the Westminster Dispensary, a mystic, a Wagnerian, great lover of music, still quite a young man, he also insisted on my coming for the simple reason, don't you know, of having seen me before him and having recognized me because of my portraits. I stood, he says, on the other side of the table on which he was writing, and gazed at him. I and Constance (the Countess Wachtmeister) were very much amused by his enthusiastic statement: 'My life seems strangely linked with yours,' he writes, 'with you and the Theosophical Society. I know I am bound to see you soon.' We were amused, but soon forgot all about it. Then I caught a cold in the throat, I really do not understand how, and then it grew still worse. When on the fifth day — after

I had to go to bed, the Ostende doctors said there was no hope, as the poisoning of the blood had begun owing to the inaction of the kidneys, I dozing all the time and doomed to enter eternal sleep while thus dozing — the Countess remembered that this Ashton Ellis is a well-known doctor. She telegraphed to him, asking him to send her a good specialist. And lo! — this perfect stranger wires back: 'coming myself, shall arrive in the night.' Through my sleep I dimly remember someone coming into the room in the night, taking my hand and kissing it and giving me something to swallow; then he sat at the edge of my bed and started massaging my back. Just fancy, this man never went to bed during three days and three nights, rubbing and massaging me every hour."

Further Madame Blavatsky's letter narrates that she heard some one saying her body would not be allowed to be burned, were she to die not having signed her will.

"Here," she continues, "consciousness awoke in me, struck with horror at the thought of being buried, of lying here with catholics, and not in Adyar. ... I called out to them and said: 'Quick, quick, a lawyer,' and, would you believe it, *I got up!* Arthur Gebhard, who had just returned from America and had come here with his mother, having heard about my illness, rushed out and brought a lawyer and the American Consul, and I really don't know how I could gather so much strength: — I dictated and signed the will. . . . Having done with it, I felt I could not keep up any longer. I went back to bed saying to myself: 'Well, good bye, now I shall die.' But Ashton Ellis was positively beside himself; the whole night he massaged me and continually gave me something nasty to drink. But I had no hope, for I saw my body was grey and covered with dark yellowish-blue spots,

and loosing consciousness I was bidding good bye to you all in my thoughts."

But the cure had taken effect; she slept twenty-four hours and woke up to life again.

Concerning the same illness she writes to her aunt, Madame Fadeeff:

"*Sunday, Catholic Easter.* – My old comrade and friend, I wrote to you about my illness some ten days ago, when I was still in bed. So what reason have you to grumble at my *playing the dummy* (3) *again*? It is true, though, that I was nearly about to play the eternal dummy; once more I had a hair's breadth escape, and once more I have risen from the dead. When and how I caught cold, having never left my room, — is more than I can understand. It began with bronchitis, and ended with a complication of kidney disease. The Ostende doctors tortured me, with no result at all, robbing me of my money and nearly killing me, but I was saved by a Theosophist of ours, Dr. Ashton Ellis, who as a reward has lost a situation with good pay, having left the Westminster Dispensary without permission and having been the last nine days by my side (massaging my back). When all the local doctors gave me up, Countess remembered about Ashton Ellis, whom she knew by reputation, and asked him to give some advice or to send some doctor, and he answered, he was coming personally in the night. He dropped everything and came here. And mind you, he had not so much as seen me before, knowing of me only through my work and articles. I am simply tortured with remorse, he having lost so much for my sake. At least it is well he is a bachelor. . . . He has saved me with massage, rubbing me day and night, positively taking no

rest whatever. Lately he has been to London and returned yesterday, informing me that he will not leave me until I am quite recovered and intends to take me to London personally, the first warm day. Madame Gebhard is still with me; instead of spending Easter with her family, she is nursing me, as if I was a baby, and seeing that I take my medicine, whilst the Countess has gone to Sweden, being compelled to do so, in order to sell her property. In future she proposes to live with me inseparably, to look after me and to take care of me. And what do you say about the attachment this Ashton Ellis has shown to me! Where could a man be found, who would give up a good position and work, all in order to be free to save from death an old woman, an unknown stranger to him? . . . And everything at his own expense, — he refuses to take a penny from me, treating me, into the bargain, to some very old Bordeaux, he has unearthed from somewhere. And all this from a stranger and an Englishman, moreover. People say: the 'English are cold, the English are soulless.' Evidently not all ... You ask whether you should send me something, whether I want something? I do not want anything, darling, except yourself. Send me yourself. We have not seen each other for a year and a half, and when shall we meet again? Maybe, never. I am going to London, and in the autumn, if I don't die by that time, I want to go to Adyar. They persistently ask for me there Have you received our new Parisian magazine, *Le Lotus*? It is edited, as you will see on the title page, '*sous l'inspiration de H. P. Blavatsky*' (!?) What 'inspiration,' please, when I have no time to write a single word for them. ... I have taken three subscriptions: one for you, one for Vera, and one for Katkoff. I simply adore Katkoff for his patriotism. I do not mind his not sending me any money again, God bless his

soul. I deeply respect him, because he is a patriot and a brave man, speaking the truth at whatever cost! Such articles as his are a credit to Russia. I am sure that if darling uncle were still living he would find an echo of his own thoughts in them. . . . Oh, if only the Regents were hanged in Bulgaria, and Germany checkmated, I should die in peace."

FOOTNOTES:

1. Copyright, 1895. ([return to text](#))
2. Meaning death. ([return to text](#))
3. Not writing. ([return to text](#))

The Path

MIND AS THE THEATRE OF HUMAN EVOLUTION: II (1) — J. D. Buck

Mental evolution is not the end nor the aim of man's existence. The human Ego endowed with self-consciousness evolves through the agency of the mind. The expansion and cultivation of the mind is, therefore, a means to an end, a method and not an ultimatum. Just here lies the fallacy and the failure of nearly all our modern methods of education. Mental experiences however varied or exact are but the steps by which we rise to the delectable Mountains of Truth; but when the summit is gained the steps by which we climbed are lost in the cloudland below, while we are merged and lost in the grandeur of the above and the beyond. The knowledge that is of most worth is not the changing experiences, nor the transitory ideas of daily life, but that which is Eternal, — the Ideals where Nature and Divinity meet and mingle, and in the final comprehension of which the consciousness of the Ego becomes universal. Its environment is now boundless space and no longer the narrow bounds of the tabernacle of flesh. Its limited and limiting ideas have evolved into Divine and Universal Ideals, and man is at one with the Over-Soul. Evolution is a meaningless jargon if it comes short of this final consummation. Theosophy teaches this supreme realization as to the destiny of Man, the goal of Humanity. That which makes it possible is the Divinity in man ever evolving toward its source. That which retards it is the selfishness in man, the bondage of the personal equation, the outgrowth of his self-consciousness which he mistakes for the end, whereas it is but the beginning of his really human evolution.

It is thus through a clear apprehension of the nature of man as a complex and composite being that he may work, if he will,

intelligently toward his goal. He need not drink to the last dregs the varied experiences of his lower nature, for he may unfold the wings of his spirit and soar in the empyrien. He who is born to Divinity need not end in despair. He will never become lost or bewildered if he will follow his highest ideals. If he will relinquish self he may gain all. He that would save his life — the personal and selfish — shall lose it, but he that will lose his life for My sake — the divine and eternal — shall find it. It is thus that the Divine and inspired teachers of men voice in another form the philosophy and the science of evolution as taught in Theosophy. The truth is within our grasp and if we reject it and suffer we have only ourselves to blame.

Man will never reach perfection through intellectual evolution. Brain-culture and soul-culture are by no means synonymous, nor does intellect comprise or bound the realms of knowledge. Even if to these we add Athletics and Moral Philosophy our curriculum is by no means complete. What the Gymnasium and field are to physical development, the mind is to range and power of thought; and as the athlete emerges from the one, so does the Ego from the other, armed and equipped for the real work of life.

Brain-culture, all that usually passes for education, only clears the ground for building of character and the real evolution of the Ego. The materials are now within reach, and real discrimination begins. Ideas are now put into action, and from the moving panorama of events, and the varied experiences of life, Ideals are at last discerned. The brain is like a mirror in which the Higher Manas is reflected. The result of this reflection is human intelligence or self-consciousness. These are the terms of the human equation, the solution of which by the mathematics of experience will solve the riddle of life. The unknown quantity is the real man, the Divine Ego. Nor is the Higher Manas the final source of Man's potentiality. Itself impersonal, and yet the source

of man's personality, it still shines by a reflected light. The real Logos lies far beyond. The "light of the Logos" is Divine Compassion, and this light it is in which the Higher Manas dwells, as the lower mind is fed from the higher. It is thus we may "enter the light, but never touch the flame." The real Logos, the Atmic ray serene, the "Father in Heaven" of the Christos, dwells in impenetrable darkness in the Great Unknown and forever unknowable. Evolution is not mere expansion and the broadening of experience, it is in the highest sense an ascension; born of aspiration; guided by intuition. To perceive this is to awaken into life from the sleep of the senses. To strive toward it is the real evolution of man. To attain to it is to complete the cycle of Necessity. This is the destiny of Humanity, the real meaning of life, the journey of the human soul; and the possibility of its realization lies in the Divine origin and nature of Man.

Selfishness, greed and lust forever defeat it. Divine Compassion alone assures it, and intellect alone also can never realize this Supreme Ideal. But when intellect opens the window of the mind to the light of truth, and the Higher Manas beams like the full-orbed moon upon the field of man's conscious life, then will the Sun of Truth expand man's vision and reveal to him his Divine Nature and destiny: A child of Earth imprisoned on a star; yet at home among the constellations: A clod, a word, a beast, a man; but destined to become a God. "All that I am is the result of what I have thought;" not of the mere *process* of thinking. Mind is the Theatre; but the goal is Perfection.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Concluded from August number. ([return to text](#))

NOTES ON THE BHAGAVAD-GITA — *William Brehon*

We assume, quite justifiably, I think, that the *Bhagavad-Gita* sets forth Aryan philosophy. The Aryan is white and noble in contradistinction to the black and ignoble. This book then, if Aryan, must give us a noble system of philosophy and ethics, useful not only for speculative minds but also in daily life. Whoever was the author, he, or they, compressed into a short conversation — that is, short for Indians — the essence of religion and philosophy.

The singular manner in which this conversation or lecturing or teaching came about should be first noted. It is after the very beginning of a battle, for the arrows had already begun to fly from side to side. A rain of arrows would first be thrown in before the hand-to-hand encounter began. Arjuna and Krishna are in Arjuna's great chariot. And there, between the two armies, Arjuna asks for advice and receives it through eighteen chapters. All of this has significance.

Arjuna is man or the soul struggling to the light, and while Krishna was one of the Avatars or manifestations of God among men, he is also the Higher Self. Arjuna as man in this world of sense and matter is of necessity either always in a battle or about to begin one, and is also ever in need of advice. This he can get only in a valuable way from his Higher Self. So the singular manner of placing the conversation where it is, and of beginning it as it begins, is the only way it ought to be done.

Arjuna is the man in the life his Karma has produced, and he must fight out the battle he himself invited. Arjuna's object was to regain a kingdom, and so each one of us may know that our fight is for a kingdom gainable only by individual effort and not by

anyone's favor.

From the remarks by Arjuna to Krishna we can perceive that the kingdom he — like ourselves — wishes to regain is the one he had in some former age upon this planet or upon some far more ancient one. He has too much insight, too much evident soul-power and wisdom to be an Ego who only for the first, or second, or third time had visited this earth. We likewise are not new. We have been here so many times that we ought to be beginning to learn. And we have not only been here, but beyond doubt those of us who are inwardly and outwardly engaged in the Theosophical movement for the good of others, have been in a similar movement before this life.

This being so, and there being yet many more lives to come, what is the reason we should in any way be downcast? The first chapter of the Book is really not only the survey of the armies, but also the despondency of the principal person — Arjuna. He grows downcast after looking over all the regiments and seeing that he had, on both sides, friends, teachers, relatives, as well as enemies. He falters because want of knowledge prevents him from seeing that the conflict and many apparent deaths are inevitable. And Krishna then proceeds to give him the true philosophy of man and the universe so that he can either fight or refrain from fighting, whichever he sees at any time the best.

Krishna leads him gradually. He plays upon his pride by telling him that if he backs out all men will say he is the most ignoble of all cowards; then he plays upon his Hindu religious teaching, telling him that a warrior must obey the rules of his caste, and fight. He does not plunge at once into high metaphysical speculation or show him occult wonders. And herein it seems to me is a good lesson for all working Theosophists. Too many of us when trying to spread forth the theosophical teaching drag the

poor Arjunas we have caught right into obscure realms where Theosophists themselves know nothing at all but terminology. Krishna's wise, practical and simple method should be followed, and much better results will be obtained. Our object is to spread theosophical philosophy as widely and quickly as possible. This cannot be done if we indulge in words and phrases far removed from daily life. What good does it do to talk about the Absolute, Parabrahm and Alaya, and to say *manas* when we mean mind, and *kama* when desire and passion are the English equivalents? It only puzzles the new enquirer, who feels that he has to learn a new language before he will be able to do anything with Theosophy. It is a good deal easier to show that the new terms can be learned afterwards.

The first chapter having introduced the practical question of life, the second is equally practical, for it directs attention at the outset to the larger and eternal life of which each incarnation is a day or a moment. For Krishna says:

"I myself never was not, nor thou, nor all the princes of the earth; nor shall we ever hereafter cease to be. As the Lord of this mortal frame experienceth therein infancy, youth and old age, so in future incarnations will it meet the same. One who is confirmed in this belief is not disturbed by anything that may come to pass."

Thus, continued *practical* existence as opposed to continued theoretical and so-called heavenly existence, and as opposed to materialistic annihilation, is declared at once. This is true immortality. The Christian Bible has no word in the original, teaching immortality such as this; and the preaching of the priests does not lean to an unselfish view of continued existence. And it is very certain that if one is fully confirmed in the knowledge of eternal life through reincarnation he is quite unlikely to be

disturbed by things that disturb other people. So at the very outset the teachings of Krishna open up a tremendous vista of life, and confer a calmness most necessary for us in the fight.

The generality of men have many and widely branching objects for mental devotion. It is a devotion to sense, or to self, or to wrong belief or to improper practice. But the follower of the *Bhagavad-Gita* gradually comes to see that the true devotion is that which has but one object through all changes of scene, of thought, or of companionship. That object is the Self which is all in all. The Self, as object, is immovable, whereas the objects taken up by the unwise are movable and transitory.

Equal mindedness and skill in the right performance of duty are the true rules — this is yoga. This right performance of duty means the mental state, for the mere performance of an act has no moral quality in it, since even a machine may be made to perform acts usually done by men. The moral quality resides in the person inside and in his presence or absence. If a human body, asleep or devoid of a soul, raised its hand and took the life of another, that would not be a crime. And oppositely the performance of a good act is no virtue unless the person within is in the right attitude of mind. Many an apparently good act is done from selfish, hypocritical, crafty or other wrong motives. These are only outwardly good. So we must attain to a proper state of mind, or mental devotion, in order to know how to skilfully perform our actions without doing so for the sake of the result; doing them because they ought to be done, because they are our duties.

Krishna warns Arjuna also against inactivity from a false view of the philosophy. This warning necessary then is so still. On hearing this teaching for the first time many say that it teaches inaction, sitting still, silence. And in India great numbers taking that view,

retired from life and its duties, going into the caves and jungles away from men. Krishna says: —

"Firmly persisting in yoga perform thy duty."

To endeavor to follow these rules empirically, without understanding the philosophy and without making the fundamental doctrines a part of oneself, will lead to nothing but disgust and failure. Hence the philosophy must be understood. It is the philosophy of Oneness or Unity. The Supreme Self is one and includes all apparent others. We delude ourselves with the idea that we are separate. We must admit that we and every other person are the Self. From this we will begin to see that we may cease to be the actor although outwardly doing every act that is right. We can cease to be the actor when we know we can withdraw ourselves from the act. Attachment to the act arises from a self-interest in the result that is to follow. It is possible for us to do these things without that self-interest, and if we are trying to follow the rule of doing our actions because they ought to be done we will at last do only that which is right to be done.

A great deal of the unhappiness of life comes from having a number of interests in results which do not come out as expected. We find people pretending to believe in Providence and to rely on the Almighty but who are continually laying down plans for those powers to follow. They are not followed, and as the poor mortal fixed his mind and heart on the result, unhappiness follows.

But there is a greater unhappiness and misery caused by acting, as is the usual way, for the sake of results. It is this that causes rebirth over and over again unendingly. It is by this that the great humdrum mass of men and women are whirled around the wheel of rebirth for ages, always suffering, because they do not know what is happening to them, and only by an accident altering the poor character of births incessantly repeated.

The mind is the actor, the person who is attached. When it is deluded it is not able to throw off the subtle chains that bind it to reincarnation. Having spent an incarnation in looking after results it is full of earthly impressions, and has made the outer skandhas very powerful. So when its stay in Devachan is at its end the old images, impressions and the powerful skandhas drag it back to another life. At the time of bodily death the mind is temporarily almost altered into the image of the dominant thought of life, and so is beside itself or insane by comparison with the sage and with what ought to be its proper state. Being so it is impossible for it either to prevent rebirth or to select and take up an incarnation with a definite end and work in the world in view.

The bearing of the teaching upon ethics is in my opinion very important. It gives a vital system as opposed to a mechanical one. We are to do our duty with the thought that we are acting for and as the Supreme Being, because that Being acts only by and through the creatures. If this be our real rule it would in time be impossible for us to do wrong, for constantly thinking thus we grow careful as to what acts we commit and are always clearing up our view of duty as we proceed.

On the other hand a mechanical code of ethics leads to error. It is convenient because any fixed code is more convenient to follow than the application of broad principles in brotherly spirit. Mechanical codes are conventional and for that reason they lead to hypocrisy. They have led people to mistake etiquette for morality. They cause the follower of them to unrighteously judge his neighbor who does not come up to his conventional code which is part of his ethics. It was a mechanical system of ethics that permitted and encouraged the Inquisition, and similar ethics in our later days permit men professing the highest altruism to

persecute their brothers in the same way in intention. If the law and liberty of the times were not opposed they would slay and torture too.

But I have only time to touch lightly upon some of the many valuable points found in the first two chapters. If but those two chapters were preserved and the others lost, we would still have enough.

The remaining chapters deal with universal cosmical truths as well as with philosophy and ethics. They all enforce the great doctrine of unity or non-separateness. In going over them we find such references as require us to know and to believe in the Wisdom-Religion. The rise and destruction of races is given, the obscurities and darkness between evolutionary periods, the universal great destructions and the minor ones are there. Through all these the Self sits calmly looking on as the spectator, the witness, the receptacle.

Where Arjuna the Archer is, he who was taught by Krishna, with him is glory, honor, fortune and success. He who knows Arjuna knows himself.

The Path

THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF DEVACHAN: II (1) — Joseph H. Fussell

We have called the mind an instrument of the soul, and like any instrument it may be well or ill-used, it may be under complete control or be unmanageable. It is very important to realize that the soul or real man is above the mind and that it has this power to control it. The mind has been well compared to a boat and the soul to the boatman. A good sailor will guide his boat whithersoever he wishes, but one who does not know how to manage rudder and sails is at the mercy of every tide and every wind and, drifting hither and thither, can keep no certain course. Nearly every thoughtful person realizes to some extent that the mind is an instrument; yet few fully realize that it can be *completely* controlled. Those whose chief object is the gratification of the senses come to identify themselves with the physical body and those whose life is centered in the things of the mind often identify themselves to a greater or less degree with the mind. Entire control of the mind is impossible so long as there is any identification of the soul with it.

We take hold of physical things with our hands, *i.e.*, we grasp them physically. We also take hold of things with our minds and grasp them, metaphysically, with the understanding. It was held by some of the ancient philosophers that the mind takes on the form of that to which it is applied and becomes modified thereby, *i.e.*, it becomes conformed, to a degree depending on the intensity of the thought, to the idea underlying the object of its attention. If, therefore, the mind be the subtile vesture of the soul, its form will correspond in the main to the general character of the thoughts which occupy it, and will be continually modified thereby, reacting more slowly on the physical, external vesture until that

also represents and corresponds to the inner character or thought.

The mind may be made to take conscious hold of a thing, with intent and deliberately, or a thought or idea may enter and occupy the mind subtilely and almost unnoticed and become firmly established before we are well aware of its presence. Every thought is a seed, and once it has gained entrance to the mind will either begin to grow, or else remain dormant until favorable conditions shall permit its growth and ripening. If a bad thought is permitted to enter it will stay as a seed unless immediately expelled by the conscious thinking of the opposite thought, but if not expelled it will remain until later it may be aroused into activity by another thought of kindred nature, and then once again comes the opportunity of expulsion. So too good thoughts may remain unconsciously in the mind as seeds ready to give their added strength to new good thoughts. Whatever thought has been permitted to enter will at some time present itself either for rejection or to gain further strength. So long however as our minds are occupied with thoughts which are not allied to one of these latent seeds of thought and also so long as no awakening suggestion comes from without the seed will lie dormant.

Now, our actions do not spring from our occasional thoughts but from our character. We may define character as the — relatively — permanent mass of thoughts, the involuntary and unconscious bent of the mind which shows itself throughout the whole life. It is said that when a man is himself, when he is under no restraint, then his innate character is most evident. To some extent character is expressed externally in the physical form, but could we see the inner form, the mental vesture, we should find that *it* exactly represented the character in every particular. The mental vesture is the exact counterpart, in form, of the character, and the building up and changing of this vesture goes on step by step with

the building up and changing of character.

But the character is not changed by a passing thought, it can be changed only by persistent thinking and by the constant endeavor to express the thought in action. Just as it is with difficulty that the ordinary child learns to play on a musical instrument or to draw, every motion requiring a conscious effort of the will; but after long practice, attention having no longer to be paid to the individual motions, the hand and the eye become trained and immediately responsive to the mind and will; so it is with modes of thought and with the practice of ethics. We may realize, whether intellectually or intuitionally, that we ought to cultivate a certain habit of thought or follow a certain line of conduct and yet at the beginning it may be almost impossible for us to carry this out. It is however a matter of general experience that by persisting in any certain course of thought or action the difficulties gradually grow less until conscious effort is no longer needed and a habit is formed, which becomes a "second nature." But what becomes of the great mass of thoughts which in any man's life will generally show a tendency in some particular direction, but which are never persistently and consciously followed out or cultivated? What happens in the case of a man who more or less *drifts* through life, at least so far as his relation to his higher nature is concerned? What also happens in the case of a man with an intense love of art, or an intense desire to help humanity or to follow some ideal, but who is unable to carry out his desires or to accomplish save in very slight degree that which he has set his heart upon, though he may give his whole life to the work? Surely in the latter case the life is not wasted. The mind of the man who drifts is like a field into which all kinds of seeds, good and bad, flowers and weeds, are blown by the wind, but the ground of which is not cultivated or tilled. The mind of the other is like a field the soil of which needs breaking up before the seed

can grow. Other parts of the field may be well tilled and other seeds be grown to flowers and fruit but in this one corner the field is barren.

In the *Bhagavad-Gita* occurs this passage: "Whoso in consequence of constant meditation on any particular form thinketh upon it when quitting his mortal shape, even to that doth he go."

This gives us the key-note to the whole matter, for a man at the moment of death reviews the whole of his past life and that "particular form" which he "thinketh upon" is the dominant form of the past life, is the trend and aim — unconscious perhaps — of all his thoughts and acts. A man is *forced* to think at the moment of death that which he thought during life, he has no choice in the matter and cannot will it otherwise.

According to this philosophy then, the earth-life strikes the key-note to the life after death, that is, to the devachanic life.

The devachanic state is essentially one for the assimilation of all those thoughts and aspirations of the preceding state that relate in any way to the higher nature, and is for the transforming of these into character. Those thoughts which had been ours in earth-life and which may have remained little more than dormant seeds, or which on the other hand we may have tended carefully but yet could never bring to full perfection — all these will take root and grow in the devachanic state. They may not take deep root, or grow luxuriantly, for this depends on the intensity of the thought and the effort exerted in its direction at the moment of death. But every thought-seed which relates to the soul will there blossom forth. For the devachanic plane is the plane of thought, of dream — but remember such dreams are real experiences, they are not *mere dreams* or idle visions — and there the soul is clothed only in the mental vesture, the garment of thought, and is no more hampered and confined in the physical

vesture — it is entirely freed for the time from the earth plane.

In earth-life we spin the threads of thought and aspiration which in Devachan are woven into the inner vesture of the soul; we prepare the bricks and mortar in earth-life and in Devachan these are fitted into place and used in the edifice of thought which the soul is building for itself. So we go on spinning and weaving and building, often undoing what we have done and so having to weave and build again and again until a perfect vesture without seam, a perfect dwelling-place, is prepared for the true man, the soul.

One purpose of earth-life is to express the inner nature in the outer external act; this we cannot help doing, it is the law of our being, and as said in the *Bhagavad-Gita*:

"All creatures act according to their natures; what then will restraint effect?"

The purpose of Devachan is to build up this inner nature — the character. Let us consider again the cases above mentioned; of the man ever striving to express himself in art or music, or to reach his ideal in whatever direction it may lie, but who apparently fails because his external nature and his environments are not suited to the carrying out of his ideals. In Devachan when freed entirely from the limitations of external physical life, the thought has free scope and can express itself in the thought vesture which responds immediately and coincidentally with the thought. So it is said that man in Devachan achieves to the full all that he desires. This must be so. It is not unreasonable that it should be so, nor is it illusionary. Man simply rises to the plane of his ideal and has a foretaste of what he will in part some day accomplish in earth-life. I say he *will* accomplish it, maybe at first only in part, but ultimately in its perfection; for he builds this ideal into his character and nature

and will act according to his nature, and if we accept the doctrine of the perfectibility of man all powers must ultimately be his. That which may now prevent the full exercise of his powers in their perfection is the other side of his nature, the lower nature which wars ever against the higher and according to which man is also constrained to act until by *self-restraint* and devotion to the higher nature he entirely subdues the lower. In the next earth-life the devotee who has given his life to music or art will, it is held, come back with the power to express his ideal in its completeness, all other things being equal. The philanthropist, unable to carry out his plans for the good of his fellowmen though devoting all his energies to the work, will come back into conditions where his energies will find full play. This is because in Devachan the thoughts, desires and efforts of the past life have woven themselves into his character, and become part of his own nature, so that the artist, the musician or the philanthropist cannot help but express this nature in outward act. But then comes a test, the test that all who have genius, all who have great powers, must meet. Will they use these powers for self or for others, will ambition find entrance into their hearts, or will each be able to say: "When the Master reads my heart He shall find it clean utterly"?

And the man who drifts, who has no definite purpose in life, who has good thoughts at times and high resolves but does not persist in them; *his* Devachan will correspond to his life. His good thoughts and resolves will blossom and bear fruit and will mould and transform his inner vesture, but only to the extent of the thought energy and the endeavor to express them in act during life. Still his character will be to this extent modified and strengthened so that in the succeeding life there will be a greater ability to give them outer expression.

This assimilation and transformation of thought into character

form, in the writer's opinion, the great purpose of Devachan. For the great majority of people, Devachan is necessary, and if the above view be a correct one it is not a state of selfishness as has been held by some, any more than it is a form of selfishness for us to digest our food so that it may give us strength to continue our work, — it is a necessity in nature.

The points we have yet to consider in connection with this subject are the so-called illusion of Devachan and the possibility of rising above the necessity of Devachan or shortening its period.

(To be concluded)

FOOTNOTE:

1. Continued from August number. ([return to text](#))

The Path

THEOSOPHY AND CAPITAL PUNISHMENT — *William Q. Judge*

From ignorance of the truth about man's real nature and faculties and their action and condition after bodily death, a number of evils flow. The effect of such want of knowledge is much wider than the concerns of one or several persons. Government and the administration of human justice under man-made laws will improve in proportion as there exist a greater amount of information on this all-important subject. When a wide and deep knowledge and belief in respect to the occult side of nature and of man shall have become the property of the people then may we expect a great change in the matter of capital punishment.

The killing of a human being by the authority of the state is morally wrong and also an injury to all the people; no criminal should be executed no matter what the offence. If the administration of the law is so faulty as to permit the release of the hardened criminal before the term of his sentence has expired, that has nothing to do with the question of killing him.

Under Christianity this killing is contrary to the law supposed to have emanated from the Supreme Lawgiver. The commandment is: "Thou shalt not kill!" No exception is made for states or governments; it does not even except the animal kingdom. Under this law therefore it is not right to kill a dog, to say nothing of human beings. But the commandment has always been and still is ignored. The Theology of man is always able to argue away any regulation whatever; and the Christian nations once rioted in executions. At one time for stealing a loaf of bread or a few nails a man might be hanged. This, however, has been so altered that death at the hands of the law is imposed for murder only, — omitting some unimportant exceptions.

We can safely divide the criminals who have been or will be killed under our laws into two classes: *i.e.*, those persons who are hardened, vicious, murderous in nature; and those who are not so, but who, in a moment of passion, fear, or anger, have slain another. The last may be again divided into those who are sorry for what they did, and those who are not. But even though those of the second class are not by intention enemies of Society, as are the others, they too before their execution may have their anger, resentment, desire for revenge and other feelings besides remorse, all aroused against Society which persecutes them and against those who directly take part in their trial and execution. The nature, passions, state of mind and bitterness of the criminal have, hence, to be taken into account in considering the question. For the condition which he is in when cut off from mundane life has much to do with the whole subject.

All the modes of execution are violent, whether by the knife, the sword, the bullet, by poison, rope, or electricity. And for the Theosophist the term *violent* as applied to death must mean more than it does to those who do not hold theosophical views. For the latter, a violent death is distinguished from an easy natural one solely by the violence used against the victim. But for us such a death is the violent separation of the man from his body, and is a serious matter, of interest to the whole state. It creates in fact a paradox, for such persons are not dead; they remain with us as unseen criminals, able to do harm to the living and to cause damage to the whole of Society.

What happens? All the onlooker sees is that the sudden cutting off is accomplished; but what of the reality? A natural death is like the falling of a leaf near the winter time. The time is fully ripe, all the powers of the leaf having separated; those acting no longer, its stem has but a slight hold on the branch and the slightest wind takes it away. So with us; we begin to separate our different inner

powers and parts one from the other because their full term has ended, and when the final tremor comes the various inner component parts of the man fall away from each other and let the soul go free. But the poor criminal has not come to the natural end of his life. His astral body is not ready to separate from his physical body, nor is the vital, nervous energy ready to leave. The entire inner man is closely knit together, and he is the reality. I have said these parts are not ready to separate — they are in fact not able to separate because they are bound together by law and a force over which only great Nature has control.

When then the mere physical body is so treated that a sudden, premature separation from the real man is effected, he is merely dazed for a time, after which he wakes up in the atmosphere of the earth, fully a sentient living being save for the body. He sees the people, he sees and feels again the pursuit of him by the law. His passions are alive. He has become a raging fire, a mass of hate; the victim of his fellows and of his own crime. Few of us are able, even under favorable circumstances, to admit ourselves as wholly wrong and to say that punishment inflicted on us by man is right and just, and the criminal has only hate and desire for revenge.

If now we remember that his state of mind was made worse by his trial and execution, we can see that he has become a menace to the living. Even if he be not so bad and full of revenge as said, he is himself the repository of his own deeds; he carries with him into the astral realm surrounding us the pictures of his crimes, and these are ever living creatures, as it were. In any case he is dangerous. Floating as he does in the very realm in which our mind and senses operate, he is forever coming in contact with the mind and senses of the living. More people than we suspect are nervous and sensitive. If these sensitives are touched by this invisible criminal they have injected into them at once the

pictures of his crime and punishment, the vibrations from his hate, malice and revenge. Like creates like, and thus these vibrations create their like. Many a person has been impelled by some unknown force to commit crime; and that force came from such an inhabitant of our sphere.

And even with those not called "sensitive" these floating criminals have an effect, arousing evil thoughts where any basis for such exist in those individuals. We cannot argue away the immense force of hate, revenge, fear, vanity, all combined. Take the case of Guiteau, who shot President Garfield. He went through many days of trial. His hate, anger and vanity were aroused to the highest pitch everyday and until the last, and he died full of curses for every one who had anything to do with his troubles. Can we be so foolish as to say that all the force he thus generated was at once dissipated? Of course it was not. In time it will be transformed into other forces, but during the long time before that takes place the living Guiteau will float through our mind and senses carrying with him and dragging over us the awful pictures drawn and frightful passions engendered.

The Theosophist who believes in the multiple nature of man and in the complexity of his inner nature, and knows that that is governed by law and not by mere chance or by the fancy of those who prate of the need for protecting society when they do not know the right way to do it, relying only on the punitive and retaliatory Mosaic law — will oppose capital punishment. He sees it is unjust to the living, a danger to the state, and that it allows no chance whatever for any reformation of the criminal.

EACH MEMBER A CENTRE — *William Q. Judge*

Some years ago one of those Masters in whom so many of our members believe directed H.P.B. to write a letter for him to a certain body of Theosophists. In this he said that each member could become, in his own town or city, if earnest sincere and unselfish, an active centre from which would radiate unseen powerful forces able to influence men and women in the vicinity for good; and that soon enquirers would appear, a Branch in time be organized, and thus the whole neighborhood would receive benefit. This seems just and reasonable in addition to its being stated by such high authority. Members ought to consider and think over it so that action may follow.

Too many who think themselves theosophically alone in their own town, have folded their hands and shut up their minds saying to themselves that they could do nothing, that no one was near who could possibly care for Theosophy, and that that particular town was the "most difficult for the work."

The great mistake in these cases is forgetting the law indicated in what H.P.B. wrote. It is one that every member ought to know — that the mind of man is capable of bringing about results through means of other minds about him. If we sit and think that nothing can be done, then our subtle mind meets other minds within the radius of our sphere — not small — and shouts into them:

"Nothing can be done." Of course then nothing is done. But if unselfishly and earnestly we think *Theosophy*, and desire that others should, like us, be benefited by it, then to the minds we meet in stray moments of the day and in many hours of the night we cry "Theosophy," and "Help and hope for thee." The result must be an awakening of interest upon the slightest provocative

occasion.

Such an inner attitude, added to every sort of attempt at promulgation, will disclose many unsuspected persons who are thinking along this very line. Thus will the opportunity of the hour be taken advantage of.

Our last Convention marked an era: the dying away of strife and opening of greater chances, the enlargement and extension of inquiry and interest on the part of the great public. This is a very great opportunity. Branches and members alike ought to rise to meet and use all that this will afford. Remember that we are not fighting for any form of organization, nor for badges, nor for petty personal ends, but for Theosophy; for the benefit, the advantage and the good of our fellow-men. As was said not long ago, those of us who follow after and worship a mere organization are making fetishes and worshipping a shell. Unselfishness is the real keynote.

Those of us who still, after years and after much instruction, are seeking and wishing for personal progress or preferment in the occult side of life, are destroying that quality first referred to — of being a living, breathing centre of light and hope for others. And the self-seekers thus also lessen their possible chances in the next life here.

Close up the ranks! Each member a centre; each Branch a centre; the whole a vast, whirling centre of light and force and energy for the benefit of the nation and of the race.

The Path

LETTERS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY: XI (1)

In letters and conversation alike, H.P.B. often referred to the debt of gratitude she owed to the Countess Wachtmeister, Madame Gebhard, and especially Doctor Ashton Ellis, for their devotion and self-abnegation during her illness. In one of the last letters she wrote to Madame Jelihovsky from Ostende, she spoke as follows:

"I really do not know what to think! What am I to them? Why should the Countess be so devoted to me, as to be ready to give her life for mine? What am I to Ellis, who never saw me before, that he should think nothing of the risk, when leaving the hospital without permission, for a whole week for my sake; now he has lost his place, his handsome pay, and his rooms at the Westminster Dispensary. He went home and returned here laughing: he does not care a bit, he says! He will have more time to spend on Theosophy, with his practise alone. Well, what does all this mean? What do they find in me? Why should it be my fate to influence the destinies of other people? I tell you seriously, *I feel frightened!* I cease understanding causes and feel lost. The only thing I know is that I have called forth an unknown power which ties the destinies of other people to my destiny, to my life. ... I know also to my great relief, that many amongst those devoted to me look up to me as to their rescuer. Many were heartless egotists, faithless materialists, worldly, lightheaded sensualists, and many have become serious people, working indefatigably, sacrificing everything to the work: position, time, money, and thinking but of one thing: their spiritual and intellectual development. They have become in a way the

victims of self-sacrifice, and live only for the good of others, seeing their salvation and light in me. And what am I? I am what I always was. At least so far as they are concerned, seriously. I am ready to give the last drop of my blood for Theosophy, but as for Theosophists I hardly love anyone amongst them personally. I cannot love anyone personally, but you of my own blood. . . . What a blind tool I am, I must own, in the hands of the one whom I call my Master! ... I do not know, *I do not know, I do not know*. For me, as for anyone else, the phenomenal birth of our Society, on *my* initiative, its daily and hourly growth, its indestructibility, in spite of the many blows from its enemies — are an unsolved riddle. I do not know any logical cause for it, but I see, I know, that the Theosophical Society is preordained to have a world-wide importance. It will become one of the events of the world! It possesses a moral and psychical power, the weight of which, like the ninth wave, will submerge, sweep away and drown all that the lesser waves of human thought have left on the shore; all foreign sediments, all shreds and patches of systems and philosophies. I am its blind motor, but a great power rests with it."

When finally settled in London Madame Blavatsky wrote to her sister:

"Here I am planted among the fogs of Albion. Literally *planted*, because I did not come here of my own free will. I have been dragged over by my *admirers*, nearly in my bed or in their arms. They make a regular hobby of me. To their mind, they won't be able to find their way to the Kingdom of Heaven without me. They sent a deputation with a petition from seventy-two Theosophists who have firmly made up their minds to deprive poor Ostende of my

'ennobling' presence and 'beneficent magnetic fluid' — *excuse du peu!* I grumble at them, I drive them away, I shut myself off from all these *mystical vampires*, who suck all the moral strength out of me — no! all the same they rush to me, like flies to honey. 'We have become aware,' they say, 'of the spirit of holiness and moral perfection in your *atmosphere*. You alone can enlighten us and give life to the hybernating and inactive London Society.' Well, now they have got what they wanted; I have come and thrown more fuel into the furnace — I hope they won't repent it. I sit at my table and write, whilst they all jump about and dance to my music. Yesterday we had a meeting at which was formed a new branch of the Theosophical Society, and — just fancy that — they unanimously called it 'The Blavatsky Lodge of the T.S.!' . . . This I call hitting the Psychological Research Society straight in the face; let them learn of what stuff we are made! . . . We are about to found a magazine of our own, *Lucifer*. Don't allow yourself to be frightened: it is not the devil, into which the Catholics have falsified the name of the Morning Star, sacred to all the ancient world, of the 'bringer of light,' Phosphoros, as the Romans often called the Mother of God and Christ. And in St. John's *Revelation* does it not say, 'I, Jesus, the morning star'? I wish people would take this to mind, at least. It is possible that the rebellious angel was called Lucifer *before his fall*, but after his transformation he must not be called so. . . . It is simply frightful what a lot of work I have. They write from Paris that the Society is also divided there. They refuse to acknowledge the Branch under the presidency of Lady Caithness, Duchesse de Pomar, and ask for a representative of mine; just like those here, who want me to take the place of Sinnett. . . . They insisted upon my tearing myself to pieces for them! I am to play at being a kind of

'omnipresent' General Booth with his Salvation Army! Thank you very much! And a new magazine — *Le Lotus* — they intend to start too. I have refused the editorship point blank; and so look at the title page — I enclose the specimen copy — '*Sous l' inspiration de Mme. H. P. Blavatsky.*' How do you like that now? And, please, how am I to inspire them? Am I to send magnetic fluids to Gaboriau, its editor, and to his collaborators? It appears that your sister is getting to be the fashion in Europe also. Look at Hartmann dedicating his book to 'my *genius.*' But how I am to get time for everything — magazines, lessons in occultism, the *Secret Doctrine*, the first part of which is not yet ready — I do not know myself!"

During this eventful time Madame Blavatsky was in excellent spirits and very hopeful as to the future of her Society, as is shown by the following letter to her sister:

"A whole Society of Catholic clergy and High-Church fanatics has been formed here against your sister. They already have had three meetings. During the first they tried to prove that I am no more and no less than the very Devil in petticoats. But my Theosophists protested, and having asked for the right of speech proved very neatly on the spot that these Catholics were Jesuits, sorry Christians, worshippers of Baal and Mammon. During the second, they tried to take up the old story: she is a spy, an agent of the Russian government and is dangerous to British interests. . . . Here arose Lane Fox, Sinnett and Sir W. Grove and proved to the public that the enemies of Theosophy, who fear my Russian patriotism, are near relatives to Balaam's ass, though it saw an angel, at least, and could talk, and they see only small blue devils everywhere, in their bigotry, and can't speak, into the bargain. At the third

meeting was discussed the question: can it be that I am Antichrist? Here the young Lord P. got up and read out my answer, in which I laconically but clearly inform the world, that if twice two equals four, all these people are blank ignoramuses and calumniators. The effect exceeded expectation as you will see from the reports, so great was the enthusiasm of my friends. . . . Now they are going to cry still louder: *Lucifer* will kill our opposers! Even my personal enemies are full of praises for it. ... And yet I feel sad, oh so sad! Oh, if I only could see you."

FOOTNOTE:

1. Copyright, 1895. ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF DEVACHAN: III — *Joseph H. Fustell*

(Concluded from September number)

It is very generally held that Devachan is mostly a state of illusion and of the imagination and that the soul is simply surrounded by pictures of its own making. It is said, for instance, that in Devachan we are not really with our friends or those whom we love but that we only *imagine* this to be the case.

Let us consider what constitutes nearness and recognition. There are the nearness and recognition that are due to physical sense perception and those that are due to inner perceptions. They may belong to the outer or the inner planes of being. Usually we say we are near another when we can see, hear and touch that other. But our physical senses reveal to us only the external physical man, and a little thought will show that something else is needed to constitute nearness and recognition in any true sense. Take the case of one we have loved becoming insane, or simply falling asleep or being absorbed in a train of thought in which we have no part. We may see, hear and touch but because of the absence of *soul*-response are not in any true sense near that one. In normal cases, however, we infer from the outward manifestations what the inner nature may be, but unfortunately the latter is too often concealed by the former instead of shining through it. We live so much on the outer plane, and place so much confidence in our sense perceptions that the inner perceptions have become dull, and we persuade ourselves into believing that what we see, hear and touch is the real man. We know inwardly that the real man is not to be known in this way, but yet, to a very large extent, we govern our lives according to

outward seemings instead of making them conform to inner verities.

A very slight consideration forces us to a belief in the illusory nature of physical, sensuous life, but it needs a strong purpose to turn away from it and make it wholly subservient to the higher life. Instead of this we cling to it as the real life and the thought of physical separation and physical death is the one we shrink from the most. If we hold to the idea that sensuous life is the true one then it is inevitable that Devachan will appear as a state of illusion, but once we begin to realize the inner life then it becomes possible to take a new view of the life after death.

All true love and friendship have their roots in the inner planes and belong, in the measure that they are true, to the soul and to the inner nature. It is however possible for the strongest ties of love and friendship to exist on the soul plane without being manifested in this or any earth life. It is also possible where there is this inner friendship between two persons for it to be obscured in the case of one but not in that of the other. It depends upon the person's Karma and his will whether the personal life is able to faithfully reflect and work harmoniously with the inner life. This view affords an explanation of cases in which there is the desire for love and friendship on one side only, which is not reciprocated. Ultimately we are all linked together by the same ties which have their basis in the essential unity and divinity of man. But we do not at all attain to the full realization of this, though it is not ultimately unattainable; we only realize it in part and too often only as a theory or as a philosophical proposition.

All that we are capable of, so long as we do not rise above this sphere of limitation, is to experience in some small degree one or other of the varied manifestations of the essential unity. We fail to see the pure white light and catch only a faint glimmer of one

or other of the prismatic rays into which it is divided on this plane of illusion. Both the mental vesture and the physical vesture act as the prisms which separate the colored rays one from another, and according to the nature of the prisms will the rays be transmitted more or less faithfully or some perhaps not transmitted at all. It is evident therefore that if we place our reliance on the physical senses for the discovery of truth we lay ourselves open to error and delusion. In earth life we use both the physical and the mental prisms — though we rarely use either in the best way possible — and these are the instruments through which shines the light of our own souls, and through which also we perceive the light which shines through the mental and physical vestures of others. In Devachan we use only the mental vesture or prism and because of its being freed from all connection with the physical vesture it transmits more easily and faithfully the rays of light which have their source in the soul. There may still be barriers to the passage of the light owing to one's development and Karma but the barriers of merely personal life are removed. We do not necessarily experience in Devachan that which the *personality* desires but only to the extent that the desires of the personality are in conformity with those of the soul. We touch more nearly the soul plane and all the things which belong only to the personal life are left behind.

If many of those barriers which prevent us from knowing our true relations to others are in Devachan broken down, we cannot call it an illusion. On earth we interchange with those whom we love the vibrations of sight, hearing and touch and also of thought, but it is only the last named that make true recognition and nearness possible; it is the others, the sense vibrations, that deceive and mislead us. In Devachan these sense vibrations do not exist, but the higher vibrations and the perceptions that belong thereto have fuller scope and wider range, and we enter

into a realm of truer recognition and knowledge. There is nothing really lost by our leaving behind the physical sense perceptions, for the soul has its own powers of sight which far transcend anything that can be experienced on the physical plane.

Whatever true love and recognition there may have been on earth, whether between friend and friend, lover and loved one, mother and child, that love and recognition will be increased a hundredfold in Devachan.

Our conceptions of Devachan and of this life would be much clearer if we could view these as related to consciousness and not to place, time, and matter. We may, if we will, rise to the Devachanic plane while on earth and may even rise above the necessity of a Devachan between earth lives. To the extent that we assimilate the experiences of our lives and put into action our ideals and resolves, to that extent do we shorten the Devachanic period. In the case of the mass of men, their stay in Devachan is of such long duration because they do not put into practice their ideals or live according to inner convictions. We dream so much that is noble and high and pure but are not able to put it into practice. No doubt external conditions have much to do with this but the will is a much more important factor. The fact is that we do not use our wills and have not the courage to live according to the light of our inner nature. We know we are tied down by conventionality but lack the will and the courage to break loose from it. Yet the will is ours if we but knew it and would use it. The mere desire to escape Devachan is not enough to cause us to reincarnate immediately. The Devachanic state is a necessity, the assimilation of experiences and the building up of character are essentials to progress, and also life on the soul plane is necessary. We cannot escape from these if we are to progress along the line of evolution; but nature gives us a choice and a power in the matter. It is not a choice to escape Devachan but either to have

our Devachan while on earth or after earth life. It is only in regard to those who know of this power but refuse to exercise it by not living a spiritual life and not making their Devachan here that we can speak of the Devachan after earth life as selfish. For the ordinary man Devachan is not a selfish but a necessary state. Yet we have little need to concern ourselves with shortening the period of or escaping Devachan if we but act up to the highest within us. Our part is to do our duty now, to live the highest life possible; Nature and the Law take care of the rest, and they always give to each the greatest opportunity that is possible and place each in those conditions which are most favorable to progress.

The Path

THE BODILY SEATS OF CONSCIOUSNESS: I — *Herbert Coryn*

To simplify the difficult study of the bodily Headquarters of consciousness, a study nevertheless upon which each of us can immediately enter, we will take the three leading and quite obvious grades, namely, (a) the physiological, organic, animal consciousness resident in the animal organs, (b) the intellectual or human consciousness of the brain, (c) the spiritual or essential and permanent consciousness of the heart.

Every cell in the body as also every particle of any kind of matter is a life, a centre of conscious Force. Every such point of consciousness is capable of acting upon our human consciousness and of giving rise to some kind of sensation on some plane. That sensation constitutes partial knowledge of it. Some of such centres of conscious life produce in our consciousness the sense: of solidity and from that notion of solidity arises our chief conceptions of matter as a solid something. But in nature is really only the conscious life; the solidity is of our own addition. But the particles or points of consciousness in nature and our own body, physical, astral, or subtler still, act on our consciousness in many other ways. Some of them awake passions; others awake pictures belonging to our own past, and this constitutes memory; some awake pictures of places and scenes belonging to remote areas of time and space; some engender spiritual ideation in our consciousness. Both we ourselves and all these are points of consciousness in the Universal Mind. These monads exist severally on the various planes of that Mind, and they act upon that level of our consciousness to which they correspond, for man belongs to all the levels of nature. And we in our turn react upon them, color them, train them. The many millions of points of consciousness of which the body is composed, from the physical

plane upward, pass and repass through our own consciousness, acting and reacting; and it is thus easy to see that about us is an epitome of the universe, and that the body may be the temple of all the consciousnesses. A few facts as to the relation of consciousness to the body are known to all, and a few more are well known in medicine. Going beyond such scraps of knowledge into a generalization, we can see the probability of the truth that every bodily organ, by means of the nerve plexuses that surround and penetrate it, is connected with our brain and consciousness, and that each modifies consciousness in a peculiar way. Every cell of each organ has a consciousness of its own; a group of many cells thus combined into an organ has also, as a group, a complex consciousness of its own; the whole body composed of all the organs, has also an animal consciousness of *its* own as a whole, and this consciousness is *our* consciousness to the extent that we are animals. In fact many of us are but roughly reasoning animals. Well then, this total bodily consciousness of ours has a certain character or flavor which is its usual one, and it is a blend of the several flavors of consciousness contributed by the organs and their cells. So unless we take ourselves in hand we are at the mercy of the organs. Let a few nerve fibres lose a little of their proper sheath of oily material and neuralgia arises, also probably an altered view of life as a whole. Malposition or inflammation of an important group of organs will or may so alter consciousness as to produce hallucinations, melancholia, or insanity. The general color of consciousness may, as is well known and proverbialised, be altered by a sluggish liver. Life then seems not worth living: immortality is very doubtful, at any rate for you, and your sins acquire a very menacing aspect. Your new business venture is certain to fail. You take with more or less wisdom a blue pill. Tomorrow you get up cheerful; your business venture is a certain success; your sins, if any, are few and little detrimental; life is a splendid possession. That represents what the liver can do

in consciousness.

You do too much bicycling and strain your heart, so that it beats weakly and irregularly. While it does so, you feel an indefinable sense of impending disaster, you walk about under the oppression of a gloomy forevision which really foresees nothing. You acquire a belief in portents and the sight of a black cat fills you with foreboding. With a wisdom derived from your success with the blue pill, you take a heart tonic. The disasters disappear over the edge of the horizon; your scepticism as to portents returns. Analogously patients with advanced lung disease are often singularly hopeful. The general consciousness can also react on the organs. Prolonged grief, or a piece of very bad news may produce jaundice or totally stop all the powers of digestion. A fear of coming calamity or an anxiety may weaken the heart, make it irregular, or stop it altogether. Let these suffice as examples. The general flavor of consciousness, then, made up by the blended flavors contributed by the organs, constitutes what we call temperament; and men differ in temperament because the emanations from the organs differ in proportion to each other for different men. And that proportion is in its turn due mainly to the trend of the last life; is karmic. It was not for nothing that what we now call "the blues" was last century called "the spleen," for the spleen is one of the organs whose influence, if not quite healthy, makes us moody and depressed. We may also note the relation of the liver to gout and rheumatism, and the temper of the gouty man. All this may sound very materialistic, but it is not so in reality. The distemper of the organs today is the physical register and effect of the unbalanced mind of yesterday. It occasionally happens that a periodically due attack of epilepsy is replaced by an ungovernable outburst of rage, and it seems reasonable to assume that in such case the epilepsy of this life is karmic effect of ungoverned rage in the last. Continued

alcoholism will deprave the liver, and many cases of congenitally depraved liver with a resulting morbid, gloomy, passionate, or suicidal temperament, may well be karmic result of alcoholism in the last birth, in its turn due to unregulated desire for the sensation of physical luxury. In a sentence, the bodily mechanism of this life with its disturbing action upon the mind, is the result, in its unbalance, of the unbalanced mind of last life. It must be true that diseases primarily arise in consciousness, as unrul'd desire.

(a) We have been laying the foundation for a closer study of the sensuous consciousness, the first of our three degrees. With your sensuous consciousness you hear what is being said; with your intellectual consciousness you understand it; with your spiritual consciousness you may have an intuition that it is right or wrong, elevating or otherwise. The sensuous consciousness is the consciousness of the body and senses. As you sit wrapped in thought your eye wanders round the room and reads the title of a book. After you have done thinking, the title of the book floats across your mental consciousness and you wonder how it got there and where you saw the book. You, the self, become conscious of what was at first only in the consciousness of the eye.

Or you wake up gradually and become at last aware that for the past hour you have had a toothache. The nerve has known of it all that hour, and at last you partake yourself of the same pleasing knowledge. The hysterical patient with an anaesthetic arm and hand is not herself aware (if the arm is out of her sight through a hole in a screen) that you have guided her fingers holding a pencil to write the word London. The hand will nevertheless of itself automatically rewrite the word.

The sensuous consciousness is of the body and senses. It is always

there, but the mind does not necessarily attend to it. When the mind does attend to it, it passes into the sensuous state, by far the most usual, the densest and grossest state. The sensuous consciousness is the being aware of what the body and senses are saying; by it we relate ourselves by many avenues of communication to the outer world, and this consciousness is calm or muddled, happy or irritable, acute or dull, according to the condition of the organs. It has in the organs its proper seat, and in *their* consciousness resides its primary memory. For example, the stomach and palate remember the meal of yesterday, or rather remember the set of sensations they experienced during the eating of the meal, which was all they knew about it. Hunger reawakens this memory and from this springs the wider memory of other organs; that of the nose, giving the anticipated smell of the dishes; that of the eye, their appearance; that of the organic nerves, the pleasant sensation following repletion. All these memories of the body reside therein, and therein alone. When they wake up, each organ of memory flashes a series of sparks into the mental consciousness, awakening it, throwing it vividly into the sensuous state, and causing it to set about preparations for dinner that involve thought. But if we were engaged in deep meditation about something, the whole set of bodily memories regarding dinner could arise in the organs without affecting the mind, except perhaps with a sense of vague discomfort. The proper memory of the mind has nothing to do with these, and if the mind desires to remember the sensations of dining it must do so by awakening the memory of these sensations in their appropriate organs and then attend thereto. But there is no need to take so much trouble, for in an hour or two the organs will take the matter into their own hands. The killing out of any particular bodily desire is to be done by the steady exclusion from the mind of the pictures that radiate from the memory and nascent activity of the organ particularly concerned. Thus the organ is deprived of

the mental reactive force which alone keeps it in an unduly active state, and it starves down to the proper degree of subordination. This inevitably, however slow the process.

(To be continued)

The Path

THE FOURFOLD LOWER MAN — *J. H. Connelly*

THE ASTRAL BODY AND ITS FUNCTIONS, ETC.

Years ago, long before I had even heard of Theosophy, Dr. J. R. Buchanan told me about his discovery of Psychometry. I did not believe a word of the seemingly preposterous things he claimed as within the scope of his new science, and would have found his affirmations amusing if my mind had not been pre-occupied with saddened contemplation of him as a mental wreck. While we were talking, a member of his class came in — a dainty little lady with a handsome intellectual face and charming manners — and the old man said to her, "I have been telling my friend about our new science, but can see that he does not believe in it. Have you any objection to giving him a demonstration of what it can do?" "None whatever," she replied smilingly. He requested that I should give her a piece of paper bearing writing, or marks of any sort, made by one whom I knew well. I did, and she held it in her right hand probably twenty minutes, while taking part brightly in a general conversation upon a variety of topics. Then she described the writer of that letter, who was one of the most prominent and brainiest of New York journalists, told first how he looked, his height, figure, complexion, the colors of his eyes and hair, and so on: then reviewed his habits, the bent of his mind, preferences, prejudices and ambitions; analyzed his character; even admirably defined the peculiarities of his literary work. All was clear, definite, detailed, and exceedingly accurate, as I either knew at the time or ascertained by subsequent inquiry. The man could not have done himself more exact justice, and in some matters would not, I think, have done so much.

Amazement almost paralyzed me. I had watched her closely, and

she had not seen a stroke of the writing (could not, indeed, if she had wished to): I had been careful to give no hint of the writer's identity and she did not know *who* the man was, any more than I know the name of the political boss in the chief city on Mars, — but she knew *what* he was, as if she had been his conscience. When she took her departure the doctor increased my perplexity by his explanation of the phenomenon. He said a great deal about the astral essence, or spirit of things, and I listened, but my mental attitude was that of the old sailor regarding a tough yarn, that he "might hoist it aboard, but couldn't stow it away in the hold."

That experience worried me a long time; it seemed so utterly inexplicable. Thought-transference I knew something about, but psychometry went altogether beyond that into regions not merely unexplored but actually unsuspected. Either the doctor had not been sufficiently clear and explicit for me to understand him, or my personal evolution had not yet reached the point where I could assimilate his information — the latter most probably — and it was all hazy to me. It would have been soothing if I had been able to treat it in the scientific materialist's way of dealing with supersensuous things, which is simply to deny their existence; or that of the parson's, who put up a sign at the entrance of every unexplored path — "No Thoroughfare," or "Closed, by order of the Commissioners." or something of the sort. As I said, it worried me, until Theosophy taught me the septenate composition of man, what his astral principle is, whence it is derived, its functions and importance as the link between the plane of gross matter and the higher realms of mind and soul. I say Theosophy taught me; but, to be explicit, the exponent was William Q. Judge, which is, after all, the same thing to me, since the philosophy and he — the wisest and best teacher we have since H.P.B. is gone — are inseparable in my mind.

Recapitulation, to an assemblage of Theosophists, of what we all have been able to learn concerning the astral being would, it seems to me, be a waste of time, if not actually bordering upon impertinence. But I may be permitted to suggest, simply as an unauthorized and wholly personal notion of my own, a mild protest against getting into a habit of being misled by the common use of the words "lower" and "higher" as applied to the principles of man. Of course the permanencies — spirit, soul and mind — are of more ultimate importance than the transient personal principles; but while we are in the corporeal phase of our evolution, it is not wise to even affect to look down upon the latter, or assume that they are to be regarded as regrettable clogs upon our ineffable remainders. The principles are not disposed like the steps of a stairway, but interblended, mutually introactive and reciprocal in their action, like the atoms of the akasa, differentiated into distinct gradations, yet one and the same in ultimate essence of being. Our development of the "higher" principles depends upon our employment of them as forces upon the "lower," which are requisite as the field of such exercise, and the good and evil of the "lower" are dependent upon circumstances and susceptible of adjustment by ourselves. Do not let us forget that the only essential, unqualified and avitchi-deserving evil is that which may be developed in the manasic principle. Such development may seem to be from kamic incitement, but the kamic impulse then is only a reflection of the baleful light from the wicked manas. Properly controlled, the kamic influence is simply one of energy, forceful for good, inspiring and sustaining the loftiest endeavors of the human soul. The kama-rupa, man's self-created embodiment from the akasa, of his most intense desires, dominant thoughts, and habitual impulses, is not necessarily a thing of horror, but may be deva or demon just as he wills it. And as for the intellectual side of manas as distinguished from the spiritual — the "lower manas" as it is

styled — it may be purified, elevated, strengthened, but must always be an inseparable adjunct in even the highest states of consciousness. I don't think I could respect an angel who had not a finely developed lower manas — if such a being were possible, which I do not believe — and am very sure I have no confidence in the compatibility of lofty spirituality with low intellectuality in humanity. Exceedingly stupid and grossly ignorant persons are sometimes very pious Christians, but that is quite in "the eternal order of the fitness of things," and does not at all disturb my views of the general principle involved. They may be even conspicuously moral persons — which is quite another thing — but their quality as such is surely not a resultant from their lack of intelligence. An oyster has probably as few vices as any other creature living, but that is simply because it is an oyster, not by reason of its spirituality. As for the astral principle, which binds together all personal entities in one common humanity, through which we are first made conscious of our one-ness with the universe, (manifested God) and by the right use of which we may pass the veil of the Unknown, still as mortals, and win knowledge and power commensurate with our aspirations; the Magical Agent of sensation and action! the Liberator from the trammels of corporeality! the Enlightener! — is it not worthy of our profound interest and tireless endeavors for its comprehension and control? Nothing is more apparent than that the most advanced races of humanity have, at this time, reached the point in evolution where development of the astral consciousness is a natural and inevitable step in their progress. Whether so recognized or not, its manifestations are the dominant interest of the seriously thinking world of today. Advanced scientists already accept the astral body of man as a logical necessity, arriving at perception of its existence through a process of reasoning analogous to that which compelled recognition of the akasa — finding it indispensable to explanation of certain indisputable

phenomena. No force can produce effects without an adequate medium of transmission to its objective point of manifestation. This is as true of the mental energies as of those of light, heat, or motion. The astral principle of man is the adequate medium between his own mind and his gross body; the converter of the intensely rapid vibrations of the former to the low rate of the latter for the phenomena of action, and the converter of the lower rate to the higher for phenomena of sensation. Furthermore, it is the sensitive medium by which the vibrations of one mind are communicated directly to another in the now familiar phenomena of telepathy and hypnotism — neither of which would be possible without it — through the continuous vibrations of the astral matter of the akasa in unison with those of the active entities impelling and sensing them. One school of hypnotists affirm a magnetic aura as a prime factor in the production of phenomena, which another school deny, but that is a detail at present unimportant, particularly as that aura is not comprehended as the astral principle and is only under discussion between them with reference to its possible influence in inducing the trance state. The hypnotization of a sensitive is, primarily, domination of the physical forces through mastery of the astral, upon which they are dependent; secondarily, subjugation of the mental forces of the hypnotee, likewise through control of the astral consciousness, by the hypnotizer. The abnormal state thus induced might properly, so far as the subject is concerned, be characterised as one of astralization, since in it consciousness is confined to the astral plane, through inhibition of the normal mental control belonging to the personality. And it is interesting, and highly significant, to observe that under the operation of this inhibition the newly awakened, or liberated, faculty of perceptivity becomes, in some cases, so intense that it extends to vestiges of impression from precedent incarnations, in the sub-conscious mind.

It is not at all surprising that the experiments of the hypnotists opening the door to an illimitable field of recondite knowledge, should have fascinated and filled them with wonder and awe at the revelations of the mysteries of the personality which they have been able to penetrate, and the powers of which they find themselves possessed; but it is strange that so few of them seem yet to have remembered the scientific law already referred to — that requiring an adequate medium for the transmission of every force as a condition to its manifestation. As the vibrations of light would stop short at an exhausted receiver, did not the akasic atoms transmit them through the atmospheric vacuum, so, were there not something of synchronous vibrational rate to carry the mentally impelled astral vibrations of the hypnotizer to the astral percipience of the hypnotee, there could be no transmission of the former's energy for control of the latter. That something is the semi-material gradation of the akasa which we refer to as the "astral current," or "astral light," or "astral plane," and the next important step science will be compelled to take is its recognition. That step cannot now be long delayed, and, when taken, will be, by virtue of its enforced admission of akasic differentiation and consequently of the supersensuous planes, the death-blow to materialism. The limit of knowledge our occidental scientists may attain in this new field of study, without adoption of the methods of the occultists, may be an interesting subject for speculation. Already they have handled and thrown aside, without suspicion of their use, the keys to doors confronting them. In no branch of science dealing with gross matter would have been overlooked such plain indications and suggestions for more exhaustive knowledge, as have been afforded in hypnotism's tentative touch of the supersensuous world. Here is one conspicuous illustration.

Oriental philosophies affirm the practicability of evolving material forms from semi-material astral matter by the

intelligently directed force of will. They say that by properly applied mental effort one can cause to appear objectively to him any form or color which is first a clear subjective concept and upon which he with concentrated attention fixes his will; furthermore, that by continued application of such will-force he will be able to eventually cause a condensation and agglomeration of the tenuous astral matter to such an extent that the form or color will appear objectively to the sensuous perceptions of others, and even attain enduring materiality in conformity with his creative concept. All that simply amuses our wise men, who do not believe a word of it. Yet some of them, without seeming to know it, have done something toward proving the oriental claims, which it is strange they do not realize.

During some experiments at Nancy, a woman in hypnotic trance was shown a perfectly blank white card and told there was a picture of Napoleon upon it. She recognized the portrait at once, criticised and admired it. The imaginary picture in the mind of the hypnotiser was clearly transferred to her astral consciousness, and she saw it on the card in every detail of uniform, expression, and so on. After a little time, her attention being momentarily withdrawn, the card was reversed and turned over. Then she was told to look at it again. She said, "It is on the other side. Now you are holding it upside down." Evidently it was objective to her astral perception, not merely a subjective-reflection from her master's mentality. Then the card was placed in a pack of others, in every way exactly similar to it, except that it had on one edge, for the purpose of identification, a minute mark which she could not have known anything about, since it was made by another person than the hypnotizer, who did not draw her consciousness to it. The pack was thoroughly shuffled and placed in a drawer, and she, having been told that after awakening she should remember and pick out that particular card bearing the picture,

was restored to normal conditions. This instruction as to what the sensitive shall, or shall not, do or remember upon awakening, seems necessary to establish an available connection between the astral consciousness and the normal faculties. Without it there is no memory of anything occurring in the trance state. When the woman was fully awake, she was told to look among the cards in the drawer for one bearing a picture. She did so, and quickly picked out the marked card, saying, "Here is one with a portrait of Napoleon on it." When other persons were unable to see anything on the smooth white surface, she became indignant, thinking some trick was being played upon her. The cards were then photographed together, spread out on a plain surface. To corporeal sight they were just so many blank spaces, but care had been taken to locate the one representing the marked card, and when they were put before the sensitive, though she was, to all seeming, in perfectly normal condition, at once she pointed out that particular card as bearing the portrait of Napoleon. She believed that she saw it with her physical eyes, the illusion of sense being fully established, but the perception was of course by her sensitized astral, consciousness. She saw it just as various persons I know see elementals and "spooks" — and sometimes deem them "angel visitors from the summer land." Would the camera make record of conditions of matter beyond the range of our most highly developed and aided sensuous perceptions? Why not? In enlargements of siderial photographs, discovery of stars is made where no telescope, however powerful, could reveal anything. She believed that she saw the portrait with her normal sight, as if it had been a photograph or engraving, and yet she was wide awake. Now, what did she see? It is by no means a violent assumption that the will-force of the operator and her thorough conviction, directed to the card with considerable definiteness of attention, had operated to make a deposit of astral matter there in conformity with the concept in their imaginations — a portrait of

Napoleon — and that her perception of it was by no means the mere interesting illusion her hypnotizer supposed, but veritable sight, by the extremely sensitized astral vision, of what was as real on the astral plane as an *alto-relievo* in bronze would have been on the material plane. The experiment is not reported as having been carried beyond that point. No attempt seems to have been made to test if that astral picture would be visible to the astral consciousness of another sensitive, or if, by further and yet more intense concentration of attention upon it, a deposit of astral matter sufficient for sensuous perception could have been procured. Yet both those things, it would seem, should have suggested themselves; could not have failed to do so, I am sure, if the experimenters had been Theosophists.

While man's body was still composed of astral matter, up to the time when the third root-race began to approximate in materiality to their environment of gross matter, he needed, and had, but three senses, *hearing*, *touch*, and *sight*. The third race began to acquire the additional sense of *taste*, which was the normal possession of the fourth. In like manner of gradual development, the fifth sense, *smell*, possessed only by the more advanced of the fourth, toward the completion of their period became common — with all previously possessed — to the fifth root-race, ours. And again "coming events cast their shadows before," as we of the fifth race are growing conscious of a sixth sense, which will be the birth-right of the sixth root-race, for whom the way is now being prepared. The arcane wisdom teaches that perfected humanity will be endowed with seven senses, but what the seventh will be we can hardly even imagine, as it must necessarily transcend our present powers of comprehension. The sixth, that of *Astral Perception*, which challenges our attention now, is as much as we are able to deal with understandingly. As we know, each of our five senses is but

the responding of astral matter, slightly differentiated for special service in different organs, to the tatwic vibrations in the akasa. Hardly anybody has them all equally developed, and, so slight are the distinctions between their service, frequently when one is lost another takes its place. All are but means of perception to one synthesizing cause, that of knowledge by the astral consciousness, for transmission of correct cognition to the mind. That superior sense, capable of grasping knowledge without employment of the five intermediary senses, the exercise of which is limited by the physical organs, is what is now demonstrated, by exceptional organism and under abnormal conditions. Already sensitives in hypnotic trance *hear* what is far beyond the range of physical ears, *see* that which is shut from them by walls, and — when not by extraneous mental control compelled to err — are accurately conscious of the qualities of *materiality*, *odor*, and *sapidity* possessed by remote objects. The man of the sixth root-race will possess those capabilities, in his normal condition, as an attribute of his conscious waking life, without susceptibility to its perversion at another's will.

By the way, that most common of hypnotic experiments, the betrayal of the senses of the hypnotee, is a noteworthy proof of the astral body and demonstration of its being the real receiver of all sense impressions. At the will of the hypnotizer the sensitive finds sweet sour or bitter, is deaf to loudest noises, insensible to vilest smells, experiences pain as pleasure, sees things that are not or does not see those which are, and so on, — all without any impairment of the physical organs. This seems wonderful to those who view things from a materialistic stand-point only, but is very simple.

The physical eyes do not see, or the physical ears hear, or the physical brain think. The mechanism of sensation and impulsion to voluntary action is altogether in the astral being, which is

controlled by the mind capable of exerting will-force upon it. One may gain such command over his astral organs as to be, at will, deaf, blind, insensible to heat or cold or pain, and this while his physical organs are in normal condition. Of itself, the gross body can, in none of its parts, do or experience anything. Even those editors who, when writing about Theosophy, seem to think with their feet, are not even capable of that.

The change of state called "death" is the first step of the Ego in its periodical change of vestments. The corporeal body is abandoned. Its component myriad lives, drawn from the material elements and held together until then by the superior force of the jivic differentiation of the universal pranic wave of life, are set free and, animated by the life-principle infusing each according to its special laws, all return to their respective affiliations with gross matter. All the rest of the man remains, but in what may be scientifically characterized as a "critical" state, one of change. Enough of the jivic principle is retained in the entity to hold together the semi-material astral body, or *linga sarira*, constituting it still a vehicle for the yet more ethereal principles of both the personality and the individuality. It is now in what we know as the *kama-lokic* state. The lower *manas* yet inhabits the entity, endowing it with powers of reflection, giving direction to *kamic* incitements, and, under the impulsion of the higher *manas*, enhancing recollection. At the same time, the instrument of action and sensation — the corporeal body — exists no longer; hence the desires of the *kamic* principle — or animal soul — vivified and spurred to the utmost, are starved and made tortures instead of gratifications. From these conditions it would seem natural to deem the *kama-lokic* state, while awaiting the second death, one of retrospective agony and horrible illusions of present experience, the legitimate products of evil life; not very far removed from the Christian's hell, except that the high

temperature and brimstone of the latter would be subjective to the former, realized only by those ill-advised enough to have expected them.

How long the kama-lokic state continues is a question. I have somewhere read, or heard affirmed, that it lasts until the second death, that of the astral body, and that cannot occur until the corporeal body has been resolved back to its elements. But I find no reason for believing anything of the sort. I do not see how the abandoned material particles can have any influence at all in determining conditions for the now wholly disconnected entity upon another plane. If that were so, the most infamously vile rich man could practically assure himself against having to endure more than a few minutes of kama loka at the utmost. He would simply need to make inheritance of his wealth conditional upon his body being promptly cremated and proper chemical treatment being given to his ashes. And, on the other hand, the purest, tenderest and saintliest soul that lived on earth in the days of the Pharaohs and, according to the custom of her people, had the ill-luck to be embalmed, would be suffering unspeakable tortures yet, through that unfortunate circumstance only. It is a notion which so little commends itself to my reason and sense of justice that I could almost as soon believe in the vicarious atonement. The truth no doubt is that the duration of the kama-lokic state is a matter of karmic adjustment, to meet with absolute justice the deserts and requirements of each individual case, and is even less subject to estimate of time limitation than the duration of the devachanic state. All that can be said positively is that it ends with the "second death," the withdrawal of the manasic triad to devachan, which is beyond the field of our present consideration.

The linga sarira thenceforth exists only as an unconscious form, a "shell" in semblance of its departed personality, gradually

disintegrating and dissipating, soon restoring its atoms to the astral current whence they had been temporarily withdrawn. Until wholly dissipated, it is a convenience for elementals seeking to effect impersonations of the dead, in obedience to mediumistic invocations. The last spark of jiva left it when the manasic triad went out, and thereafter its process of decay is analogous to that of the corporeal body.

But one principle strictly belonging to the personality is still left, the kama rupa or animal soul, which preserves a specialized consciousness confined to its dominant faculties, *memory* — through vestiges of sensuous impression made during life — and *desire*, the product of such memory impelling to recurrent experience. The power of ratiocination it has lost with the lower manas; a vehicle for action and sensation it no longer possesses, since deprived of the linga sarira. It can only wait and suffer until the karmic hour strikes for its return to the world of causes and effects. And, with exceptions which will be noted, it does return, for it, the self-created Self of the man, the embodiment of all characteristics of his personality, is the germ upon which is formed the astral body of a "new-springing life." It is the karmic link between incarnations. Through it the heredity of ancestral physical features and mental traits and the latencies from which atavistic phenomena spring are preserved. It is the seed from which grow the distinctive conformations of body and the cerebral developments that limit and modify the faculties and tendencies of the lower or personal mind. In it inhere the taints of evil, the accursing skandhas, of an unworthy past. In short, it is the architect of the corporeal house that will exactly meet the requirements for experience of some Ego returning to reincarnation. And it should not be understood as wholly evil. Good also inheres in this abstract remnant of personality. It returns to life through the energy of its desire for existence,

which is its dominant quality, but the purpose of such desire is not necessarily altogether bad. Where it is, the current of karmic retribution carries it steadily downward, from one incarnation to another, through a succession of beings devoid of the higher principles, under increasing weight of woe resultant from continuous evil, until the desire for life fades out and the wretched entity reaches extinction. Who but the All-Wise shall say at what point in that descent return for the miserable animal soul is no longer possible — where must be abandoned the hope that the energy of its nature may not be helpful to evolutionary ascent by the human soul to union with the spiritual if the right influences can be brought to bear upon it?

I am well aware that this view of the functions of the kama-rupa may be regarded by some of my brethren as — to say the least — not explicitly set forth in such teachings as we have received. Indeed, if I remember aright, somewhere there is a statement from which the assumption may be drawn that the kama-rupa in some mysterious way becomes responsible for the existences of animals, or incarnates in animals, or something of the sort. As a figurative affirmation that may be all right. I have no doubt some reincarnated human beings possess the characteristics of lions, many more those of foxes and wolves, and an infinite number are much like asses. But as a literal statement of fact I find nothing in reason to support it. And I have too much respect for the animals to believe it, anyway. I sympathize with good Walt Whitman who wrote:

"I think I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self-contained.

I stand and look at them long and long.

They do not sweat and whine about their condition,

They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins,

They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God,

Not one is dissatisfied, not one is demented with the mania
of owning things,
Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived
thousands of years ago,
Not one is respectable or unhappy, over the whole earth."

To return from this gruesome digression to the more engaging theme of astral consciousness: What a magnificent vista of possibilities opens before the imagination in contemplation of the conditions of existence in a community where everybody shall be endowed with that sixth sense and, beyond it, have fully developed astral sensitiveness to the mental vibrations of those surrounding him; where each will not simply live in a glass house but himself be transparent. Professional reformers would have there no excuse for continuing in business; selfish financiering, corrupt "practical politics," hypocrisy, treachery and crime would no longer pay, indeed would not even be practicable; and vice would die a natural death. There is no wild improbability in such an imagining, unless we utterly refuse to believe in a coming millenium when everybody shall "eschew sack and live cleanly." If evolution is eventually to bring man to perfection, as we all hopefully believe, a very long stride in that direction would certainly result from the universal conscious utilization of the full powers of the astral body.

The Path

MECHANICAL THEOSOPHY — *William Q. Judge*

The earnest, devoted student can hardly believe that there exist any theosophists sincerely holding a belief in theosophical doctrines but who are, at the same time, found to have such a mechanical conception of them as permits one to retain undisturbed many old dogmas which are diametrically opposed to Theosophy. Yet we have such among us.

It comes about in this manner. First, Theosophy and its doctrines are well received because affording an explanation of the sorrows of life and a partial answer to the query, "Why is there anything?" Then a deeper examination and larger comprehension of the wide-embracing doctrines of Unity, Reincarnation, Karma, the Sevenfold Classification, cause the person to perceive that either a means of reconciling certain old time dogmas and ideas with Theosophy must be found, or the disaster of giving the old ones up must fall on him.

Contemplating the criminal class and laws thereon the mechanical theosophist sees that perhaps the retaliatory law of Moses must be abandoned if the *modus vivendi* is not found. Ah! Of course, are not men agents for karma? Hence the criminal who has murdered may be executed, may be violently thrust out of life, because that is his karma. Besides, Society must be protected. You cite the bearing on this of the subtile, inner, living nature of man. The mechanical theosophist necessarily must shut his eyes to something, so he replies that all of that has no bearing, the criminal did murder and must be murdered; it was his own fault. So at one sweep away goes compassion, and, as well, any scientific view of criminals and sudden death, in order that there may be a retaliatory Mosaic principle, which is really bound up in

our personal selfish natures.

Our naturalistic mechanician in the philosophy of life then finds quite a satisfaction. Why, of course, being in his own opinion a karmic agent he has the right to decide when he shall act as such. He will be a conscious agent. And so he executes karma upon his fellows according to his own desires and opinions; but he will not give to the beggar because that has been shown to encourage mendicity, nor would he rescue the drunken woman from the gutter because that is her fault and karma to be there. He assumes certainly to act justly, and perhaps in his narrowness of mind he thinks he is doing so, but real justice is not followed because it is unknown to him, being bound up in the long, invisible karmic streams of himself and his victim. However, he has saved his old theories and yet calls himself a theosophist.

Then again the mechanical view, being narrow and of necessity held by those who have no native knowledge of the occult, sees but the mechanical, outer operations of karma. Hence the subtle relation of parent and child, not only on this plane but on all the hidden planes of nature, is ignored. Instead of seeing that the child is of that parent just because of karma and for definite purposes; and that parentage is not merely for bringing an ego into this life but for wider and greater reasons; the mechanical and naturalistic theosophist is delighted to find that his Theosophy allows one to ignore the relation, and even to curse a parent, because parentage is held to be merely a door into life and nothing more.

Mechanical Theosophy is just as bad as that form of Christianity which permits a man to call his religion the religion of love, while he at the same time may grasp, retaliate, be selfish, and sanction his government's construction of death-dealing appliances and in going to war, although Jesus was opposed to both. Mechanical

Theosophy would not condemn — as Christianity does not — those missionaries of Jesus who, finding themselves in danger of death in a land where the people do not want them, appeal to their government for warships, for soldiers, guns and forcible protection in a territory they do not own. It was the mechanical view of Christianity that created an Inquisition. This sort of religion has driven out the true religion of Jesus, and the mechanical view of our doctrines will, if persisted in, do the same for Theosophy.

Our philosophy of life is one grand whole, every part necessary and fitting into every other part. Every one of its doctrines can and must be carried to its ultimate conclusion. Its ethical application must proceed similarly. If it conflict with old opinions those must be cast off. It can never conflict with true morality. But it will with many views touching our dealings with one another. The spirit of Theosophy must be sought for; a sincere application of its principles to life and act should be made. Thus mechanical Theosophy, which inevitably leads — as in many cases it already has — to a negation of brotherhood, will be impossible, and instead there will be a living, actual Theosophy. This will then raise in our hearts the hope that at least a small nucleus of Universal Brotherhood may be formed before we of this generation are all dead.

The Path

LETTERS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY: XII (1)

XII (2)

The effect of her work was spreading, at which she was overjoyed, founding with her usual buoyancy great hopes for her Society, the teachings she advocated and the people who followed them. But personally, at the bottom of her heart, she felt cold and lonely, in spite of the many devoted people around her. Her constant cry was, Oh for something Russian, something familiar, somebody or something loved from childhood! She was always glad to spend all her savings to have her sister or her sister's children with her. To please her, Madame Jelihovsky offered to ask the Rev. E. Smirnoff, the minister of the Russian Embassy Church in London, to call on her. H.P.B. was very pleased with the suggestion: "But will he not refuse?" she wrote in return. "Maybe he also takes me for the Antichrist? What an inconsistent old fool I am: there is a gulf for me between the Catholic and Protestant clergy and our own priesthood. Is it not astonishing that I, a heathen, hating Protestantism and Catholicism alike, should feel all my soul drawn towards the Russian Church. I am a renegade, a cosmopolitan unbeliever — everyone thinks so, and I also think so, and yet I would give the last drop of my blood for the triumph of the Russian Church and everything Russian."

During the winter of 1887 *Novoe Vremya*, one of the leading St. Petersburg papers, informed the Russian public that Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, a compatriot of theirs, had settled in London with the view of demolishing Christianity and spreading Buddhism, to further which she had already built a pagoda with Buddha's idol in it, etc., etc. She immediately wrote a letter on the subject to the office of this newspaper, in a very good-natured

and humorous tone, but unfortunately it never was printed.

"Why should *Novoe Vreniya* tell such fibs?" she wrote to Mme. Jelihovsky. "Whence could it gather that our intention is to preach Buddhism? We never dreamed of such a thing. If in Russia they read my *Lucifer*, our chief organ in Europe at present, they would learn that we preach the purest Theosophy, avoiding the extremes of Count Tolstoi, trying to reestablish the purely Christlike Theosophy and life-giving morality. In the third, November, number there will be an article of mine ('The Esoteric Character of the Gospels') in which I stand up for the teachings of Christ, glorifying, as usual, his true doctrine, not disfigured as yet either by Popery or Protestantism. I, *i.e.*, we Theosophists, certainly do unmask Phariseeism and superstition of every kind. I do not spare Catholicism either, which has overdressed the pure teachings of Christ with unnecessary gewgaws and empty-sounding ritualism, or Protestantism which, in the heat of its indignation against the wilfulness of the Pope and the vanity of the Catholic clergy, has stripped the tree of truth of all its healthy bloom and fruit, as well as of the barren flowers, which were grafted on it by Popery. We mean, it is true, to give it hot to bigotry, to Phariseeism, to bitter materialism, but "Buddhism" is not the right word for them to use. Make of it whatever you can. People call me, and, I must admit, I also call myself, a heathen. I simply can't listen to people talking about the wretched Hindus or Buddhists being converted to Anglican Phariseeism or the Pope's Christianity: it simply gives me the shivers. But when I read about the spread of Russian orthodoxy in Japan, my heart rejoices. Explain it if you can. I am nauseated by the mere sight of any foreign clerical, but as

to the familiar figure of a Russian pope I can swallow it without any effort.

I told you a fib in Paris, when I said I did not want to go to our Church; I was ashamed to say that I went there before your arrival, and stood there, with my mouth wide open, as if standing before my own dear mother, whom I have not seen for years and who could not recognise me! . . . I do not believe in any dogmas, I dislike every ritual, but my feelings towards our own church-service are quite different. I am driven to think that my brains lack their seventh stopper (3) . . . Probably, it is in my blood . . . I certainly will always say: a thousand times rather Buddhism, a pure moral teaching, in perfect, harmony with the teachings of Christ, than modern Catholicism or Protestantism. But with the faith of the Russian Church I will not even compare Buddhism. I can't help it. Such is my silly, inconsistent nature."

In May 1888 Madame Jelihovsky lost her son. Madame Blavatsky felt her sister's sorrow with her usual acuteness and passion, which is shown by the two following fragments:

" . . . in a country new to you all, you, may be, will find some relief. Come, darling. Come all of you, my dears, do not grudge me this greatest joy. You will have a separate room, and we have a garden, a nice shady garden, with birds singing in it, as if in the country. You shall be comfortable, and the poor girls will have what little distraction is possible for them . . . Smirnoff is also writing to you, advising you to come. He is so fond of you all. . . He has just been to see me. He is the only person with whom I could talk about you as with an intimate friend. For God's sake make up your mind! do come! . . . do not change your

mind. The hope to see you has given new life to me. This is my first gladness, my first ray of light in the darkness of sorrow and suffering, of my *lonely* suffering, my untold suffering for you! Come, darling . . ."

She certainly possessed a great faith in the undying nature of man, which amounted to knowledge, and without doubt she could have used her moral influence over her sister to console her. But the great kindness of her loving heart knew better than even this and she tried to soothe her loved ones with words about new, unfamiliar surroundings, her garden and birds singing in it, as simple as the first pangs of her sister's sorrowing heart. Late in the autumn of 1888 there was a considerable lapse of time between her letters to her sister, at which Madame Jelihovsky grew impatient and wrote reproachfully to ask with what she was so very busy that she could not find a minute to write a letter. Madame Blavatsky answered:

"Friend and sister: Your thoughtless question, 'What am I so busy with?' has fallen amongst us like a bomb loaded with naive ignorance of the active life of a Theosophist. Having read it, I translated your Kushma Proatkoff (4) into the language of Shakespeare; and, as soon as I translated it — Bert., Arch., Wright, Mead, and the rest of my home staff swooned right away, smitten with your defamatory question — 'what am I busy with?' I, is it? I tell you, if there ever was in the world an overworked victim it is your long-suffering sister. Do take the trouble to count my occupations, you heartless Zoilas. Every month I write from forty to fifty pages of "Esoteric Instructions," instructions in secret sciences, which must not be printed. Five or six wretched voluntary martyrs among my esotericists have to draw, write and lithograph during the nights, some 320 copies of them, which I have to

superintend, to rectify, to compare and to correct, so that there may be no mistakes and my occult information may not be put to shame. Just think of that! White-haired, trained Cabalists and sworn Free-Masons take lessons from me. Then, the editing of *Lucifer* wholly depends upon me, from the leader and some other more or less lively article for every number, to the correcting of proofs. Then my dear Countess d'Ad-hemar sends me *La Revue Theosophique*; I can't refuse to help her either. Then, I also must eat, like anyone else, which means supplying some other bread-winning article. Then the receptions, the weekly meetings, accompanied by learned discussions, with a stenographer behind my back, and sometimes two or three reporters in the corners, — all this, you can easily believe, takes some time. I must read up for every Thursday, because the people who come here are no ignoramuses from the street, but such people as the electrician K., Dr. William B. and the naturalist C. B. I must be prepared to defend the teachings of Occultism against the applied sciences, so that the reports of the stenographer may be printed, without correction, in our new monthly publication under the name of *The Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*. This alone, the stenographer and the printing — cost my theosophists nearly £40 a month Since your departure they have all gone mad here; they spend such a lot of money that my hair stands on end Don't you see, they have written a circular to all theosophists of all the wide world: 'H.P.B.,' they say, 'is old and ill, H.P.B. won't stay with us much longer. Suppose H.P.B. died, then we might whistle for it! There will be no one to teach us manners and secret wisdom. So let us raise a subscription for the expenses, etc., etc. . . . 'And so they have raised a subscription and now

spend money. And 'H.P.B.' sits with holes in her elbows, sweating for everybody and teaching them. Needless to say, I won't accept penny for this sort of teaching. 'Your silver perish with you, for that you thought to buy the grace of God for money,' I repeat to everyone who imagines he can buy the divine wisdom of centuries for pounds and shillings."

The following two letters show how very open Madame Blavatsky was to new impressions, even in her old age. The first is from Fontainebleau, the second from Jersey, where she was taken by Mrs. Candler in the summer of 1889, less than two years before her death. Both are to Madame Fadeef.

"Delicious air, all impregnated with the resin of the pine forest and warmed by the sun, to which I am exposed whole days, driving in the lovely park — has revived me, has given me back my long lost strength. Just fancy, several theosophists came yesterday from London to see me, and so we all went to see the castle. Out of the fifty-eight state rooms of the palace I have done forty-five with my *own, unborrowed legs!!* It is more than five years since I have walked so much! I have ascended the entrance steps, from which Napoleon I took leave of his guardsmen; I have examined the apartments of poor Marie Antoinette, her bedroom and the pillows on which rested her doomed head; I have seen the dancing hall, *gallerie de Francois I*, and the rooms of the "young ladies" Gabrielle d' Estree and Diane de Poitiers, and the rooms of Madame de Maintenon herself, and the satin cradle of *le petit roi de Rome* all eaten up by moths, and lots of other things. The Gobelins, the Sevres china and some of the pictures are perfect marvels. I have also put my ringers on the table on which the great Napoleon signed his resignation. But best of all I liked the

pictures embroidered with silk *par les demoiselles de St. Cyr* for Madame de Maintenon. I am awfully proud of having walked all around the palace all by myself. Think of it, since your stay in Wursburg I have nearly lost my legs; and now, you see, I can walk all right. But what trees in this *doyen des forets!* I shall never forget this lovely forest. Gigantic oaks and Scotch firs, and all of them bearing historical names. Here one sees oaks of Moliere, of Richelieu, of Montesquieu, of Mazarin, of Beranger. Also an oak of Henri III, and two huge seven hundred year old trees *des deux freres Faramonds*. I have simply lived in the forest during whole days. They took me there in a bath-chair or drove me in a landau. It is so lovely here, I did not feel any desire to go to see the Exhibition. . . . "

Then from Jersey:

"Well, my old comrade, I have seized a short little minute in the interval of work, which is simply smothering me after my inertia and laziness at Fontainbleau, and write to you in bed, in spite of being perfectly well. The doctor has put me there for precaution's sake, as lately my knees have been aching a little. I have been brought here by my Mrs. Ida Candler, an American friend, so that I might get some sea air. The house is quite close to the shore, yellow sand begins right from the steps.

On three sides the house is drowsed in trees and flowers. Camelias and roses, as if we were in Italy! . . . A lovely island and so curious. They have a government of their own here, England being acknowledged only nominally, mostly for the sake of the pompousness. They issue their own coins and keep to their own ancient Norman laws. For instance, in case some person wants to catch a thief in his

garden or simply box somebody's ears, he must shout, before he proceeds to do so '*Haro! Oh, Rollo, mon prince et mon seigneur!*' Otherwise he will catch it himself. This "Rollo" is the first of the Norman princes, father of Robert the Devil, a giant and a hero, who took the island from the Druids. The inhabitants speak a funny kind of French; but they are awfully offended if anyone says they are French or English. 'I am a Jerseyman, and no one else' they say . . ."

FOOTNOTES:

1. Copyright, 1895. ([return to text](#))
2. The next number, xiii, will close this series. In January another series of H.P.B.'s letters to Dr. F. Hartmann, will be commenced. ([return to text](#))
3. A Russian equivalent for "a bee in the bonnet." ([return to text](#))
4. Kushma Proatkoff is the author of very amusing parodies of philosophic aphorisms, of which H.P.B. was very fond. ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE BODILY SEATS OF CONSCIOUSNESS: II — *Herbert Coryn*

(Concluded from October number)

(b) But the mind has its own proper mental or intellectual consciousness, wherein it applies itself more particularly to the brain than to the body elsewhere; and connected with the brain are the proper mental and intellectual memories. This is the second of the three possibilities of consciousness, and its activities are registered by its own organ of memory. Try and remember an event or a train of thought you have nearly forgotten and you will shortly perceive by a sense of fulness or even a headache that it is with the brain you are working. It is with the brain that are registered the memories of all things that we did with thought, inasmuch as it was by the brain that we did them. For the intellectual consciousness is the organ of the judgment and comparisons of cognitions of any plane, and without it all cognitions of all planes must remain comparatively unrelated and so not knowledge proper. We walk to a place and remember afterwards whatever we thought about on the journey, not the steps we took. Walking is done by the spinal cord and it alone has the mechanical memory of the method, not the brain, though there is a continual intercommunication between the organic and cerebral memories. The association of thoughts, ideas, pictures and sensations arises from that interchange and relation. The stomach preserves the memory of the method of digestion. That is not in the brain, and like walking, it can go on when thought is otherwise occupied. States of consciousness, whether sensuous or spiritual, to be remembered, must be reawakened where they arose. Though they may involuntarily awake by association, the mind holds the key to their voluntary awakening and comparison. Connected with the brain are the memories of all

things whatsoever to which the mind has ever applied itself, and no others. The mind, entering the sensuous state, gathers up as food some of the leading cognitions of the senses, which thereupon become mental pictures, and carries those it has seized to the brain for registration in memory. I go into a strange room and bend my mind to a study of it. The whole picture of the room, entering my senses, the eyes, the ears, the nose, enters the sensuous consciousness of the mind which for that purpose has voluntarily entered the sensuous state. Thereupon there exists in my mind a complete picture for brain registration. I say I am conscious of the room. Let us particularize a little. Say there is a red mark on one of the walls. A bit of the retina of the eye vibrates in accordance with that mark. This vibration flows back from the eye along the ether in the centre of a nerve thread, and, passing through the brain, reaches a cell on its surface, a cell which thereupon vibrates in response to the red mark. The eye saw the mark first, and afterwards I see it. The brain-cell ceases after awhile to throb to that red vibration. Part of the energy of vibration leaves the cell and passes out into the ether, the astral aura about each of us, and there is thereafter in my astral picture-gallery a picture of the red spot, an astral picture or point of defined energy in space capable of pouring its energy back into that cell and reawakening its vibrations and therefore my memory of the spot. Wherefore the cell, while it remains healthy is the key to that memory. For when it revibrates in connection with the astral picture, and the vibration flows downward as far as the retina, the whole of the primary conditions under which I noted the spot reexist, only somewhat more faintly. So I faintly re-see the spot, and that is the process of memory. If all this occurs too vividly, say when all the brain-cells are throbbing too fast in fever, it may be as vivid as the primary cognition and so become an hallucination. Similarly, in the case of the room, other cells take up and vibrate to other leading features of the walls.

Suppose there was a blue mark alongside of the red. This is taken up by a cell adjacent to that which took up the red. When I turn my attention to other matters, both red and blue cells discharge their vibrations into the ether, wherein exists henceforth a little picture of two spots side by side, one red and one blue. Now suppose I am in another room, and on a wall facing me again exists a red spot which I note. It follows the easy path traced by the first, reaching the same cell, and perhaps finally the first astral picture. This consists of two spots, but when one of them, in this case the red, is thus reinforced, the reinforcing energy will overflow into the other. So there will be recalled to my memory the two spots of the first wall and I shall say that this second wall reminds me, by its partial resemblance, of the first.

So while a brain-cell is vibrating, and at the same time giving off vibratory energy to the ether, such overflowing etheric vibrations from point to point may wake up all kinds of old pictures of the past of which also they form a part; and these, affecting their related cells, will cause the dead and spectral past to spring suddenly into life and color. But the cells of this present brain cannot wake up ether-pictures to which they never give rise, but which, connected with the last birth, were given origin by and keyed to a brain long since dead. Hence, though the complete astral gallery of the last life remains about us, it is now closed to us. The cells of *this* brain have only electric wires to the pictures of *this* life, which they themselves awoke in the astral light. So we may lose certain memories, if the brain-cells that are keyed to them become destroyed by disease. The memories remain as astral pictures, but we have lost the key to that gallery. Of course, if we know how to raise our consciousness above the brain limits, we can reach these pictures and a million others, and to these we may key some brain-cells for the purpose of future ready reference, but this requires training. Similarly we cannot

remember much of the astral picturing of dreams, because in the transit down to the ordinary consciousness we do not key the brain-cells to those astral pictures, or but to few of them. So the brain-cells lie between our ordinary consciousness and the astral world, and whatever of the astral, whether memories of this or another life, or astral visions, reaches us here, must, I think, do so by exciting some brain-cells. In deep sleep we go through and far beyond the astral planes, but as we cannot key the brain-cells to any of these high experiences, we can recover little or nothing of that which survives only as dim feelings or as the tattered shreds of blended dreams. So knowledge and consciousness remain unified.

It seems therefore that the brain must do its work in terms of pictures, and that pure brain thinking is a comparison of these. To recall an emotion, you must reawake to that effect the organ that gave rise to it. You can only remember a toothache by re-arousing the pain in the offending nerve in a shadowy manner, though it would become less and less shadowy by continuance. You can only remember hunger by making the nerves behind the stomach partly reproduce it. Hunger in the stomach sets up such associated pictures as a meal-table in the brain, and in the brain are only those pictures, not the hunger. Hunger in sleep will cause the brain to make a very real picture of a meal. You can recall hunger by reversing the process, creating the alluring picture of a chop, and *this* awakes the "brain of the stomach." You can start at any point of this circuit of consciousness and go forward or backward. When you see a man hunting for food, you could do as the scientists do, elaborately tabulate and measure his actions, and arrive at no result except your tables. But you know that when you yourself go through those acts it is in response to the inner emotion of hunger, and so, going at once beyond the outer observation of science, you grasp the real fact of the

situation, namely, that the man's actions are caused by hunger. You have got from effect back to cause. Apply that very process to all nature, and in different parts of your being you will be able to find or feel the cause at the root of every effect or movement in nature, at once reaching to a wisdom behind and above that outer observation and measuring we call science. But there are parts of nature that cannot find their counterpart in us in any such kamic organ as the stomach; if we would understand these we must use other seats of feeling. We are all in the habit of living too exclusively in the brain, and for that reason are materialistic. The materialist requires that all the divine play of nature should manifest to his brain, which can really only concern itself with the outer pictures; and this on penalty of relegation to the domain of the "Unknowable." The brain cannot reflect the soul of nature, which is not a picture. The heart must do that, and *that* organ of knowledge we do not cultivate and so deny soul in nature. The brain cannot reflect the hunger in our meal-hunting man, and to be logical the materialist should therefore deny his hunger and relegate to the "Unknowable" the cause of his actions. We answer part for part to nature, and each part of us must interpret its own part of nature. The mainspring of nature is in its heart, and to understand *that*, our own heart must be used.

(c) And this brings us to the third of the three planes of human consciousness and its bodily seat, for the body is the temple of many things high as well as low.

Krishna says of himself in the *Bhagavad Gita*: "I am the ego which is seated in the hearts of all beings." *The Secret Doctrine* says "That class of the Fire-Dhyanis which we identify with the Agnishwattas is called in our school the Heart of the Dhyanic body, and it is said to have incarnated in the third race of men and made them perfect. A mysterious relation exists between the essence of this angelic Heart and that of man. And

the Egyptian defunct invokes his heart or the deity of it as necessary to and presiding over his incarnations. It was taught by H.P.B. that "Every cell in the human organism corresponds with a like cell in the divine organism of the manifested universe, which is an intelligent unit in this or that hierarchy of beings." This refers of course to the informing life of each cell, a life that is withdrawn at bodily death, and makes it clear that there is a specific identity of life-essence in each cell of the body and some conscious being in the cosmos, man epitomizing the universe; and further that the informing spiritually conscious life-essence of the human heart is derived from and forever linked with the Agnishwattas who awaken in man self-consciousness, egoism. The pulse of the divine life of the Universe, source of all wisdom, is in the beat of the human heart. H.P.B., speaking of the brain of man, teaches that it is "the direct recipient of the impressions of the heart" which are spiritual, and then shows the macrocosmic parallel thus. "The universe possesses a brain as the organ of its mind. This brain though not objective to our senses is none the less existing. As in man so in the universe. Every organ *therein* is a sentient entity, and every particle of substance" (material or spiritual) "is a cell, a nerve centre, which communicates with the brain-stuff."

But what are the ideations of the heart-consciousness? What is spiritual consciousness, and who is the spiritual man? Is emotion spirituality? There may be base emotion as well as noble. Is intellection spiritual? Intellection may be used for the vilest objects. We must separate off spirituality from its concomitants. Let us get something to the point from the *Bhagavat Gita*, that sacred home for all souls who would find rest and wisdom.

The primeval spirit is that "from which floweth the never ending stream of conditioned existence." It is then the eternal root. "It is even a portion of myself which draweth together the five senses

and the mind in order that it may obtain a body and may leave it again." So it is also the root selves of men, and "devotees who strive to do so see it dwelling in their own hearts." In living nature it is clothed with the qualities and those who would find it must go beneath them, by *feeling*, and find the life. "It is the light of all lights, and it is wisdom itself, the object of wisdom, and that which is to be obtained by wisdom; in the hearts of all it ever presideth." It is with the heart that its presence is to be felt and understood, not the brain. The heart consciousness is one that reflects in feeling the motive essence lying within the outer ways of nature, thus sympathetically knowing them and generating real wisdom.

If now with this as a starting-point we turn to the "First Principles" of Herbert Spencer's philosophy, we shall find something which seems to me not far from some of this. For he shows that behind all forms in the two worlds of matter and of consciousness, deeper than all changes, must be held to lie an absolute reality which on the one side is the substratum of consciousness and on the other that of matter, whilst in it inhere all the laws that rule the changes of both. There is little in Herbert Spencer's First Principles that might not be of value to the student of the *Bhagavad Gita*, and throughout its pages is a solemnity behind the words that places it in harmony with the profound and solemn devotion of the poem. The spiritual man is he who feels in himself that absolute reality of Spencer, the spirit of the *Gita*. Only, when the outer consciousness has suspended its changes, we are taught in the latter that that root-soul can be consciously attained by the man who thus mounts to it by long devotion and meditation. Do we know our own consciousness as one with that supreme source of consciousness? It is one, in the heart, but do we think from there? Yet to think from there, or rather to feel, and to think from the brain, mark apart the

spiritual and the intellectual men.

Why does the boulder crash from hanging cliffs into the foaming sea? Because of the life-bond stretching and drawing through space from earth to crag, a force of the world-life in the heart alike of man and nature. Or with the brain we can say gravitation, acting inverse to the square of the distance. Why does the tree throw up in the spring a million opened leaves to the Sun? By the very same leap and outgoing glow of conscious life that makes the child, shout, the lover woo, the heart of the poet make thought glow into passion and words fall into the cadencies of music, the outgoing of spirit into matter. Every movement of nature has its reflection, its counterpart, its explanation therefore, in the consciousness of the heart of man, and he is spiritual who can read out his own heart into nature and her ways. In the heart glows that one eternal life that is the life of nature; it comes and goes in its degrees, it takes every form and flows through each to all others, lending to each a consciousness. Blessed is the consciousness of man in that it can, as can that of no other form in nature, find and recognize and learn from its source. In a moment can be learned in the heart the purpose of that leaved and flowered splendor of the tree, though words can bear little relation to such a piece of knowledge. If we give many moments through the years, surely consciousness will grow, deepen, understand, and we shall find in our hearts every secret, every purpose, the causality of every stir of the tree's half-blind life; and this would be the recovery of memory of what, ages and ages gone, was our own whole life. Going on through years and lives, we shall learn more and more of the path of the Spirit in all worlds and all consciousnesses. Following this path, there are many even amongst ourselves who have gone far; and yet, since they speak but the words of the poor brain, they do not in writing or speech betray their place in this school of nature. These, when

we meet them, we run the risk of slighting, and may entertain angels unawares. Such men must be known by the heart.

What shall we do to get on this path of complete wisdom? It is an easy path, no violence is needed. How shall we know we are upon it? To any one who with earnestness should ask: Am I on it? the answer would be yes; for the very wish for such a journey is a movement of the heart that *is* that path.

If the self of the tree elected to dwell in the leaves, it would die with oncoming autumn; if it have home in the root, it will watch all springs and all autumns unmoved; so in man the self in the heart throws up the foliage of life, and we elect to dwell in that finite. We hold to the brain and to body, to feeling, to passion, to sensation, to all that is young and strong for a spring but whose autumn is certain. "Those who are wise in spiritual things grieve neither for the death nor the living. I myself never was not, nor thou, nor all the princes of the earth, nor shall we ever hereafter cease to be. As a man throweth away old garments and putteth on new, even so the dweller in the body, having quitted its old mortal frame, entered into others which are new". That is the Gita again, pointing out the easy path, a path that only seems hard when we think of it with the brain. The thoughts of the Gita are spoken to the personal self from the heart of each of us, translated into words that the brain may comprehend; but to the hearing of him who is willing to give prolonged and deep attention, trying to attain the while his highest consciousness, there arises within and about the words the keynote and harmonies of another world, sounded from the heart. It is the same with the stanzas of the *Secret Doctrine*; they must be heard and felt from the heart, since in the heart is that very power which brought forth the worlds and will again withdraw them. The processions of the Universe, like those of the tree, must be *felt*, if we would understand them. They are states of feeling,

reflected in the rhythm of the stanzas. We can note the graded increase of the pulse. First there is stillness and the flow of word-tone is very smooth. "The eternal parent, wrapped in her ever invisible robes had slumbered once again for seven eternities. Time was not, for it lay asleep in the infinite bosom of duration. Alone the one form of existence stretched boundless, infinite, ceaseless, in dreamless sleep, and life pulsated unconscious in universal space throughout that all presence." Through the stages reflected in the second stanzas the pulse of the heart of the world stirs a little, and in the third it moves into real life. "The last vibration of the seventh eternity thrills through infinitude. The vibrations sweeps along, touching with its swift wing the whole universe, and the germ that dwelleth in darkness." And in the fourth arises the great movement and the marshalling of the forces of the "Army of the Voice." It is with the heart, not firstly or finally the brain, that we approach some understanding of that vast drama, just as we understand the falling cliff, the unfolding tree, and the purposes of human life. For thus sympathetically comes our understanding of men. In this work we cease neither to act nor to think. At once we think and act with greater range and scope. We make too little allowance for the possibilities of time. Finding that we can for a moment retire to the heart and let the force there drive the body to its work and duties, we are disappointed because in another instant the currents flash again to the brain and leave us as before, the petty man of this body and habit and name. Think what the years will do if we try only for a little, daily, to seek sanctuary in the heart. The little cares of life will begin to take their proper insignificance, and the small resentments of daily injuries cease to be. Nature will lose to our eyes her dead externality and become the changeful home of that golden flame we have begun to find in our own hearts. Charity for all men will soften our thoughts and words, for we shall see that what they do that we call evil means only that they have not

yet become aware of that light we have begun to seek. If the stone and the tree have it, how much more humanity, its chiefest work and embodiment. To those who will, then, the "Path" in one aspect may be counted easy. Not easy the uttermost surrender to the guidance of the Voice, but the *beginning* that leads to the great end is easy. The voice is conscience, but it is very much more than we are accustomed to intend by that word. At the dawn, when first the darkness began to break, it alone was; thought, life, will, and about it the veils of mother-substance. Down the long ladder of being it gave form to the formless, life to form, consciousness and law to life. Turning upon itself, the life and consciousness became those of man, and in man is still in its purity that unfading flame, the old light, the master-thought of the world. Is the finding of it too difficult? "The man whose devotion has been broken off by death goes to the region of the righteous, and is then born on earth in a pure family, or even among those who are spiritually illuminated. Being thus born again he comes in contact with the knowledge that belonged to him in a former body, and from that time he struggles more diligently towards perfection. . . . Even if only a mere enquirer he reaches beyond the outer words of the scriptures."

The stillness of the lake, the movement of the ocean, the stir of the spring-life in the tree, the passions and hopes and loves that play in mankind, the mediation of the wise, the light of the consciousness of a Master, the thought on which rests the universe, all these things are to be understood by each in the heart, and wisdom gathers from life to life.

The Path

BHAVAGAD-GITA – CHAPTER VII — *William Brehon*

This chapter is devoted to the question of that spiritual discernment by means of which the Supreme Spirit can be discerned in all things, and the absence of which causes a delusion constantly recurring, the producer of sorrow. Krishna says that this sort of knowledge leaves nothing else to be known, but that to attain it the heart — that is, every part of the nature — must be fixed on the Spirit, meditation has to be constant, and the Spirit made the refuge or abiding-place. He then goes on to show that to have attained to such a height is to be a Mahatma.

Among thousands of mortals a single one perhaps strives for perfection, and among those so striving perhaps *a single one knows me as I am.*

This points out the difficulty to be met in any one life, but is not cause for discouragement. It simply makes clear the fact, and thus also punctures the boastful claims of those who would pretend to have reached perfection but do not show it in their acts.

He then gives an eightfold division of his inferior nature, or that part of the Universal One which can be known. This is not the nature of man, and does not oppose the theosophical sevenfold system of human principles. No particular theosophical classification for the divisions of nature has been given out. It would, on the one hand, not be understood, and on the other, disputes leading to no good end would follow. He might as well have stated the twenty-fivefold division held by some other school. This "inferior nature" is only so, relatively. It is the phenomenal and transient which disappears into the superior at the end of a kalpa. It is that part of God, or of the Self, which chose to assume the phenomenal and transient position, but is, in

essence, as great as the superior nature. The inferiority is only relative; as soon as objective material, and subjective spiritual, worlds appear, the first-named has to be denominated inferior to the other, because the spiritual, being the permanent base, it is in that sense superior: but as an absolute whole all is equal.

Included in the inferior nature are all the visible, tangible, invisible and intangible worlds; it is what we call Nature. The invisible and intangible are none the less actual; we know that poisonous gas, though invisible and intangible is fatally actual and potential. Experiment and induction will confer a great deal of knowledge about the inferior nature of God and along that path the science of the modern west is treading, but before knowing the occult, hidden, intangible realms and forces — often called spiritual, but not so in fact — the inner astral senses and powers have to be developed and used. This development is not to be forced, as one would construct a machine for performing some operation, but will come in its own time as all our senses and powers have come. It is true that a good many are trying to force the process, but at last they will discover that human evolution is universal and not particular; one man cannot go very far beyond his race before the time.

Krishna points out to Arjuna a gulf between the inferior and the superior. This latter is the Knower and that which sustains the whole universe, and from it the inferior nature springs. So the materialistic and scientific investigator, the mere alchemist, the man who dives into the occult moved by the desire for gain to himself, will none of them be able to cross the gulf at all, because they do not admit the indwelling Spirit, the Knower.

The superior nature can be known because it is in fact the Knower who resides in every human being who has not degraded himself utterly. But this must be admitted before any approach to

the light can be made. And but few are really willing, and many are unable, to admit the universal character of the Self. They sometimes think they do so by admitting the Self as present, as contiguous, as perhaps part-tenant. This is not the admission, it leaves them still separate from the Self. All the phenomenal appearances, all the different names, and lives, and innumerable beings, are hung suspended, so to say, on the Self. Thus:

And all things hang on me as precious gems upon a string.

A number of preeminently great and precious things and powers are here enumerated and declared to be the Self; while next the very delusions and imperfections of life and man are included. Nothing is left out. This is certainly better than an illogical religion which separates God from the delusions and cruelties of nature, and then invents a third thing, in the person of a devil, who is the source of human wickedness. All this further accentuates the difficulties in the way. Krishna says the illusion is difficult to surmount, but that success can be attained by taking refuge in the Self — for he is the Self. The entire congregation of worshippers who are righteous find favor with the Self, but those who are spiritually wise are on the path that leads to the highest, which is the Self.

This means, as Krishna says, that those who with the eye of spiritual wisdom see that the Self is all, begin to reincarnate with that belief ingrained in them. Hitherto they had come back to earth without that single idea, but possessed of many desires and of ideas which separated them from the Self. Now they begin to return fully at rest in the Self and working out their long-accumulated karma. And at last they become what was mentioned in the opening verses, a Mahatma or great soul.

There is, however, a large number of persons who are in the class which has been deprived of spiritual discernment "through

diversity of desires" or who have not yet had discernment for the same reason. The verse reads as follows:

Those who through diversity of desires are deprived of spiritual wisdom, adopt particular rites subordinated to their own natures, and worship other Gods.

Although these words, like the rest of the colloquy, were spoken in India and to a Hindu, they are thoroughly applicable in the west. Every mode of thought and of living may be called a rite gone over by each one as his conscious or unconscious religion. A man adopts that which is conformable, or subordinate, to his own nature, and being full of desires he worships or follows other Gods than the Supreme Self. In India the words would more particularly mean the worship, which is quite common, of idols among those who are not educated out of idolatry; but they would also mean what is said above. In the west these "other gods" are the various pleasures, objects, aims and modes of life and thought, be they religious or not, which the people adopt. They have not the many thousands of gods of the Hindu pantheon, each one for some particular purpose, but it comes to the same thing. The idol-worshipper bows to the god visible so that he may attain the object of his heart which that god is supposed to control. The western man worships his object and strives after it with all his heart and mind and thus worships something else than the Supreme Imperishable One. The god of one is political advancement, of another — and generally of most — the possession of great wealth. One great god is that of social advancement, the most foolish, hollow and unsatisfactory of all; and with it in America is yoked the god of money, for without wealth there is no social preeminence possible except in those cases where official position confers a temporary glory. The mother often spends sleepless nights inventing means for pushing her daughter into social success; the father lies wakefully

calculating new problems for the production of money. The inheritors of riches bask in the radiance coming from their own gold, while they strive for new ways to make, if possible, another upward step on that road, founded on ashes and ending at the grave, which is called social greatness. And out of all this striving many and various desires spring up so that their multiplicity and diversity completely hide and obstruct all spiritual development and discernment.

But many who are not so carried away by these follies attend to some religion which they have adopted or been educated into. In very few cases, however, is the religion adopted: it is born with the child; it is found with the family and is regularly fastened on as a garment. If in this religion, or cult, there is faith, then the Supreme Self, impartial and charitable, makes the faith strong and constant so that thereby objects are attained. In whatever way the devotee chooses to worship with faith it is the Supreme which, though ignored, brings about the results of faith.

A curious speculation rises here; it may be true, it may be not. It can be noticed that millions of prayers are recited every month addressed to the One God, all through Christendom, asking various favors. Millions were offered for the conversion to a better life of the Prince of Wales — they failed. The rain ceases and prayers are made, but the dryness continues. Candles are lighted and prayers said to stop the earthquake which is destroying the city — the quakings go on until the impulse is ended and the city ruined. It is perfectly impossible to prove answers to prayer in enough cases to convince the thoughtful. Now, the speculative thought is, that perhaps the prayers offered to an unmanifested God have no effect, for to be effectual the Being appealed to must have a separate existence so as to be able to intervene in separated manifested things. Christians do not possess the statistics of results from prayer offered to Gods in

Oriental countries. The usual cases brought forward in the west are such as the orphan asylum, for which nothing is asked except in prayer. But in India they have institutions similarly — but not so lavishly — supported and no asking alone save to the particular patron god. It is a matter of strong, constant faith which carries the thoughts of the prayer into the receptive minds of other people, who are then moved by the subconscious injected thought to answer the request. Now if the prayer is offered to an unseen and unknown God the faith of the person is not firm, whereas perhaps in the case of the idol-worshipper, or of the Roman Catholic addressing himself to the Mother of God — with her image before him, the very presence of the representative is an aid to constancy in faith. All this applies of course to prayers for personal and selfish ends. But that prayer or aspiration which is for spiritual light and wisdom is the highest of all no matter to whom or what addressed. All religions teach that sort of prayer; all others are selfish and spiritually useless.

The Path

LETTERS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY: XIII (1)

In February, 1890, she wrote to Mme. Jelihovsky:

"As you see, I am in Brighton, on the seashore, where I was sent by the doctors, to inhale the oceanic evaporations of the Gulf Stream, to get rid of a complete nervous prostration. I do not feel any pains, but palpitations of the heart, a ringing in the ears — I am nearly deaf — and weakness too, such weakness that I can hardly lift my hand. I am forbidden to write or read or even to think, but must spend whole days in the open air — 'sit by the sea and wait for fair weather.' My doctor got frightened, himself, and frightened all the staff. It is an awfully expensive place; and my money — alas! So my esotericists put their money together immediately and persuaded me to go. And now subsidies fly to me from all points of the compass, for my care; some of them even unsigned, simply to my address. America especially is so generous that, upon my word, I feel ashamed. I admit they 'want' me, as they repeat to me twenty times a day, but still, why should they spend so much? They keep me in luxury as if I were an idol, and don't allow me to protest.

"Two or three Theosophists at a time take turns at my side, coming from London; watching my every movement like Cerberuses. Now one of them is putting his head in with a tearful request to stop writing, but I must let you know that I am still alive. You have been to Brighton, have you? We have splendid spring weather here; the sun is simply Italian, the air is rich; the sea is like a looking-glass, and during whole days I am pushed to and fro on the

esplanade, in an invalid chair. It is lovely. I think I am already strong enough. My brain moves much less, but before I was simply afraid for my head. My doctor said exhaustion of the brain and nervous prostration. 'You have overworked yourself,' he says, 'you must give yourself a rest.' That's it! And with all this work on my hands! 'You have written your full,' he says; 'now drive about.'

"It is easy for him to speak, but all the same I must put the third volume of the *Doctrine* in order, and the fourth — hardly begun yet, too. It is true though that in my present state of weakness my head keeps nodding, I feel drowsy. But, all the same, don't be afraid. There is no more danger. Take consolation from the enclosed newspaper cuttings. You see how the nations magnify your sister! My *Key to Theosophy* will bring many new proselytes, and the *Voice of the Silence*, tiny book though it is, is simply becoming the Theosophists' bible.

"They are grand aphorisms, indeed. I may say so, because you know I did not invent them! I only translated them from Telugu, the oldest South-Indian dialect. There are three treatises, about morals, and the moral principles of the Mongolian and Dravidian mystics. Some of the aphorisms are wonderfully deep and beautiful. Here they have created a perfect *furor*, and I think they would attract attention in Russia, too. Won't you translate them? It will be a fine thing to do."

The sea air did her good, but she did not keep her strength long. Not later than April she was again forbidden to work, abstaining from which was a real torture for her, as with her failing strength the activity of her thought seemed only to increase. She knew she had not much time to lose, and yet she had to spend whole days

in her bed doing absolutely nothing. She wrote to her sister:

"And still I have a consolation: my Theosophists grudge nothing for me in either labor, time or money. Formerly I used to think they could not do without me, having imagined I am a well of wisdom, and so took care of me as of a precious jewel, which has come from far across the seas. And now I see I was mistaken, many of them simply love me as a dear mother of theirs. For instance Mrs. Candler: she is not a very deep Theosophist, and yet she spent the whole of the last summer petting me and now again she writes, asking me to settle beforehand where I feel inclined to spend the season, and wants to take me to all kinds of places, having wrapped me in wadding. But I shall not go anywhere. I want you, Vera, you and your children. Besides, it seems likely that Charlie and Vera will also return from India. They could not stay long in Russia; you are free to do what you like, so instead of the country come to me, all of you. ... Or maybe you would prefer to spend the summer in Stockholm, near the seaside instead of England. Seriously — my Swedish Theosophists are very eager that I should come; one of them offers me a whole villa at my service, with a park and a yacht to sail in the bay. . . . But I think we might as well stay in London. Our new house, the Theosophical headquarters, is right in Regent's Park, near the Zoological Gardens. I am forbidden to work now, but all the same I am awfully busy changing from one end of London to the other. We have taken three separate houses, joined by a garden, for several years; 19 Avenue Road, with building-right. So I am building a lecture hall, to hold 300 people; the hall is to be in Eastern style, made of polished wood, in a brick shell, to keep the cold out; and no ceiling inside, the roof being supported by

beams and made also of polished wood. And one of our Theosophists who is a painter is going to paint allegorical signs and pictures over it. Oh, it will be lovely!"

Mme. Blavatsky was as pleased as a child with all the new arrangements, and yet she had a foreboding she was to die in this new house, and spoke of it to her sister.

Her next letter, dated July, describes the opening of her new lecture hall.

"At one end of the hall they placed a huge arm-chair for me and I sat as if enthroned. I sat there hardly able to keep myself together, so ill was I, my doctor near at hand in case I should faint. The hall is lovely, but about 500 people had assembled, nearly twice as many as it would hold. . . . And imagine my astonishment: in the first row I was shown Mrs. Benson, the wife of the Archbishop of Canterbury, to whom my *Lucifer* addressed a "brotherly message." I am sure you remember it? What are we coming to! The speeches were by Sinnett and others, but, needless to say, no one spoke so well as Annie Besant. Heavens, how this woman speaks! I hope you will hear her yourself. She is now my coeditor of *Lucifer* and the president of the Blavatsky Lodge. Sinnett is to remain the president of the London Lodge alone. As for me, I have become a regular theosophical pope now: I have been unanimously elected president of all the European theosophical branches. But what is the use of all this to me? . . . If I could get some more health — that would be business. But honors and titles are altogether out of my line." (2)

FOOTNOTES:

1. Copyright, 1895. ([return to text](#))

2. This number closes the series of letters by H.P.B. to her family. Next month we will begin a series written to Dr. F. Hartmann, with some notes by him. — Editor. ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE DOCTRINE OF REBIRTH — *Bandusia Wakefield*

ARGUMENTS IN ITS FAVOR BROUGHT TOGETHER AND SOME OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

The term *reincarnation*, as used in Theosophical literature, means the coming again and again of the human soul into successive human bodies of flesh, but *never* into the body of a lower animal.

In evolution the door always closes behind the eternal pilgrim, and, for this informing and indwelling principle, there is no going back. Its progress is like the flow of the blood through the heart. Valves open for the forward flow of the life current in its cycle, but close against a backward flow. Or it is like that of the chambered nautilus that builds itself new mansions as the old ones grow too small, and never goes back; in fact, cannot, for the old house is outgrown. So when once a centre of self-consciousness has been evolved from the Universal Consciousness, and has incarnated in a fit vehicle for its use, the human body, it can never enter the body of a lower animal or function through its organism.

Reembodiment, or change of form, is a method of progress in the involution and evolution of the whole cosmos, but reembodiment of collective life in forms below the human is succeeded by reincarnation of individual thinking entities when the human stage is reached.

We see evidence of design in all nature, a working towards an end, and in this working a cyclic law obtains, alternate periods of subjective and objective life. We see it clearly in the vegetable kingdom. The tree drops its old garment of leaves, the life principle withdraws to the root and dwells in subjectivity till the period of reawakening, when it comes forth again into trunk and

branch and takes on a new body of leaves. Not only the leaves, but branch and stalk of other plants, die, leaving only root or bulb or seed to hold the latent life and ideal plan of the plant. But the life and the plan are there, however unmanifested, and nature never makes a mistake in reembodying the one in accordance with the other. In this kingdom a physical vehicle is not dispensed with during subjective periods, but is reduced to small limits.

Reembodiment is plainly discernible in the insect world, where the same old material is worked over into a new and entirely different body but always with the intervening subjective states. We have a familiar illustration of this in the caterpillar, chrysalis, and butterfly. Higher in the scale, transformations in the same body are limited to organs, the informing principle is more developed, and it has no longer a physical body during subjective states save in hibernation, sleep and trance.

As reembodiment, with alternate periods of activity and rest, obtains in the lower kingdoms, analogy would lead us to infer the same for the higher. If it is worth while to conserve the informing principle of a plant with its specific character and reembody it, surely the soul of man deserves as much.

The immortality of the human soul demands reembodiment of some kind, somewhere, and the fittest body at present is the human organism, which required so many million years for its building, and the fittest place is earth so long as earth can furnish needed experience. If the life of the soul is without an end it must also be without a beginning, for that which has one end must have two. A beginning with the body implies an end with the body. That the soul is not the product of the body and does not necessarily perish with it is evident from its superiority over the body, as no stream can rise higher than its source.

The aim we see about us in nature is surely not set aside when we

come to man, and since the soul of man incarnates, it must incarnate for a purpose, and that purpose must be the development of all the latent potentialities within it through experience by its contact with matter on the physical plane. This development includes the conquest of matter and the training of the animal man till it becomes a fit instrument for the divine, and implies also the helping of other souls in their development. This object we plainly see cannot be accomplished in one earth life, even the longest; and how many quit the body at birth or in early childhood! If these can complete their development under other conditions than those afforded on the physical plane, then were it never necessary to incarnate at all and incarnation is a farce. But incarnation being necessary, reincarnation must be so also. To acquire wisdom there must be opportunity for all experience, and to learn the unsatisfying nature of material life it must be tested in every phase. Many, many lives on earth are necessary for this; and the desire which first brought the soul into physical life will bring it again and again until physical life has nothing more to offer that can draw the soul.

The theory of repeated earth-lives in which a reincarnating ego reaps what it has sown and sows what it will reap is the only one consistent with the idea of justice. The great differences in mental and moral capacities of different individuals, as well as in their circumstances, can be just on no other ground than that each individual has made his own capacities and conditions. What justice is there in creating new souls without any wish, will or action on their part for all new-born bodies and making these souls with widely different tendencies and capacities, placing some, often weak ones, in the most wretched and vicious surroundings where only strong souls could be virtuous, and others in beautiful, good and happy homes with every incentive to virtue, and then holding all alike responsible for the outcome

of their lives? There is no justice in it. Only on the theory that each soul makes for itself its character and conditions is there any justice in the existing state of things. But this theory demands preexistence of the soul and reincarnation.

Neither is there any justice in the theory that some race in the future will reap the grand results of the experience of preceding races, unless that race be composed of the same egos as the preceding or has rendered or will render them like benefits.

The wide divergences in mental and moral characteristics in the same family can be accounted for only on the theory of a persistent ego that incarnates again and again gathering up, assimilating and carrying on the results of all its experiences. Heredity will not account for these differences, for even in the case of twins where not only the ancestry but the prenatal conditions are the same these wide mental and moral divergencies may be seen in connection with great physical similarity. Heredity accounts for the physical likeness and is a co-worker with reincarnation by affording the ego a suitable instrument for its purposes, an instrument which the ego has earned by its past.

Reincarnation and not heredity accounts for genius and infant precocity. Often the genius is the only one in his family possessing his striking qualities in any marked degree. He neither inherited them from ancestors nor transmitted them to posterity, but must have acquired them by his own exertions in the past, and still carries them with him. To call these qualities the unearned gift of a Creator is but to ascribe partiality and injustice to that Creator.

Infant precocity shows remembrance of knowledge acquired in the past. This is true not only of a Mozart, who composed a most difficult concerto at the age of four years, but of less noted persons who at a very early age were able to read without having

been taught in the present life.

Some persons comprehend and accept with great readiness Theosophical teachings on first presentation, because these are not new to their egos, while others of equal intellect comprehend and accept with difficulty or not at all. We readily accept those new ideas which are only an extension of our previous ideas.

Great spiritual lights, such as Jesus and Buddha, are no products of heredity with the added acquirements of one life only; but the suffering through which those souls were perfected and made one with the divine spirit was the suffering of many lives.

Reincarnation best accounts for the decay of highly-civilized races and nations and the rise of new ones. The egos that brought on the high civilization of the old race quit it for the new, and then less and less advanced egos incarnate in the old, thus bringing on its decay. By the law of progress through heredity the race ought to go on to greater things instead of going back. Through reincarnation there is real and continued progress. The going-back is only apparent, for all the egos go forward, and only the race made use of as an instrument by successively less and less advanced egos goes back. The instrument, but not the user, wears out.

Only the theory of reincarnation gives a satisfactory explanation of the extinction of races. All the egos in the present cycle of development, having progressed beyond the need of anything that a certain race can furnish, will no longer incarnate in it, but will seek a more advanced race, so births cease in the old race and it becomes extinct.

The reappearance of certain types of civilization after intervals of 1500 years goes to sustain the doctrine of reincarnation of the same ego after that interval in a subjective state. As an example of

this note the reappearance of the conquering, colonizing and empire-loving character of the Romans of the Augustan period in the English of the Elizabethan age. See also at the present time in the currents of mystic, religious and philosophical thought a reappearance of the mystic thought, Gnosticism and Neo-Platonism of the fourth century.

The instinctive feelings of attraction and repulsion felt on first meeting people and without any apparent reason, may be due to old relations existing in former lives and not yet severed on the invisible planes. Indeed they are sometimes hard to account for on any other hypothesis.

Peculiar emotions connected with certain things and events point to some unknown former relationship to them.

Dreams often indicate a familiarity with persons and things not known in this life.

Intuitions of former lives enrich the page of the poet. Wordsworth says:

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar.

The same thought in varying phrase is expressed by many other inspired poets.

There are many people who have distinct remembrance of former lives, and that all do not remember is no proof of previous non-existence; for we do not remember the first years of our infancy nor many of the events of our later life, yet we do not on that account consider ourselves to have been non-existent. The reason so many of us do not remember is because the new brain

we use in the present body is not sufficiently sensitive to the fine vibrations of the Higher Ego to be impressed with its knowledge of the past. But when the lower nature has been sufficiently trained and purified, then each personality will be able to receive the knowledge of the past and be strong enough to bear it. But at the present stage of development, it is a blessing to most of us that we are not burdened with a memory of the details of the past, and many would be glad to forget portions of the present life could the lesson be retained without the remembrance of the mistakes that taught them. This is just what we have from our past lives.

The objection to reincarnation is sometimes offered that it is unjust to suffer for an unremembered past, or for the deeds of another personality. Those who make this objection, however, never think of injustice in reaping the happy rewards of an unremembered past, or of the deeds of another personality. They fail also to consider how many causes of suffering sown in this life are forgotten before the suffering comes, yet they do not for that reason think the suffering unjust. Through all lives the ego is the same; and each personality, though a new one, is an aggregation of qualities from the past. So the suffering is just.

Some people object to reincarnation because, as they say, they do not want to come back, they have had enough of the troubles of earth and are tired of earth-life, or they do not wish to lose their individuality or be separated from their friends or fail to recognize them. All these objections are based on the likes and dislikes of the objectors, as if these were sufficient to change facts and laws of nature. These people lose sight of the common fact in their every-day experience that there not liking things does not prevent their being. But granting the potency of likes and dislikes, one may be weary of earth-life under certain conditions and yet be eager to try it under others. In fact, it is a common thing to hear people say, "Oh, if I could only live my life over again with

the knowledge I now have, how differently I would act!" This chance they sigh for they will have.

As for losing the individuality, this is a mistake. The individuality, which includes all that is worth saving, is not lost. It is only the undesirable portion of the being that is broken up. The new personality is but a new putting together of old material which has to be worked over till something better is made of it, or till it is so refined and purified that it is worthy to be preserved.

The objection regarding the failure to recognize friends is based on externals. That these friends must continue to have the same outward appearance is entirely unreasonable, as they do not do this even through one short earth-life. Applied to the soul-plane, this objection would preclude all mental and spiritual growth. In regard to the separation of friends, souls that are truly bound together by pure unselfish love are not separated by either birth or death of a body. Attachments hold over from one life to another and bring the same individuals together in successive incarnations.

Another objection put forward against reincarnation is that by presenting the opportunities of future lives it will make people careless regarding the present, that they will follow evil courses, indulging in whatever gratifies the lower nature. This might be so if there were no retribution, but every evil thought and deed carries in itself the seed of pain. The law of Karma is inseparably linked to that of reincarnation, and there is no escaping the consequences of one's acts. This knowledge, instead of making people more inclined to lead evil lives, will have just the opposite effect.

The appearance of vicious children in virtuous families and virtuous children in vicious families is offered as an objection to the theory that the soul is drawn to reincarnate in a family having

similar characteristics to his own. Other factors than this, however, enter into the account. The interlinking of past Karma may be such as to bring together in the same family very different characters. Sometimes strong souls that have a mission to help humanity may be born into low conditions from choice, for by such birth they are best enabled to help all. They are too strong and pure to be overpowered by the conditions and so rise above them. But by their lowly birth and passing up through all ranks they are enabled to come into sympathetic touch with all.

Reincarnation accounts for the divergences in families while heredity does not, although it is claimed that they may be accounted for by reversion. Yet the theory of reversion is disproved by the appearance of a single genius in an obscure family; for had any of his like appeared before in that family it would not have been obscure.

It is claimed that reincarnation sets aside heredity, or that heredity invalidates reincarnation, neither of which is true; for reincarnation works with heredity, the latter affording the suitable physical environment for the returning ego.

Increase of population is put forward as an objection to reincarnation, yet it is not positively known that the population of the earth increases, there being no statistics of population in many parts of it; and even if the population should increase there are so many more egos out of incarnation than in it that the increase could easily be accounted for without affecting the theory of reincarnation.

Reincarnation is believed in by the majority of the human race. It is the belief of Brahmans, Buddhists, Zoroastrians, Sufi Mohammedans and many of the tribes of North and South America, among them the Mayas. It is held by some Jews and Christians and by most of the members of the Theosophical

Society of whatever religion. As a theory reincarnation is becoming less strange and unreasonable to the western mind, and it certainly best accounts for known existing facts.

This doctrine is very clearly taught in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, which is accepted by both Brahmans and Buddhists, and also in the Upanishads. It belongs to the ancient religious teachings of the Egyptians. The "Song of Resurrection" by Isis is a song of rebirth. It is taught in the *Talmud*, the *Zohar* and *Kether Malkuth*, and in the *Old* and *New Testaments*. Micah prophecies the coming again of one whose "going-forth" had been from everlasting (v. 2).

Jesus asked his disciples "Whom do men say that I am?" And they answered, "Some say thou art John the Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremias or one of the prophets" (*Matthew*, xvi, 13). So it was thought that any of these might come again. And the same belief on the part of his own chosen disciples is implied by the question, "Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (*John*, ix, 2), which implies the possibility of his sinning before birth. And Jesus said nothing against such a belief in either case although he says of himself, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth" (*John*, xviii, 37). On the contrary he declares that, "Before Abraham was, I am" (*John*, viii), and that John the Baptist was Elias come again (*Matthew*, xi, 14). In *Revelation* (iii, 12,) is the statement, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the house of my God, and he shall go no more out," which implies that he had been out before and would go out again unless he overcame. In *John* (iii, 13) is the passage, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven," which teaches preexistence unless heaven has been and is devoid of men. There are numerous other passages supporting the teaching of reincarnation to be found in the Christian Bible.

A general knowledge in the western world of the doctrines of karma and reincarnation would be a very beneficial influence. It would greatly increase the sense of moral responsibility and consequently the moral character of the people. It would change the attitude of the rich and the poor towards each other for the better. The rich would feel themselves accountable for making the best use of their wealth, would know that if they practised injustice and unkindness in their treatment of the poor and had no sympathy for their suffering, that they might expect sometime to be poor themselves and suffer like treatment to learn a needed lesson. So even from a selfish point of view there would be a strong incentive to brotherly action. A thorough assimilation of these doctrines would strike deeper root than this and would really make people less selfish. On the part of the poor these teachings would enable them to see that they themselves were the real makers of their hard lot, that they had earned it by their own past or that they had chosen it for their own soul growth.

This knowledge would help them to bear with patience what would otherwise be revolted against as great injustice, and it would take away their hate and envy of the rich, while at the same time the rich would be more kind to them, so that a general brotherly feeling would arise. A wholesome teaching is this:

Who toiled a slave may come anew a prince,
For gentle worthiness and merit won;
Who ruled a king may wander earth in rags
For things done and undone.

BHAGAVAD-GITA – CHAPTER VII — *William Brehon*

Although the strength of the devotee's devotion and faith for any God or object is due entirely to the Supreme Self, no matter if the faith be foolish and the God false, yet the reward obtained is said to be temporary, transitory, sure to come to an end. But unlike Western religious systems this is declared to be a matter of law instead of being determined by sentiment or arbitrarily. The sentences in which I find this are as follows:

But the reward of such short-sighted man is temporary.

Those who worship the Gods go to the Gods, and those who worship me come to me.

Man, made of thought, occupant only of many bodies from time to time, is eternally thinking. His chains are through thought, his release due to nothing else. His mind is immediately tinted or altered by whatever object it is directed to. By this means the soul is enmeshed in the same thought or series of thoughts as is the mind. If the object be anything that is distinct from the Supreme Self then the mind is at once turned into that, becomes that, is tinted like that. This is one of the natural capacities of the mind. It is naturally clear and uncolored, as we would see if we were able to find one that had not gone through too many experiences. It is moveable and quick, having a disposition to bound from one point to another. Several words would describe it. Chameleon-like it changes color, sponge like it absorbs that to which is applied, sieve-like it at once loses its former color and shape the moment a different object is taken up. Thus, full of joy from an appropriate cause, it may suddenly become gloomy or morose upon the approach of that which is sorrowful or gloomy. We can therefore say it becomes that to which it is devoted.

Now "the Gods" here represent not only the idols of idol-worshippers, but all the objects and desires people run after, for the idols are but the representatives of the desired object. But all these Gods are transitory. If we admit the existence of Indra or any other God, even he is impermanent. Elsewhere it is said that all the Gods are subject to the law of death and rebirth — at the time of the great dissolution they disappear. The vain things which men fix their minds on and run after are of the most illusory and transitory character. So whether it be the imaginary Gods or the desires and objects the mind is fixed on, it — that is, those who thus act — has only a temporary reward because the object taken is in itself temporary. This is law and not sentiment.

Pushing into details a little further it is said that after death the person, compelled thereto by the thoughts of life, becomes fixed in this, that or the other object or state. That is why the intermediate condition of kama-loka is a necessity. In that state they become what they thought. They were bigots and tortured others: those thoughts give them torture. Internal fires consume them until they are purified. The varieties of their different conditions and appearances are as vast in number as are all the immense varieties of thoughts. I could not describe them.

But those who worship or believe in the Self as all-in-all, not separate from any, supreme, the container, the whole, go to It, and, becoming It, know all because of its knowledge, and cease to be subject to change because It is changeless. This also is law, and not sentiment.

The chapter concludes by showing how the ignorant who believe in a Supreme Being with a form, fall into error and darkness at the time of their birth because of the hold which former life-recollections have upon the mind. This includes the power of the Skandhas or aggregates of sensations and desires accumulated in

prior lives. At birth these, being a natural part of us, rush to us and we to them, so that a new union is made for another lifetime. In the other life, not having viewed the Self as all and in all, and having worshipped many Gods, the sensations of liking and disliking are so strong that the darkness of rebirth is irresistible. But the wise man died out of his former life with a full knowledge of the Self at the hour of death, and thus prevented the imprinting upon his nature of a set of sensations and desires that would otherwise, upon reincarnation, lead him into error. This is the chapter on Unity, teaching that the Self is all, or if you like the word better, God: that God is all and not outside of nature, and that we must recognize this great unity of all things and beings in the Self. It and the next chapter are on the same subject and are only divided by a question put to Arjuna.

The Path

GENERAL PERTINENT OBSERVATIONS — *The Observer*

Quite a number of Theosophists — I mean members of the Society — have been talking to me of what a shame it is that the great daily newspapers give so much space to such events as a prize fight or the marriage of an American millionaire's daughter to an English duke, and will not put in matter about Theosophy. It is quite true that our doings do not occupy much space in the papers, but what are they for? They were not established for our propaganda and we should be satisfied with what they do give us. But it has been found that in outlying states and places, where there is not so much going on, the newspapers are willing to give a great deal of attention to us. I understand that the whole of the *Ocean of Theosophy* appeared in a newspaper of Fort Wayne, Indiana, before it was published in book-form. The great papers of the principal cities cannot afford to do this because their mass of readers is enormous and varied. The intelligent Theosophist will at once see that it would be hopeless to expect thousands of people who do not care for Theosophy to be daily interested in accounts of it. Then the city newspaper represents the selfish, hurried, superficial, money-grabbing majority, just as much as it does the others in minority. And if we just think for a moment — those of us who have kept up with our history — of the great difference between now and 1875 as to our treatment by newspapers, we must in fact be very thankful.

American members ought to know how difficult is the case of their European brothers. Here we have greater freedom of thought, hence quicker acceptance, and very little persecution. Over there it is not so. Such a thing could hardly occur there as did here the other day. The ministers in a town rose up against our lecturer and tried to prevent his speaking by inducing the

landlord to cancel the contract for the hall. Result: many citizens otherwise uninterested, intervened and obtained for us another hall. This could hardly take place, say in a similar small town in England, where the clergymen's *fiat* would be final. The people over there have not yet wholly escaped from the physical domination of the church. If they had lately so escaped they would themselves be yet too bigoted to give us the hearing or the freedom we get here.

Then, too, look at their newspapers! They either ignore the whole matter or now and then blurt out that Theosophy has been killed dead as a door-nail, never to rise again. All this tends to discourage. But members know Theosophy is not dead. We should not forget the plight of our fellows, and they can gain encouragement from our activity and the freedom we have.

A very significant fact is this: The Roman Catholics ignore Theosophy and all our doings. Of course now and then in their own church newspapers — which we never read — they may use us badly, but otherwise they are silent. We may go to a town and be well advertised, the Episcopalians and the Methodists will howl about us, but the Roman Catholics say nothing. This is in accord with the policy of killing a thing by ignoring it. We are therefore pleased, or ought to be, for the abuse the others heap upon us. Why should members groan when now and then we are loudly and unjustifiably abused? Why, that is a good advertisement, and surely we want the world to know of Theosophy.

Hypnotism is once more suggested as a means for doing away with all crime, and the New York *Herald* in November printed an article thereon. In this the writer proposes to hypnotize crime out of all criminals, and hopes soon to see asylums for the purpose. The case of a kleptomaniacal boy is cited who, the writer said,

had been changed into an honest boy, and now has a position of great trust.

This horrible notion, as it seems to me, will of course have believers and helpers. People, like physicians, are empirical and prone to cure the outer sore rather than the poor blood that caused it. But the case of the boy proves nothing because it is not known how long the effect of suggestion will last, nor whether it may not suddenly break down and leave the person again a criminal. Then the people who propose this method do not know Theosophy. They do not see the seeds of crime in the mind, and do not admit that it might be worse to prevent the criminal now for present benefit than to let him work his criminal nature out. For if his criminal thought is now simply stopped for a while it may come out worse in the next life. It would seem as if the story in the *Bible* of the man having his devils come back worse than before might illustrate this. But even the proposal made so seriously points out how generally theosophical and occult ideas have affected the American public.

Proposals looking to the formation of retreats — some irreverent people would call them monasteries or nunneries — for Theosophists, seem to be unwise. There are not enough members in the entire movement to do its work properly. Why then withdraw them from activity? The duty of every member now is a business duty as well as one purely philosophical, psychical and ethical. Collections of members coming together in one house should be, at this period of our progress, for better and wider work. And that work should be now and not in the future. Hence getting up such centres, in debt, and sure to have to struggle through a long period, is a mistake.

LETTERS OF H.P.B. TO DR. HARTMANN: I

1885 TO 1886

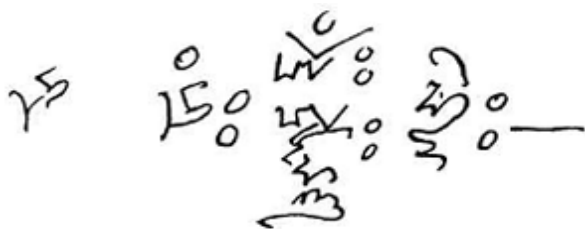
I

OSTENDE, DECEMBER 5

My dear Doctor: (1) — You must really forgive me for my seeming neglect of you, my old friend. I give you my word of honor, I am worried to death with work. Whenever I sit to write a letter all my ideas are scattered, and I cannot go on with the *Secret Doctrine* that day. But your letter (the last) is so interesting that I must answer it as asked. You will do an excellent thing to send to the *Theosophist* this experiment of yours. It has an enormous importance in view of Hodgson's lies and charges, and I am happy you got such an independent corroboration; astral light, at any rate, cannot lie for my benefit. (2)

I will only speak of number 4, as the correctness about the other three letters you know yourself. 1. This looks like the private temple of the Teschu Lama, near Tchigadze — made of the "Madras cement"-like material; it does shine like marble and is called the snowy "Shakang" (temple) — as far as I remember. It has no "sun or cross" on the top, but a kind of algiorna dagoba, triangular, on three pillars, with a dragon of gold and a globe. But the dragon has a swastika on it and this may have appeared a "cross." I don't remember any "gravel walk" — nor is there one, but it stands on an elevation (artificial) and a stone path leading to it, and it has steps — how many I do not remember (I was never allowed inside); saw from the outside, and the interior was described to me. The floors of nearly all Buddha's (Songyas) temples are made of a yellow polished stone, found in those

mountains of Oural and in northern Tibet toward Russian territory. I do not know the name, but it looks like yellow marble. The "gentleman" in white may be Master, and the "bald-headed" gentleman I take to be some old "shaven-headed" priest. The cloak is black or very dark generally — (I brought one to Olcott from Darjeeling), but where the silver buckles and knee-breeches come from I am at a loss. (3) They wear, as you know, long boots — up high on the calves, made of felt and embroidered often with silver — like that devil of a Babajee had. Perhaps it is a freak of astral vision mixed with a flash of memory (by association of ideas) about some picture she saw previously. In those temples there are always movable "pictures," on which various geometrical and mathematical problems are placed for the disciples who study astrology and symbolism. The "vase" must be one of many Chinese queer vases about in temples, for various objects. In the corners of the temples there are numerous statues of various deities (Dhyanis). The roofs are always (almost always) supported by rows of wooden pillars dividing the roof into three parallelograms, and the mirror "Melong" of burnished steel (round like the sun) is often placed on the top of the Kiosque on the roof. I myself took it once for the sun. Also on the cupolas of the [dagoba] there is sometimes a graduated pinnacle, and over it a disk of gold placed vertically, and a pear-shaped point and often a crescent supporting a globe and the svastica upon it.



Ask her whether it is this she saw, Om tram ah hri hum, which figures are roughly drawn sometimes on the Melong "mirrors" — (a disk of brass) against evil spirits — for the mob. Or perhaps

what she saw was a row of slips (little cubes) on which such things are seen:



If so, then I will know what she saw. "Pine woods" all round such temples, the latter built expressly where there are such woods, and wild prickly pear, and trees with Chinese fruit on that the priests use for making inks. A lake is there, surely, and mountains plenty — if where Master is; if near Tchigadze — only little hillocks. The statues of Meilha Gualpo, the androgyne Lord of the Salamanders or the Genii of Air, look like this "sphinx;" but her lower body is lost in clouds, not fish, and she is not beautiful, only symbolical. Fisherwomen do use soles alone, like the sandals, and they all wear fur caps. That's all; will this do? But do write it out.

Yours ever,

H. P. B.

II

WURZBURG, DECEMBER (SOMETHING), 1885

My dear Conspirator: (4) — Glad to receive from your letter such an emanation of true holiness. I too wanted to write to you; tried several times and — failed. Now I can. The dear Countess Wachtmeister is with me, and copies for me, and does what she can in helping, and the first five minutes I have of freedom I utilize them by answering your letter. Now, as you know, I also am occupied with my book. It took possession of me (the epidemic of writing) and crept on "with the silent influence of the itch," as Olcott elegantly expresses it — until it reached the fingers of my

right hand, got possession of my brain — carried me off completely into the region of the occult. (5) I have written in a fortnight more than 200 pages (of the *Isis* shape and size). I write day and night, and now feel sure that my *Secret Doctrine* shall be finished this — no, not *this* — year, but the next. I have refused your help, I have refused Sinnett's help and that of everyone else. I did not feel like writing — now I do. I am permitted to give out for each chapter a page out of the Book of Dzyan — the oldest document in the world, of that I am sure — and to comment upon and explain its symbology. I think really it shall be worth something, and hardly here and there a few lines of dry facts from *Isis*. It is a completely new work.

My "satellite," (6) I do not need him. He is plunged to his neck in the fascinations of Elberfeld, and is flirting in the regular style with the Gebhardt family. They are dear people and are very kind to him. The "darling Mrs. Oakley" has shown herself a brick — unless done to attract attention and as a *coup d'etat* in the bonnet business. But I shall not slander on mere speculation; I do think she has acted courageously and honorably; I send you the *Pall Mall* to read and to return if you please; take care of the paper.

Thanks for photo. Shall I send a like one to your "darling"? She is mad with me however. Had a letter from Rodha; she swears she never said to "Darling" or the he Darling either, that I had "abused them to the Hindus."

To have never existed, good friend, is assuredly better. But once we do exist we must not do as the Servian soldiers did before the invincible Bulgarians or our bad Karma, we must not desert the post of honor entrusted to us. A room may be always had at Wurzburg; but shall you find yourself contented for a long time with it? Now the Countess is with me, and I could not offer you anything like a bed, since we two occupy the bedroom; but even if

you were here, do you think you would not go fidgeting again over your fate? Ah, do keep quiet and wait — and try to *feel* once in your life — and then do not come at night, as you did two nights ago, to frighten the Countess out of her wits. Now you did materialize very neatly this time, you did. (7) Quite so.

Yours in the great fear of the year 1886 — nasty number.
H. P. B.

(*To be continued*)

FOOTNOTES:

1. On the request of Mr. and Mrs. Johnston and others I have permitted these private letters from H. P. Blavatsky to myself to be published in the PATH, as they contain some things of general interest. — Dr. F. Hartmann ([return to text](#))
2. This refers to the clairvoyant (psychometric) examination of an "occult letter," which was printed, together with the picture, in the *Theosophist* of 1886. The psychometer was a German peasant woman, entirely uninformed in regard to such things; but gave as it appears a correct description of a Buddhist temple in Tibet, with its surroundings and the inscriptions within; also of the lamas or priests and of the Master, and also of some people working in the neighborhood of the temple. The picture could not have been read from my own mind, as I have never seen such a temple, or if I have been there in the spirit, that visit has left no trace in my personal memory. — H. ([return to text](#))
3. The explanation of seeing the gentleman in knee-breeches may be that I was just then very much occupied with the spirit of the well-known occultist, Carl von Eckertshausen. — H. ([return to text](#))
4. H.P.B. used to call me in fun her "conspirator" or "confederate"

because the stupidity of certain persons went so far as to accuse me of having entered into a league with her for the purpose of cheating myself. — H. ([return to text](#))

5. This was in answer to a letter in which I complained of the irresistible impulse that caused me to write books, very much against my inclination, as I would have preferred to devote more time to "self-development." — H. ([return to text](#))

6. Babajee. ([return to text](#))

7. I know nothing about it. — H. ([return to text](#))

The Path

YUGAS — A. J. Vosburgh

In reading Theosophical literature one is often confronted by the words Mahayuga, Kaliyuga, Manvantara, Kalpa, etc. No doubt all of the older members of the T.S. are perfectly familiar with the words and their meaning, but it may be of help to recent members, or those who have not time or opportunity to dig down into ancient eastern chronology, to see the principal points clearly set forth.

It has been taught that there was no true understanding of the stellar or solar system until the time of Copernicus, some four hundred years ago, but to any student it is evident he built his system upon that of the Pythagorean school of two thousand years before. The Chinese have some astronomical annals, which they claim go back about 3000 years B.C.; they do not record much but comets and eclipses, and many of their predictions of the latter cannot be verified by modern calculations.

The Egyptians taught astronomy to the Greeks, and they no doubt had very close knowledge of the solar system; their year was of 365 days, with methods of correcting. Although they have left us no observations, the north and south position of the Pyramids has led to a supposition that the Egyptians used them for astronomical purposes. The Zodiac of Denderah is one of their relics, and it is worth noting that upon it the equinoctial points are in the sign of Leo. If it was constructed at that time, it would carry us back nearly 10,000 years.

The Chaldeans, according to Diodorus, had long observed the motion of the heavenly bodies, as well as eclipses; they had the metonic period, or cycle of 19 years, also three other astronomical cycles, the Saros of 3600 years, the Neros 600 and the Sosos of 60

years. Simplicius and Porphyry relate that a series of eclipses, preserved at Babylon, were transmitted by Alexander to Aristotle and contained the observations of 1903 years preceding the conquest of Babylon by the Macedonians, and although crude, they were sufficiently correct to enable Halley to discover the acceleration of the Moon's mean motion. There have also been discovered in the ruins of Palenque, among the Toltecs and Aztecs, planispheres, on one of which were inscribed symbolical figures corresponding nearly to the signs on the Chinese planispheres, and (Humbolt) "that the name of the first day is also the name of *Water*, and that the symbol consists of undulating lines similar to that of Aquarius in the Egyptian and Greek Zodiacs.

The Hindus have possessed astronomical knowledge for thousands of years, and their calculations today are found to be singularly correct; the question in regard to them is, whether an astronomical system of advanced character, which certainly was found among them, is as old as they assert it to be. It is claimed that they may have obtained their knowledge from the Arabians or Egyptians; but, on the other hand, the remarkable correctness of their tables, and the known character of the people in question, whose advances in mathematics cannot be doubted, and whose habits have throughout recorded history induced them to repel all connection with foreigners, are urged in favor of the originality of their system. We have their calendars annexed to the Vedas, which date back according to Colebrooke 1400 years B.C. They include a solar year of 365 days and are so composed as to determine it correctly. The Zodiac of Vereapettah and that described by Sripeti in the Sanskrit, are believed to be older than Denderah. (Sir William Jones.)

The "Bones of Napier," an ingenious instrument used in making long calculations, before the discovery of logarithms, was used in

a slightly different form by the Hindus long before.

As with nations of the present, the Hindus referred to two principal meridians, Lanca and Ramissuram. Lanca is supposed to have been an island (no longer existing) under the equator, somewhat southwest of the island of Ceylon. It was one of the four cities, Yavacoti, Lanca, Bornacoti, and Siddhapuri, which are supposed to lie under the equator 90 deg. distant from each other. Ramissuram is a small island situated between Ceylon and the continent of India at the entrance of Palks passage in the straits of Manaar. It is famous for its ancient Pagoda and Observatory. The meridian of Lanca is supposed to run through two other towns on the continent of India, Sanahita-saras and Avanti, now Oogein. The Shastras state that "in the north on the same meridian as Lanca there are two other cities, Avanti-Rohitaca (the mountain) and Sannihita-saras, which in *former times* were the seats of colleges and observatories." I mention these facts simply to show the possession by the Hindus from remote times of an extensive knowledge of mathematics and astronomy. We now come to their division of time.

The Tamil solar year is sidereal, *i.e.*, the space of time during which the Sun departing from a star returns to it again. Their Zodiac is divided into 12 signs, or mansions, Mesha, Vrisha, Midhuna, *et al*, corresponding to our Aries, Taurus, Gemini, etc. Each solar month contains as many days and parts of days as the sun stays in each sign. They divide the year into six seasons, called Ritu, in the Sanskrit, of two months each, the first of which, Chaitram or Vaisacha, corresponds to our April. The Saran or natural day is the time included between two consecutive sun risings. The names of the days are as follows:

1. Sunday	Ravi	Sun
2. Monday	Soma	Moon

3. Tuesday	Mangala	Mars
4. Wednesday	Bhuda	Mercury
5. Thursday	Guru	Jupiter — also Teacher's day.
6. Friday	Sucra	Venus
7. Saturday	Sani	Saturn.

They also divided time into a number of cycles or yugas, the meaning of which has been interpreted in various ways; the most accepted holds that the word yug, or yuga, properly means the conjunction or opposition of one or more planets. It is generally used however to express long periods of years at the expiration of which certain phenomena occur. It is probably more particularly referred to the revolution of Jupiter, one of whose years is about twelve of ours, five revolutions or sixty years being equal to a Vrihaspati chakra or cycle (literally a wheel) of Jupiter. In this Vrihaspati cycle there are contained five other cycles of twelve years each. The names of these five cycles or yugas are:

1. Samvatsara	Presided over by	Agni
2. Parivatsara	"	Area
3. Iduratsara	"	Chandra
4. Anuvatsara	"	Brahma
5. Udravatsara	"	Siva

The use of these yugs is prehistoric, at least to outsiders. In each Mahayug, reckoning from the past, we have four lesser yugs, as follows:

1. Satya yug	or Golden age	1,728,000 years
2. Treta yug	or Silver age	1,296,000 years
3. Dvapara yug	or Brazen age	864,000 years
4. Kali yug	or Iron age	432,000 years

So that a Mahayug consists of 4,320,000 years.

The sun performs 4,320,000 Bag-hanas, or sidereal revolutions, in a Mahayug.

There are also the Ayanas, or librations of equinoctial points, 600 in a Mahayug.

A Kalpa consists of 1000 Mahayugs, or 4,320,000,000 years, which Kalpa is also called a "Day of Brahma" (*S.D.* ii, 308). In *making up* the Kalpa we have, first, a twilight, or Sandhya, equal to the Satya yug of 1,728,000 years; second, fourteen Manvantaras of 308,448,000 years *each*, all of which together make up the Kalpa. Each Manvantara is presided over by a patriarch, or Manu, the names of which I omit. *We are* living in the seventh Manvantara (presided over by the patriarch Vaivas-vata), of which twenty-seven Mahayugs have passed. So if one desires to know exactly where he is along the "Pilgrimage of the Ego" the following scheme will place him:

Sandhi, or Twilight of Kalpa	1,728,000 years
Six Manvantaras	1,850,688,000 years
Twenty-seven Mahayugs	116,640,000 years
The Satya yug = to Sandhi	1,728,000 years
The Treta yug	1,296,000 years
The Dvapara yug	864,000 years
Of Kali yug up to April 11th, 1895	4,997 years

The beginning of the Kalpa was the time when planetary motion began. Of this time, 17,064,000 years were spent or employed in creation, at the end of which man appeared.

It will be seen from the above that the first 5000 years of our Kali yug will expire April 11th, 1898.

Do *we* look for any manifestations?

The Path

SOME VIEWS OF AN ASIATIC (1)

You ask me what is my belief about "reincarnation." Well, as it is a complicated question, I must give you a plain statement of my full belief. To begin with, I am a Pantheist. I believe that *the whole universe is God*. You must, however, well understand that the word "God" does not convey to me any meaning attached to that word by the Westerns. When I say "God" I understand it to be nature or universe, and no more. Therefore I might more appropriately be called a "naturalist." To my mind there is no possibility of the existence of an extra-cosmical Deity. For if there were, the harmony or equilibrium of nature could not be preserved, and the whole, instead of being one harmonious whole, would be a Tower of Babel. This harmony can be kept only by the working of the immutable laws of Nature. And if the laws of nature be immutable, they must be blind, and require no guiding hand. (2) Hence the existence of an extra-cosmical Deity is impossible. This is, as far as I can understand, the chief teaching and principle of Aryan philosophy. As the position is logical, I must accept it in preference to the Semitic theory, which rests on blind faith alone.

Some of the Pantheists recognize the existence of two distinct entities, viz., Matter and Spirit. But thinking deeply over the subject has led me to the conclusion that their position is not quite logical; for, as far as I can understand, there can be but one Infinite entity and not two. Call it either matter or spirit, but it is one and the same. Who can say that this is spirit and that matter? Take an instance: Ice is a gross form of matter. If a little rarified it will be water, which is still matter. Higher still it is vapor; still matter. Higher, gas; it is still matter. Further it becomes ether, but it is still matter; and then you may go on *ad infinitum*. Thus

becoming more and more sublimated, it will reach its climax by the way of spiritualization. But still it does not become nothing. For if it does, there must come a time when the whole universe will be nothing. If it is so, it is not infinite, as it has an end. If it has an end, it must have had a beginning; if it had a beginning, it must have been created; and thus we must assume the existence of an extra-cosmical Deity, which, as said above, is not logical. Then we thus logically find that this highest sublimated form of matter cannot be nothing. In this case matter has reached that climax of sublimation or spiritualization, when any further action would make it grosser, not finer. What is commonly understood by the word *spirit*, then, is nothing but that highly etherealized form of matter which we, with our finite senses, cannot comprehend. But it is still matter, inasmuch as it is still something and liable to be grosser.

There is then *only one* eternal infinite existence, call it either spirit or matter. I will, however, call it by the latter name, as that is most suited in its common understanding for what I am to state. Matter, as you know, we call *Maya*. Some say that this thing does not really exist; but I do not agree to that. In my opinion it is called *Maya simply on account of these transformations*. It is never steady. The process is ever working. The one infinite agglomeration of matter is in some of its modes becoming grosser, while in others becoming more sublimated. The circle is ever turning its round. Nothing goes out of that circle. Everything is kept within its bounds by the action of the centripetal and centrifugal forces. The *forms* are changing, but the *inner substance* remains the same.

You will ask: "What is the use of being good or bad; our souls in proper time will be etherealized?" But what is a soul? Is it material or immaterial? Well, it is material for me, and there is nothing immaterial, as said above. As far as I can think, it is an

agglomeration of all the attributes together with that something which gives us the consciousness that we *are*. But in the case of the ice, it was not sublimated until touched by heat. The centripetal force was strong in its action, and it required the centrifugal force to refine the ice. Just so with man. The action of the centripetal force keeps us to our gross forms, and if we have to etherealize ourselves, we must supply the centrifugal force, which is our *will*. And this is the first principle of Occultism. We must study and know the forces of nature. Every result must be in proportion to the cause producing it. We are every instant emitting and attracting atoms of matter. Now, a person who is not an occultist will have various desires, and unconsciously to himself he will produce a cause which will attract to him such atoms of matter as are not suited for his higher progress. The same way, when he is emitting others, he may give them such a tendency that they will mix with others evilly inclined; and thus other individualities, which are thus formed, will have to suffer for no fault of theirs. But an occultist directs both. He is the master of the situation. He guides them, and by knowing their action he produces such conditions as are favorable to his obtaining of "Nirvana." (3)

But what is *Nirvana*? By Nirvana I mean a *state*, and not a locality. It is that condition in which we are so etherealized that instead of being merely a mode of the Infinite Existence, as at present, we are merged in totality, or we become the *whole*. Another thing about the advanced occultist is that he is in a better position to benefit humanity.

The particles of which I am formed have always existed; yet I do not know in what form they existed before. Probably they have passed through billions of transformations. (4) Why do I not know these? Because I did not supply the force that would have prevented the disintegration of my individuality. (5) I will, if I

attain Nirvana, remain there till the action of the force that put me there ceases; the effect being always in proportion to the cause. The law of Exhaustion must assert itself. (6)

In passing through this process of etherealization, you all along give a certain tendency to the particles of which you are composed. This tendency will always assert itself; and thus in every cycle, or reincarnation, you will have the same advantages which you can always utilize to soon be free, and by remaining longer in the Nirvana state than the generality of humanity, you are comparatively free. (7) So every consciousness, which has been once fully developed, must disintegrate, if not preserved by the purity of its successive Egos till the Nirvana state is attained. Now I believe that the full development of my consciousness as Krishna is possible only on this earth, (8) and therefore if I die before that is done I must be reborn here. If I reach the Nirvana state, even though I am in another body, I shall know myself as Krishna.

Now I suppose this is sufficient for you. It is difficult to put such ideas on paper. Such things are to be understood intuitively.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Taken from a private letter to William Q. Judge, F.T.S., received in 1878-9, and first published in the *Platonist*. ([return to text](#))

2. Allowance must be made all through for a lack of complete knowledge of the English language. What is here meant is that the inherent impulse acts according to its own laws without any *extra-cosmic* power meddling with it as a guide. — Editor. ([return to text](#))

3. It is said that Buddha attained to Nirvana before he left this earth, hence he was always free. — Editor. ([return to text](#))

4. That all the particles of the matter of our universe have passed through millions of transformations, and been in every sort of form, is an old assertion of the Adepts. H.P.B. in *Isis Unveiled*, and the *Secret Doctrine* points this out as showing how the Adept may use matter, and it will also bear upon the protean shapes the astral matter may assume. Editor. ([return to text](#))

5. This word is used to mean the personalities; the person in any birth. Since the letter was written, *individuality* is much used to mean the indestructible part.- Editor. ([return to text](#))

6. If this be right —and I agree with it — Nirvana has to come to an end, just as Devachan must; and being ended, the individual must return to some manifested plane or world for further work.- Editor. ([return to text](#))

7. The comparison made is with the general run of men in all races. They are not free at any time. In the writer's opinion there is a certain amount of freedom in being in Nirvana; but he refers to other and secret doctrines which he does not explain. — Editor. ([return to text](#))

8. This has always been accepted, that only on earth could we unify the great potential trinity in each, so that we are conscious of the union, and that when that is done, and not before, we may triumph over all illusions, whether of name or form, place or time, or any other. — Editor. ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE SCREEN OF TIME — *William Q. Judge*

Forever hiding futurity, the Screen of Time hangs before us, impenetrable. Nor can it be lifted. Its other side may have pictures and words upon it which we would like to read. There is such a desire in the human heart to know what the coming days may hold, that if there be pictures on the hidden side of the Screen we long to see them. But fortunately for us in our present weak condition we may not look behind. Standing in front, all we are privileged to perceive are the reflections from human life thrown upon this side known as the present, while the pictures that have been there in the past turn themselves into background and distance, sometimes bright, but oftener gloomy and grey.

A very pernicious doctrine is again making an appearance. It is weak, truly, but now is the time to deal with and destroy it if possible. It is the theory that the best way to overcome a tendency — of any sort — of the physical nature, is to give way to it. This is the dreadful doctrine of Satiation: that the only way to deal with lust and other things of the lower plane is to satisfy all cravings. By argument this may be shown to be an evil doctrine; but fact overcomes all argument, and it is easy to discern the truth to be that satiation of a craving does not remove its cause. If we eat, and dissipate hunger, the need for food will soon be felt again. And so with all cravings and tendencies which are classified as bad or low, or those which we wish to get rid of. They must be opposed. To satisfy and give way to them will produce but a temporary dullness. The real cause of them all is in the inner man, on the plane of desire whether mental or physical. So long as no effort is made to remove them they remain there. The *Voice*

of the Silence is against the doctrine of satiation most clearly, and so are the voices of all the sages. We must all wish that this pernicious idea may never obtain a hold in Theosophical ranks.

The desire to see the fulfilment of lugubrious and awful prophecies is a singular one for good men to hold. Yet many Theosophists have this most strange peculiarity. They have read and heard of certain prophecies said to have been made by H. P. B. about calamitous and disastrous times to come in Europe; of a new reign of terror; of sinking continents and destroyed nations. They add to these the improbable, vague and sometimes hoaxing prophecies by astrologers and old women. Then they begin to wish all these most terrifying things would come to pass so that their prophets may be justified. Every time a slight jar occurs in Europe they feel the *terreur* is at hand. But it does not arrive. Surely we ought to be satisfied with an ominous prophecy, if we believe in it, and be content to let its fulfilment be delayed for an extremely long period. We do not need prophecies, in any case, because out of our present deeds future events are made. Those among us who wish, as I said, for the realization of forebodings are the croakers of the movement. Even among the singular people called Theosophists they are singular, but their peculiarity is both unhealthy and useless.

In 1888 I had a morning conversation with H. P. B. at the Lansdowne Road house in London, upon the spread or weight of the Theosophical movement. I said that it was sometimes appalling to remember the millions of people in America alone, in comparison with the few Theosophists and Theosophical branches: what hope was there of our making a change in national character in any land? Her reply was that, while it might seem discouraging looked at in that way, it was really not so.

"Look," she said, "at our beginnings in 1875, when no one knew of Theosophy, and only jokes greeted our amazing efforts for publicity. But now we have come into the papers and magazines. We have made a distinct impression on the mind and literature of the time. This is much to have done."

There is abundant proof of this on every hand. Our name is now well understood. Writers may allude in their sketches to Theosophists and Theosophy without fear of castigation by the editor. There are two recent conspicuous instances. The N. Y. *Herald*, in December last, had an article in which this occurs:

"No man on the globe knows how to keep a hotel as the American does. He is a perfect *Mahatma* at the business."

Here is this great word abused, it is true; but that does not damage it. It has reached in less than twenty years the familiar treatment which it took in India centuries to come to. There they often use it as a term of reproach, on the principle that to call a man that high and great thing which he cannot be is to abuse him.

Again, in the *Cosmopolitan* for December last — a magazine widely read — there is a story by Zangwill called "Choice of Parents," on the abolition of compulsory reincarnation. The sketch deals entirely with the ante-natal world and reincarnation on the earth. Not long before the author had something in the English *Pall Mall Magazine* wherein Theosophy, Theosophists and reincarnation were mentioned. I do not know who will have the hardihood to deny the great share the Theosophical movement has had in bringing about this change.

At the present time one of the most urgent needs is for a simplification of Theosophical teachings. Theosophy is simple

enough; it is the fault of its exponents if it is made complicated, abstruse or vague. Yet enquiring people are always complaining that it is too difficult a subject for them, and that their education has not been deep enough to enable them to understand it. This is greatly the fault of the members who have put it in such a manner that the people sadly turn away. At public meetings or when trying to interest an enquirer it is absolutely useless to use Sanskrit, Greek or other foreign words. Nine times out of ten the habit of doing so is due to laziness or conceit. Sometimes it is due to having merely learned certain terms without knowing and assimilating the ideas underneath. The ideas of Theosophy should be mastered, and once that is done it will be easy to express those in the simplest possible terms. And discussions about the Absolute, the Hierarchies, and so forth, are worse than useless. Such ideas as Karma, Reincarnation, the Perfectibility of Man, the Dual Nature, are the subjects to put forward. These can be expounded — if you have grasped the ideas and made them part of your thought — from a thousand different points of view. At all meetings the strongest effort should be made to simplify by using the words of our own language in expressing that which we believe.

The Path

LETTERS OF H.P.B. TO DR. HARTMANN: II

1885 TO 1886.

III

[NO DATE]

MY DEAR DOCTOR: — Two words in answer to what the Countess told me. I do myself harm, you say, "in telling everyone that Damodar is in Tibet, when he is only at Benares." You are mistaken. He left Benares toward the middle of May, (ask in Adyar; I cannot say for certain whether it was in May or April) and went off, as everybody knows, to Darjeeling, and thence to the frontier *via* Sikkhim. Our Dar-jeeling Fellows accompanied him a good way. He wrote a last word from there to the office bidding good-bye and saying: "If I am not back by July 21st you may count me as dead." He did not come back, and Olcott was in great grief and wrote to me about two months ago, to ask me whether I knew anything. News had come by some Tibetan pedlars in Darjeeling that a young man of that description, with very long flowing hair, had been found frozen in the (forget the name) pass, stark dead, with twelve rupees in his pockets and his things and hat a few yards off. Olcott was in despair, but Maji told him (and he, D., lived with Maji for some time at Benares,) that he was not dead — she knew it through pilgrims who had returned, though Olcott supposes — which may be also — that she knew it clairvoyantly. Well I know that he is alive, and am almost certain that he is in Tibet — as I am certain also that he will not come back — not for years, at any rate. Who told you he was at Benares? We want him sorely now to refute all Hodgson's guesses and inferences that I simply call lies, as much as my "spy" business and forging — the blackguard: now mind, I do not give myself out as infallible in

this case. But I do know what he told me before going away — and at that moment he would not have said a fib, when he wept like a Magdalen. He said, "I go for your sake. If the Maha Chohan is satisfied with my services and my devotion, He may permit me to vindicate you by proving that Masters *do* exist. If I fail no one shall ever see me for years to come, but I will send messages. But I am determined in the meanwhile to make people give up searching for me. I want them to believe I am dead."

This is why I think he must have arranged some trick to spread reports of his death by freezing.

But if the poor boy had indeed met with such an accident — why I think I would commit suicide; for it is out of pure devotion for me that he went. (1) I would never forgive myself for this, for letting him go. That's the truth and only the truth. Don't be harsh, Doctor — forgive him his faults and mistakes, willing and unwilling.

The poor boy, whether dead or alive, has no happy times now, since he is on probation and this is terrible. I wish you would write to someone at Calcutta to enquire from Darjeeling whether it is so or not. Sinnett will write to you, I think. I wish you would.

Yours ever gratefully,
H. P. B.

IV

[NO DATE]

MY DEAR DOCTOR: — I read your part II — and I found it excellent, except two or three words you ought to change if you care for truth, and not to let people think you have some animus yet against Olcott. (2) Such are at the end "Presidential orders" and too much assurance about "fictions." I never had "fictions," nor are Masters (as living men) any more a fiction than you and I. But

this will do. Thus, I have nothing whatever against your theory, though you do make of me a sort of a tricking medium.

But this does not matter, since as I wrote to Dr. H.S. and will write to all — "Mme. Blavatsky of the T.S. is dead." I belong no more to the European Society, nor do I regret it. You, as a psychologist and a man of acute perception, must know that there are situations in this life, when mental agony, despair, disgust, outraged pride and honor, and suffering, become so intense that there are but two possible results — either death from broken heart, or ice-cold indifference and callousness. Being made to live for purposes I do not know myself — I have arrived at the latter state. The basest ingratitude from one I have loved as my own son, one whom I have shielded and protected from harm, whom I have glorified at the expense of truth and my own dignity, has thrown upon me that 'straw which breaks the camel's back.' It is broken for the T. S. and for ever. For two or three true friends that remain I will write the *S.D.*, and then — depart for some quiet corner to die there. You have come to the conviction that the "Masters" are "planetary spirits" — that's good; remain in that conviction.

I wish I could hallucinate myself to the same degree. I would feel happier, and throw off from the heart the heavy load, that I have desecrated their names and Occultism by giving out its mysteries and secrets to those unworthy of either. If I could see you for a few hours, if I could talk to you; I may open your eyes, perhaps, to some truths you have never suspected. I could show you who it was (and give you proofs), who set Olcott against you, who ruined your reputation, and aroused the Hindu Fellows against you, who made me hate and despise you, till the voice of one who is the voice of God to me pronounced those words that made me change my opinion. (3)

I could discover and unveil to you secrets for your future safety

and guidance. But I must see you personally for all this, and you have to see the Countess. Otherwise I cannot write. If you can come here, even for a few hours, to say good-bye to me and hear a strange tale, that will prove of benefit to many a Fellow in the future as to yourself, do so. If you cannot, I ask you on your honor to keep this private and confidential.

Ah, Doctor, Karma is a fearful thing; and the more one lives in his inner life, outside this world and in regions of pure spirituality and psychology, the less he knows human hearts. I proclaim myself in the face of all — the biggest, the most miserable, the stupidest and dullest of all women on the face of the earth. I have been true to all. I have tried to do good to all. I have sacrificed myself for all and a whole nation — and I am and feel as though caught in a circle of flaming coals, surrounded on all sides like an unfortunate fly with torn-off wings — by treachery, hatred, malice, cruelty, lies; by all the iniquities of human nature, and I can see wherever I turn — but one thing — a big, stupid, trusting fool — "H.P.B." — surrounded by a thick crowd circling her (4) of traitors, fiends and tigers in human shape.

Good-bye, if I do not see you, for I will write no more. Thanks for what you have done for me. Thanks, and may you and your dear, kind sister be happy.

Yours,
H. P. B.

(To be continued)

FOOTNOTES:

1. The fact is that Damodar was never asked to go to Tibet, but begged to be permitted to go there, and at last went with permission of H.P.B., on which occasion I accompanied him to the steamer. — H. ([return to text](#))

2. This refers to my *Report of Observations at the Headquarters at Adyar*. ([return to text](#))

3. Babajee, whose Brahmanical conceit caused him to turn against H.P.B. when he became convinced that he could not make her a tool for the propaganda of his creed. — H. ([return to text](#))

4. This explains the letter printed in the notorious book of V. S. Solovyoff, page 124. The intrigue was acted by Babajee, who, while professing great friendship for me, acted; as a traitor and spy. — H. ([return to text](#))

The Path

THE SUBJECTIVE AND THE OBJECTIVE — *Alpha*

A LESSON FROM THE CAVE OF PLATO — REPUBLIC, BOOK I

"After this, I said, imagine the enlightenment and ignorance of our nature in a figure: Behold! human beings living in a sort of underground den, which has a mouth opening towards the light, and reaching all across the den; they have been here from their childhood, and have their legs and necks chained so that they cannot move, and can only see before them; for the chains are arranged in such a manner as to prevent them from turning round their heads. At a distance above and behind them the light of a fire is blazing, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way; and you will see, if you look, a low wall built along the way, like the screen which marionette players have before them, over which they show the puppets.

"I see, he said.

"And do you see, I said, men passing along the wall, carrying vessels which appear over the wall; and some of the passengers, as you would expect, are talking, and some of them are silent?

"That is a strange image, he said, and they are strange prisoners.

"Like ourselves, I replied; and they see only their own shadows, or the shadows of one another, which the fire throws on the opposite wall of the cave?

"True, he said, how could they see anything but the

shadows, if they were never allowed to move their heads?

"And of the objects which were being carried in like manner they would only see the shadows?"

"Yes, he said.

"And if they were able to talk with one another, would they not suppose that they were naming what was actually before them?"

"Very true.

"And suppose further that the prison had an echo which came from the other side, would they not be sure to fancy that the voice which they heard was the voice of a passing shade?"

"No question, he said.

"There can be no question, that the truth would be to them just nothing but the shadows of the images."

The term *consciousness* is used by writers connected with the Theosophical movement with a very wide range of meaning. Atoms are invisible lives, says H.P.B.; and there is no such thing as inorganic, in the sense of dead or lifeless matter. Every variety or kind of existence is conscious on its own plane or according to its own condition or state; the molecules of granite as well and as truly, though not in the same way, as the mind of man. Every molecule in the brain has its own consciousness, according to its state or plane of existence; and the sum of the consciousness of its molecules is the consciousness of the brain in its totality, considered as a merely physical, visible organ.

But the astral man, which we may take to be coextensive with the physical man, and to correspond with it, if not to coincide with it,

organ for organ and molecule for molecule, is the real seat of sensation; and in the brain the sensations are registered and interpreted. The astral brain, the organ of Kama Manas, or of the lower or personal mind, furnishes the connecting link between the thinker and the object of thought; and here is bridged the chasm which has been recognized by philosophers, in Western lands at least, as utterly impassable. Says President Bascom:

"Facts must exist either in space as physical or in consciousness, as mental; there is no third state. Mental and physical phenomena are cut broadly and deeply apart, by the fact that the one class transpires exclusively in consciousness, and the other as exclusively out of consciousness (in space)."

Again he says:

"There is no *a priori* impossibility discoverable by us, making the transfer of influence from mind to matter, from matter to mind, an absurdity. Our last traces of physical force in the movement inward are found in the brain; our first traces in the movement outward are also met with at the same point. Thus far only can the eye trace material changes; here is- it first able to pick them up. How the last nervous impulse is linked to the play of consciousness . . . we cannot imagine. . . . We are profoundly ignorant of any connection between the two."

Now the scheme of Theosophy recognizes a continuous gradation of powers, faculties, states, principles — call them what you will — from the highest or most spiritual to the lowest or most material. In this whole gamut of states or conditions no chasm is found; there is nothing to bridge; consciousness is the necessary substratum and presupposition of the most material, and consciousness is the noumenon or essential reality of the most:

spiritual.

We know of nothing more material or external than the physical, material, visible body — the world of matter, so called; and here is the inner wall (reversing the figure from outward to inward) of the cave which Socrates describes in Plato's dialogue; the wall upon which fall the shadows supposed by the prisoners to be the only realities. Indeed, the "wall" may be taken as merely the drop-curtain of the theatre, and the shadows themselves as representing the physical substance known to ourselves and our fellow prisoners. Hence there can be on this lowest plane (the plane of the shadows) really no consciousness as we know it; consciousness only looks on what is below, and cannot for its chains turn its face upward to the light. It is said, indeed, that the atom is the Atma or seventh principle of the molecule; but the molecule is infinitesimal and invisible, and what consciousness it may have in itself — what is the nature of consciousness on that plane — we cannot profitably guess even, much less know.

The astral or kamic man is within, or above, or superior to the physical man; and its apprehension of external or physical nature, which we term sensation, is the lowest form of consciousness recognized by us. But mere sensation is not intelligent. As the astral or emotional man exists within (in the symbolical meaning of "within") the physical man, and by its power of sense takes hold of the latter, so there exists within the astral or emotional the logical faculty or principle, whose office is to sort out the sensations and refer each to its source or cause in the outer world. This logical faculty (the lower mind or Kama Manas) is, as related to the world or planes below it, the faculty that perceives; and its action in taking hold of and interpreting the sensations is called perception.

Now suppose we consider the real Ego, the enduring entity that

we mean when we say "man," to be one of the prisoners represented by Plato as confined in a den or cave; and external, physical, visible and tangible matter as the shadows on the wall of the cave. The Ego, in its descent from spirit into matter, goes deeper and deeper into the cave until it reaches the wall and is stopped. It can go no farther; and it must, impelled by the universal and all-embracing law of action and reaction, retrace its course toward spirit. Its progress downward or outward (from spirit — inward as to the cave) has been without consciousness in any sense that we can comprehend. When it strikes the wall of its dungeon and strives to go still farther, it cannot do so; its limit is reached. This develops unintelligent consciousness — a consciousness wholly spiritual, and in no sense maniac. As it recedes backward in involution, still facing the wall, the reflected light of Manas thrown back from the wall enables it to interpret in a manner these sensations — to distinguish them from each other and to group them — but not at first to relate them to itself. Here is the beginning of the lowest mind, known in Mr. Sinnett's classification as Kama Rupa or the Animal Soul. To reach this degree of development immeasurable ages were required. The first dawn of sensation begins when the physical development has proceeded far enough to furnish a suitable vehicle for the astral body. The astral development goes on, and moulds the physical world to its purpose, until it in its turn has become — or until the two together have become — a suitable vehicle for the emotional and perceptive faculties. These steps are easy to name, but they have been taken with slow and toilsome tread through the first, second and third rounds of our chain of globes; and were repeated in briefer but immensely long periods in the first races of this our fourth round.

To the stone belongs molecular consciousness, not consciousness as we know it, but only so called by analogy; to the plant belongs

astral consciousness, or the dawn of sensation; to the animal belongs emotional consciousness, or the dawn of perception. As this faculty or principle becomes more and more fully developed and active, a new faculty begins to act — the human intellect, the lower manas, begins to awake and exercise its functions. The prisoner has retreated far enough from the wall of his cave, has evolved far enough toward spiritual perception, to be able to recognize his lower principles as himself — to relate the experience, the sensations, the perceptions of these lower principles to his own identity; to distinguish between the "I" and the "not-I." This is self-consciousness, or consciousness of self; and here the human stage is reached in the return of the monad from its journey to the confines of matter.

In *Discussions of Philosophy and Literature*, Sir William Hamilton, one of the foremost philosophers of modern times, makes the following statement:

"In the philosophy of mind, *subjective* denotes what is to be referred to the thinking subject, the Ego; *objective*, what belongs to the object of thought, the Non-Ego. . . . These correlative terms correspond to the first and most important distinction in philosophy; they embody the original antithesis in consciousness of self and not-self — a distinction which in fact involves the whole science of mind; for psychology is nothing more than a determination of the subjective and the objective, in themselves, and in their reciprocal relations."

Hamilton was not only a profound thinker and an erudite scholar; he was also a master in the English language, and capable of expressing his thoughts clearly and tersely. The definition above quoted certainly gives the right use of these terms; and for those who, with President Bascom, hold that a gulf

that cannot be bridged cuts broadly apart the facts which transpire in consciousness and the facts which transpire in space, it would seem to need no further elucidation. But when they are used in Theosophical discussions, the further consideration must not be overlooked, that the Ego, the Non-Ego, and the bond between the two (the thinker, the object of thought, and the thought) are all one. This gives emphasis to the fact that the line between the subject and object is purely imaginary; the distinction is logical and not metaphysical. Thus the terms subjective and objective are seen to be wholly correlative, and what is subjective in one relation is objective in another, and *vice versa*. This correlative feature has always been recognized; but it becomes more significant and takes on new phases when viewed in the light of the septenary constitution of man.

Philosophers who have thought most deeply, and who have explored most fully the nature of man, and the various problems of ontology, show by their postulates and their reasoning that they implicitly apprehend, if they do not explicitly recognize, several of the distinctions represented by the septenary classification of principles. Dr. James March, president of the University of Vermont at the time of his death about fifty years ago, left several philosophical treatises which were afterward collected and published by his successor in the faculty of that institution. It is many years since I read this work, but I remember distinctly an essay in which the learned doctor discussed the changes wrought by the supervening of higher faculties in the course of evolution. He spoke of the force by which a crystal is built up by accretion, by regular additions from without; of the force by which a vegetable germ develops from within; of the powers of perception and locomotion which distinguish the animal, to some species of which he conceded the logical faculty of ratiocination; and of the faculty of intuition, or

perception of intellectual and spiritual truths and axioms, which distinguishes man from the lower forms of animal life. Here, in the classification of existence as amorphous, crystalline, vegetable, animal and human, each higher including all lower but superadding a new faculty, power, or principle of growth, there is plainly foreshadowed the method upon which our teaching of the septenary constitution of nature and of man is developed.

As the subjective is that which is within, and the objective is that which is without, the relation first emerges upon the evolution of the astral principle, or *Linga Sharira*; for the merely physical entity is so thoroughly one in nature that its different forms can hardly be considered as bearing this relation to each other. (Yet there is probably a septenary in physical nature below the astral, as witness earth, water, air, fire, etc.; and earth may be in truth objective to air.) The distinctions that are so obvious, organic, inorganic, etc., are really differing manifestations of the informing higher principles. But upon the development of the astral principle the relation appears; this is subjective as to the physical body, and the latter is objective as to the former. So when the kamic principle develops, or evolves from potentiality to potency, from a latent state to activity, this in turn becomes subjective, and to it the lower principles are objective. When the Lower Manas in its turn becomes active and subjective, it takes intelligent cognizance of the lower principles as objective, and recognizes their identity with itself, and then self-consciousness appears. And when, by evolution or training, the Higher Manas becomes active, then will the entire quaternary, or lower Ego, become in relation to this added faculty, objective.

This is very well expressed in an article in *Lucifer* for September, 1891 (vol. ix, p. 23,) as follows:

"This expansion of consciousness includes a development

of the subtle senses which open up to the inner man new worlds, peopled with their inhabitants, and interdependent the one with the other. The subjective becomes the objective, with a still more subtle subjectivity beyond, which can become again objective as a still more spiritual consciousness is attained by the striver after freedom."

In the *Secret Doctrine*, vol. i, p.189, H.P.B. says:

"It stands to reason that there must be an enormous difference in such terms as 'objectivity' and 'subjectivity,' 'materiality' and 'spirituality,' when the same terms are applied to different planes of being and perception."

This paper is intended to be suggestive rather than exhaustive; and I shall have accomplished my purpose if I have set the relation of subjective to objective in a clearer light, and pointed out the direction in which to look for a better understanding of the philosophical side of our literature.

The Path

BHAGAVAD-GITA – CHAPTER VI — *William Brehon*

More than one subject is treated in this chapter. It ends what I call the first series, as the whole eighteen chapters should be divided into three groups of six each.

Renunciation, equal-mindedness, true meditation, the golden mean in action, the Unity of all things, the nature of rebirth and the effect of devotion upon it and devachan, are all touched upon.

It is a most practical chapter which would benefit Theosophists immensely if fully grasped and followed. The mistakes made many thousand years ago by disciples were the same as those of today. Today, just as then, there are those who think true renunciation consists in doing nothing except for themselves, in retiring from active duties, and in devoting their attention to what they are pleased to call self-development. On the other hand are those who mistake incessant action for true devotion. The true path is between these two.

The forsaking of worldly action — called *sannyas* — is the same as what is known in Europe as the monastic life, especially in some very ascetic orders. Adopted selfishly under a mistaken notion of duty it cannot be true devotion. It is merely an attempt to save oneself. The course adopted by some Theosophical students very much resembles this erroneous method, although it is practised in the freedom of the world and not behind monastery walls.

To be a true renouncer of action and a devotee one must put the problem on another plane. On the physical brain plane there is no way of reconciling a contradiction such as appears to exist in the direction to perform actions and yet renounce their performance. It is exactly here that many readers of the

Bhagavad-Gita stop and are confused. They have for so long been accustomed to thinking of the physical and living in it, the terms used for their thought are so material in their application, that, seeing this contradiction, they say that the book will not benefit them. But considering the difficulty from the view that the real actor is the mind, that acts are not the dead outward expressions of them, but are the thoughts themselves, we can see how one can be both a renouncer and a devotee, how we can outwardly perform every action, multitudes of them, being as active as any one who is wrapped up in worldly pursuits, and yet be ourselves unattached and unaffected.

Duty and the final imperative — the "what ought I to do" — comes in here and becomes a part of the process. The actions to be performed are not any and every one. We are not to go on heedlessly and indiscriminately doing everything that is suggested. We must discover what actions ought to be performed by us and do them for that reason and not because of some result we expect to follow. The fact that we may be perfectly certain of the result is no reason for allowing our interest to fasten upon that. Here again is where certain Theosophists think they have a great difficulty. They say that knowing the result one is sure to become interested in it. But this is the very task to be essayed — to so hold one's mind and desires as not to be attached to the result.

By pursuing this practice true meditation is begun and will soon become permanent. For, one who watches his thoughts and acts so as to perform those that ought to be done, will acquire a concentration in time which will increase the power of real meditation. It is not meditation to stare at a spot on the wall for a fixed period, or to remain for another space of time in a perfectly vacuous mental state which soon runs into sleep. All those things are merely forms which in the end will do no lasting good. But

many students have run after these follies, ignoring the true way. The truth is, that the right method is not easy; it requires thought and mental effort, with persistency and faith. Staring at spots and such mis-called occult practices are very easy in comparison with the former.

However, we are human and weak. As such we require help, for the outer self cannot succeed in the battle. So Krishna points out that the lower self is to be raised up by the help of the higher; that the lower is, as it were, the enemy of the higher, and we must not allow the worst to prevail. It will all depend upon self-mastery. The self below will continually drag down the man who is not self-conquered. This is because that lower one is so near the thick darkness that hangs about the lower rungs of evolution's ladder it is partly devil. Like a heavy weight it will drag into the depths the one who does not try to conquer himself. But on its other side the self is near to divinity, and when conquered it becomes the friend and helper of the conqueror. The Sufis, the Mohamedan mystical sect, symbolize this in their poetry relating to the beautiful woman who appears but for a moment at the window and then disappears. She refuses to open the door to her lover as long as he refers to their being separate; but when he recognizes their unity then she becomes his firm friend.

The next few verses in the *Gita* outline that which is extremely difficult — equal-mindedness, and intentness upon the Supreme Being in heat and cold, pleasure and pain, success and failure. We cannot reach to this easily, perhaps not in many lives, but we can try. Every effort we make in that direction will be preserved in the inner nature and cannot be lost at death. It is a spiritual gain, the riches laid up in heaven to which Jesus referred. To describe the perfection of equal-mindedness is to picture an Adept of the highest degree, one who has passed beyond all worldly considerations and lives on. higher planes. Gold and stones are

the same to him. The objects he seeks to accomplish are not to be reached through gold and, so it and the pebbles have the same value. He is also so calm and free from delusion of mind and soul that he remains the same whether with enemies or friends, with the righteous or the sinners.

This high condition is therefore set before us as an ideal to be slowly but steadfastly striven after so that in the course of time we may come near it. If we never begin we will never accomplish, and it is far better to adopt this high ideal, even though failing constantly, than to have no ideal whatever.

But some are likely to make a mistake herein. Indeed they have done so. They set up the ideal, but in a too material and human manner. Then they thought to walk on the chosen path by outward observance, by pretending to regard gold and stones as the same to them, while in their hearts they preferred the gold. Their equal-mindedness they confined to other people's affairs, while they displeased and alarmed all relatives and friends by the manner of riding this hobby and by wrong neglect of obvious duty. Truly they sought for equal-mindedness, but failed to see that it can only be acquired through right performance of duty, and not by selecting the duties and environments that please us.

(To be continued)

The Path

HOW SHOULD WE TREAT OTHERS? — *F. T. S.*

The subject relates to our conduct toward and treatment of our fellows, including in that term all people with whom we have any dealings. No particular mode of treatment is given by Theosophy. It simply lays down the law that governs us in all our acts, and declares the consequences of those acts. It is for us to follow the line of action which shall result first in harmony now and forever, and second, in the reduction of the general sum of hate and opposition in thought or act which now darkens the world.

The great law which Theosophy first speaks of is the law of karma, and this is the one which must be held in view in considering the question. Karma is called by some the "law of ethical causation," but it also the law of action and reaction; and in all departments of nature the reaction is equal to the action, and sometimes the reaction from the unseen but permanent world seems to be much greater than the physical act or word would appear to warrant on the physical plane. This is because the hidden force on the unseen plane was just as strong and powerful as the reaction is seen by us to be. The ordinary view takes in but half of the facts in any such case and judges wholly by superficial observation.

If we look at the subject only from the point of view of the person who knows not of Theosophy and of the nature of man, nor of the forces Theosophy knows to be operating all the time, then the reply to the question will be just the same as the everyday man makes. That is, that he has certain rights he must and will and ought to protect; that he has property he will and may keep and use any way he pleases; and if a man injure him he ought to and will resent it; that if he is insulted by word or deed he will at once

fly not only to administer punishment on the offender, but also try to reform, to admonish, and very often to give that offender up to the arm of the law; that if he knows of a criminal he will denounce him to the police and see that he has meted out to him the punishment provided by the law of man. Thus in everything he will proceed as is the custom and as is thought to be the right way by those who live under the Mosaic retaliatory law.

But if we are to inquire into the subject as Theosophists, and as Theosophists who know certain laws and who insist on the absolute sway of karma, and as people who know what the real constitution of man is, then the whole matter takes on, or ought to take on, a wholly different aspect.

The untheosophical view is based on separation, the Theosophical upon unity absolute and actual. Of course if Theosophists talk of unity but as a dream or a mere metaphysical thing, then they will cease to be Theosophists, and be mere professors, as the Christian world is today, of a code not followed. If we are separate one from the other the world is right and resistance is a duty, and the failure to condemn those who offend is a distinct breach of propriety, of law, and of duty. But if we are all united as a physical and psychical fact, then the act of condemning, the fact of resistance, the insistence upon rights on all occasions — all of which means the entire lack of charity and mercy — will bring consequences as certain as the rising of the sun tomorrow.

What are those consequences, and why are they?

They are simply this, that the real man, the entity, the thinker, will react back on you just exactly in proportion to the way you act to him, and this reaction will be in another life, if not now, and even if now felt will still return in the next life.

The fact that the person whom you condemn, or oppose, or judge

seems now in this life to deserve it for his acts in this life, does not alter the other fact that his nature will react against you when the time comes. The reaction is a law not subject to nor altered by any sentiment on your part. He may have, truly, offended you and even hurt you, and done that which in the eye of man is blameworthy, but all this does not have anything to do with the dynamic fact that if you arouse his enmity by your condemnation or judgment there will be a reaction on you, and consequently on the whole of society in any century when the reaction takes place. This is the law and the fact as given by the Adepts, as told by all sages, as reported by those who have seen the inner side of nature, as taught by our philosophy and easily provable by anyone who will take the trouble to examine carefully. Logic and small facts of one day or one life, or arguments on lines laid down by men of the world who do not know the real power and place of thought nor the real nature of man cannot sweep this away. After all argument and all logic it will remain. The logic used against it is always lacking in certain premises based on facts, and while seeming to be good logic, because the missing facts are unknown to the logician, it is false logic. Hence an appeal to logic that ignores facts which we know are certain is of no use in this inquiry. And the ordinary argument always uses a number of assumptions which are destroyed by the actual inner facts about thought, about karma, about the reaction by the inner man.

The Master "K.H.," once writing to Mr. Sinnett in the *Occult World*, and speaking for his whole order and not for himself only, distinctly wrote that the man who goes to denounce a criminal or an offender works not with nature and harmony but against both, and that such act tends to destruction instead of construction. Whether the act be large or small, whether it be the denunciation of a criminal, or only your own insistence on rules or laws or rights, does not alter the matter or take it out of the rule laid

down by that Adept. For the only difference between the acts mentioned is a difference of degree alone; the act is the same in kind as the violent denunciation of a criminal. Either this Adept was right or wrong. If wrong, why do we follow the philosophy laid down by him and his messenger, and concurred in by all the sages and teachers of the past? If right, why this swimming in an adverse current, as he said himself, why this attempt to show that we can set aside karma and act as we please without consequences following us to the end of time? I know not. I prefer to follow the Adept, and especially so when I see that what he says is in line with facts in nature and is a certain conclusion from the system of philosophy I have found in Theosophy.

I have never found an insistence on my so-called rights at all necessary. They preserve themselves, and it must be true if the law of karma is the truth that no man offends against me unless I in the past have offended against him.

In respect to man, karma has no existence without two or more persons being considered. You act, another person is affected, karma follows. It follows on the thought of each and not on the act, for the other person is moved to thought by your act. Here are two sorts of karma, yours and his, and both are intermixed. There is the karma or effect on you of your own thought and act, the result on you of the other person's thought; and there is the karma on or with the other person consisting of the direct result of your act and his thoughts engendered by your act and thought. This is all permanent. As affecting you there may be various effects. If you have condemned, for instance, we may mention some: (a) the increased tendency in yourself to indulge in condemnation, which will remain and increase from life to life; (b) this will at last in you change into violence and all that anger and condemnation may naturally lead to; (c) an opposition to you is set up in the other person, which will remain forever until one

day both suffer for it, and this may be in a tendency in the other person in any subsequent life to do you harm and hurt you in the million ways possible in life, and often also unconsciously. Thus it may all widen out and affect the whole body of society. Hence no matter how justifiable it may seem to you to condemn or denounce or punish another, you set up cause for sorrow in the whole race that must work out some day. And you must feel it.

The opposite conduct, that is, entire charity, constant forgiveness, wipes out the opposition from others, expends the old enmity and at the same time makes no new similar causes. Any other sort of thought or conduct is sure to increase the sum of hate in the world, to make cause for sorrow, to continually keep up the crime and misery in the world. Each man can for himself decide which of the two ways is the right one to adopt.

Self-love and what people call self-respect may shrink from following the Adept's view I give above, but the Theosophist who wishes to follow the law and reduce the general sum of hate will know how to act and to think, for he will follow the words of the Master of H. P. B. who said: "Do not be ever thinking of your self and forgetting that there are others; for you have no karma of your own, but the karma of each one is the karma of all." And these words were sent by H.P.B. to the American Section and called by her words of wisdom, as they seem also to me to be, for they accord with law. They hurt *the personality* of the nineteenth century, but the personality is for a day, and soon it will be changed if Theosophists try to follow the law of charity as enforced by the inexorable law of karma. We should all constantly remember that if we believe in the Masters we should at least try to imitate them in the charity they show for our weakness and faults. In no other way can we hope to reach their high estate, for by beginning thus we set up a tendency which will one day perhaps bring us near to their development; by not

beginning we put off the day forever.

The Path

LETTERS OF H.P.B. TO DR. HARTMANN: III

1885 TO 1886

(Concluded)

V

[NO DATE]

MY DEAR DOCTOR: — Every word of your letter shows to me that you are on the right path, and I am mighty glad of it for you. Still, one may be on the right way, and allow his past-self to bring up too forcibly to him the echoes of the past and a little dying-out prejudice to distort them. When one arrives at knowing himself, he must know others also, which becomes easier. You have made great progress in the former direction; yet, since you cannot help misjudging others a little by the light of old prejudices, I say you have more work to do in this direction. All is not and never was bad in Adyar. The intentions were all good, and that's why, perhaps, they have led Olcott and others direct to fall, as they had no discrimination. The fault is not theirs, but of circumstances and individual karmas.

The first two pages of your letter only repeat that, word for word, which I taught Olcott and Judge and others in America. This is the right occultism. Arrived at Bombay, we had to drop Western and take to Eastern Rosicrucianism. It turned [out] a failure for the Europeans, as the Western turned [out] a failure for the Hindus. This is the secret, and the very root of the failure. But, having mixed up the elements in the so-desired Brotherhood — that could not be helped. Please do not misunderstand me. Occultism is one and universal at its root. Its external modes differ only. I certainly did not want to disturb you to come here only to hear

disagreeable things, but [I] do try: (a) to make you see things in their true light, which would only benefit you; and (b) to show you things written in the *Secret Doctrine* which would prove to you that that which you have lately learned in old Rosicrucian works, I knew years ago, and now have embodied them. Cross and such symbols are world-old. Every symbol must yield three fundamental truths and four implied ones, otherwise the symbol is false. You gave me only one, but so far it is a very correct one. In Adyar you have learned many of such implied truths, because you were not ready; now you may have the rest through self-effort. But don't be ungrateful, whatever you do. Do not feel squeamish and spit on the path — however unclean in some of its corners — that led you to the Adytum at the threshold of which you now stand. Had it not been for Adyar and its trials you never would have been where you are now, but in America married to some new wife who would either have knocked the last spark of mysticism out of your head, or confirmed you in your spiritualism, or what is worse, one of you would have murdered the other. When you find another man who, like poor, foolish Olcott, will love and admire you as he did — sincerely and honestly — take him, I say, to your bosom and try to correct his faults by kindness, not by venomous satire and chaff. We have all erred and we have all been punished, and now we have learned better. I never gave myself out for a full-blown occultist, but only for a student of Occultism for the last thirty-five or forty years. Yet I am enough of an occultist to know that before we find the Master within our own hearts and seventh principle — we need an outside Master. As the Chinese Alchemist says, speaking of the necessity of a living teacher: "Every one seeks long life (spiritual), but the secret is not easy to find. If you covet the precious things of Heaven you must reject the treasures of the earth. You must kindle the fire that springs from the water and evolve the Om contained within the Tong: One word from a wise Master and you

possess a draught of the golden water."

I got my drop from my Master (the living one); you, because you went to Adyar. He is a Saviour, he who leads you to finding the Master within yourself. It is ten years already that I preach the inner Master and God and never represented our Masters as Saviours in the Christian sense. Nor has Olcott, gushing as he is. I did think for one moment that you had got into the epidemic of a "Heavenly Master and Father God," and glad I am to find my mistake. This was only natural. You are just one of those with whom such surprises may be expected at any moment. Commit one mistake, and turn for one moment out of the right path you are now pursuing, and you will land in the arms of the Pope. Olcott does not teach what you say, Doctor. He teaches the Hindus to rely upon themselves (1), and that there is no Saviour save their own Karma. I want you to be just and impartial; otherwise you will not progress. Well, if you do not come and have a talk — I will feel sorry, for I will never see you again. If you do, the Countess and I will welcome you.

Yours ever truly,
H. P. B.

VI

April 3, 1886.

MY DEAR DOCTOR: — I had given up all hope of ever hearing from you again, and was glad to receive today your letter. What you say in it seems to me like an echo of my own thoughts in many a way; only knowing the truth and the real state of things in the "occult world" better than you do, I am perhaps able to see better also where the real mischief was and lies.

Well, I say honestly and impartially now — you are unjust to Olcott more than to anyone else; because you had no means to

ascertain hitherto in what direction the evil blew from.

Mind you, Doctor, my dear friend, I do not justify Olcott in what he did and how he acted toward yourself — nor do I justify him in anything else. What I say is: he was led on blindly by people as blind as himself to see you in quite a false light, and there was a time, for a month or two, when I myself — notwithstanding my inner voice, and to the day Master's voice told me I was mistaken in you and had to keep friends — shared his blindness. (2)

This with regard to some people at Adyar; but there is another side to the question, of which you seem quite ignorant; and that I wanted to show to you, by furnishing you with documents, had you only come when I asked you. But you did not — and the result is, this letter of yours, that will also go against you in the eyes of Karma, whether you believe in the Cross empty of any particular entity on it — or in the Kwan-Shi-Yin of the Tibetans.

To dispose of this question for once, I propose to you to come between now and May the 10th, when I leave Wurzburg to go elsewhere. So you have plenty of time to think over it, and to come and go as you like. The Countess is with me. You know her; she is no woman of gush or impulse. During the four months we have passed together, and the three months of utter solitude, we have had time to talk things over; and I will ask you to believe her, not me, when and if you come, which I hope you will. (3)

As to the other side of the question, that portion of your letter where you speak of the "army" of the deluded — and the "imaginary" Mahatmas of Olcott — you are absolutely and sadly right. Have I not seen the thing for nearly eight years? Have I not struggled and fought against Olcott's ardent and gushing imagination, and tried to stop him every day of my life? Was he not told by me (from a letter I received through a Yogi just returned from Lake Mansarovara) in 1881 (when he was

preparing to go to Ceylon) that if he did not see the Masters in their true light, and did not cease speaking and enflaming people's imaginations, that he would be held responsible for all the evil the Society might come to? (4) Was he not told that there were no such Mahatmas, who Rishi-like could hold the Mount Meru on the tip of their finger and fly to and fro in their bodies (!!) at their will, and who were (or were imagined by fools) more gods on earth than a God in Heaven could be, etc., etc., etc.? All this I saw, foresaw, despaired, fought against; and, finally, gave up the struggle in utter helplessness. If Sinnett has remained true and devoted to them to this day, it is because he never allowed his fancy to run away with his judgment and reason. Because he followed his common-sense and discerned the truth, without sacrificing it to his ardent imagination. I told him the whole truth from the first, as I had told Olcott, and Hume also.

Hume knows that Mahatma K. H. exists, and holds to it to this day. But, angry and vexed with my Master, who spoke to him as though he (Hume) had never been a Secretary for the Indian Government and the great Hume of Simla — he denied him through pure viciousness and revenge.

Ah, if by some psychological process you could be made to see the whole truth! If, in a dream or vision, you could be made to see the panorama of the last ten years, from the first year at New York to the last at Adyar, you would be made happy and strong and just to the end of your life. I was sent to America on purpose and sent to the Eddies. There I found Olcott in love with spirits, as he became in love with the Masters later on. I was ordered to let him know that spiritual phenomena without the philosophy of Occultism were dangerous and misleading. I proved to him that all that mediums could do through spirits others could do at will without any spirits at all; that bells and thought-reading, raps and physical phenomena, could be achieved by anyone who had a

faculty of acting in his physical body through the organs of his astral body; and I had that faculty ever since I was four years old, as all my family know. I could make furniture move and objects fly apparently, and my astral arms that supported them remained invisible; all this ever before I knew even of Masters. Well, I told him the whole truth. I said to him that I had known Adepts, the "Brothers," not only in India and beyond Ladakh, but in Egypt and Syria, — for there are "Brothers" there to this day. The names of the "Mahatmas" were not even known at the time, since they are called so only in India. (5) That, whether they were called Rosicrucians, Kabalists, or Yogis — Adepts were everywhere Adepts — silent, secret, retiring, and who would never divulge themselves entirely to anyone, unless one did as I did — passed seven and ten years probation and given proofs of absolute devotion, and that he, or she, would keep silent even before a prospect and a threat of death. I fulfilled the requirements and am what I am; and this no Hodgson, no Coulombs, no Sellin, can take away from me. All I was allowed to say was — the truth: There is beyond the Himalayas a nucleus of Adepts, of various nationalities; and the Teschu Lama knows them, and they act together, and some of them are with him and yet remain unknown in their true character even to the average lamas — who are ignorant fools mostly. My Master and K. H. and several others I know personally are there, coming and going, and they are all in communication with Adepts in Egypt and Syria, and even Europe. I said and proved that they could perform marvellous phenomena; but I also said that it was rarely they would condescend to do so to satisfy enquirers. You were one of the few who had genuine communications with them; and if you doubt it now, I pity you, my poor friend, for you may repent one day for having lost your chance. (6)

Well, in New York already, Olcott and Judge went mad over the

thing; but they kept it secret enough then. When we went to India, their very names were never pronounced in London or on the way (one of the supposed proofs — that I had invented the Mahatmas after I had come to India — of Mr. A. O. Hume!) When we arrived, and Master coming to Bombay bodily, paid a visit to us at Girgaum, and several persons saw him, Wimbridge for one — Olcott became crazy. He was like Balaam's she-ass when she saw the angel! Then came Damodar, Servai, and several other fanatics, who began calling them "Mahatmas"; and, little by little, the Adepts were transformed into Gods on earth. They began to be appealed to, and made *puja* to, and were becoming with every day more legendary and miraculous. Now, if I tell you the answer I received from Keshow Pillai you will laugh, but it characterizes the thing. "But what is your idea of you Hindus about the Masters?" — I asked him one day when he prostrated himself flat before the picture in my golden locket. Then he told me that they (the Mahatmas) were their ancient Rishis, who had never died, and were some 700,000 years old. That they were represented as living invisibly in sacred trees, and when showing themselves were found to have long green hair, and their bodies shining like the moon, etc., etc. Well, between this idea of the Mahatmas and Olcott's rhapsodies, what could I do? I saw with terror and anger the false track they were all pursuing. The "Masters," as all thought, must be omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent. If a Hindu or Parsi sighed for a son, or a Government office, or was in trouble, and the Mahatmas never gave a sign of life — the good and faithful Parsi, the devoted Hindu, was unjustly treated. The Masters knew all; why did they not help the devotee? If a mistake or a flapdoodle was committed in the Society — "How could the Masters allow you or Olcott to do so?" we were asked in amazement. (7) The idea that the Masters were mortal men, limited even in their great powers, never crossed anyone's mind, though they wrote this themselves repeatedly. It was "modesty

and secretiveness" — people thought "How is it possible," the fools argued, "that the Mahatmas should not know all that was in every Theosophist's mind, and hear every word pronounced by each member?"

That to do so, and find out what the people thought, and hear what they said, the Masters had to use special psychological means, to take great trouble for it at the cost of labor and time — was something out of the range of the perceptions of their devotees. Is it Olcott's fault? Perhaps, to a degree. Is it mine? I absolutely deny it, and protest against the accusation. It is no one's fault. Human nature alone, and the failure of modern society and religions to furnish people with something higher and nobler than craving after money and honors — is at the bottom of it. Place this failure on one side, and the mischief and havoc produced in people's brains by modern spiritualism, and you have the enigma solved. Olcott to this day is sincere, true and devoted to the cause. He does and acts the best he knows how, and the mistakes and absurdities he has committed and commits to this day are due to something he lacks in the psychological portion of his brain, and he is not responsible for it. Loaded and heavy is his Karma, poor man, but much must be forgiven to him, for he has always erred through lack of right judgment, not from any vicious propensity. Olcott is thoroughly honest; he is as true as gold to his friends; he is as impersonal for himself as he is selfish and grasping for the Society; and his devotion and love for the Masters is such that he is ready to lay down his life any day for them if he thinks it will be agreeable to them and benefit the Society. Be just, above all, whatever you do or say. If anyone is to be blamed, it is I. I have desecrated the holy Truth by remaining too passive in the face of all this desecration, brought on by too much zeal and false ideas. My only justification is that I had work to do that would have been too much for four men, as you know. I

was always occupied with the *Theosophist* and ever in my room, shut up, having hardly time to see even the office Hindus. All was left to Olcott and Damodar, two fanatics. How I protested and tried to swim against the current, only Mr. Sinnett knows, and the Masters. Brown was crazy before he came to us, unasked and unexpected. C. Oakley was an occultist two years before he joined us.

You speak of hundreds that have been made "cowards" by Olcott. (8) I can show you several hundreds who have been saved through Theosophy from drunkenness, dissolute life, etc. Those who believed in a personal God believe in him now as they did before. Those who did not — are all the better in believing in the soul's immortality, if in nothing else. It is Sellin's thought, not yours — "the men and women ruined mentally and physically" by me and Olcott. Hubbe Schleiden is ruined only and solely by Sellin (9) aided by his own weakness.

No, dear Doctor, you are wrong and unjust; for Olcott never taught anyone "to sit down and expect favors from Mahatmas." On the contrary, he has always taught, verbally and in print, that no one was to expect favors from Mahatmas or God unless his own actions and merit forced Karma to do him justice in the end.

Where has Sellin heard Col. Olcott's Theosophy? Sellin had and has his head full of spiritualism and spiritual phenomena; he believes in spirits and their agency, which is worse even than believing too much in Mahatmas. We all of us have made mistakes, and are all more or less to blame. Why should you be so hard on poor Olcott, except what he has done personally against you, for which I am the first to blame him? But even here, it is not his fault. I have twenty pages of manuscript giving a detailed daily account of your supposed crimes and falseness, to prove to you that no flesh and blood could resist the proofs and

insinuations. I know you now, since Torre del Greco; I feared and dreaded you at Adyar — just because of those proofs. If you come, I will let you read the secret history of your life for two years, and you will recognize the handwriting. (10) And such manuscripts, as I have learned, have been sent all over the branches, and Olcott was the last to learn of it. What I have to tell you will show to you human nature and your own discernment in another light.

There are things it is impossible for me to write; and unless you come here — they will die with me. Olcott has nothing to do with all this. You are ignorant, it seems, of what took place since Christmas. Good-bye, then, and may your intuitions lead you to the Truth.

Yours ever,
H. P. B.

FOOTNOTES:

1. The reputed "Postscript" in No. 7, vol. xvi, of the *Theosophist*, goes to show that in this case H P.B. was wrong. H. ([return to text](#))
2. This refers to a certain intrigue, owing to which Col. Olcott was made to believe that I wanted to oust him from the presidential chair. — H. ([return to text](#))
3. When I went to Wiirzburg I found that the whole trouble resulted from foolish gossip, started by Babajee, concerning my relations with a certain lady member of the T. S. — H. ([return to text](#))
4. The great increase in numbers of the members of the T. S. was undoubtedly due to the fact that, attracted by the false glamor of phenomena, fools rushed in "where angels fear to tread." H. ([return to text](#))
5. In Ceylon everybody of high standing is called "Mahatma"; the

title seems to correspond to what in England is called "Esquire."

— H. ([return to text](#))

6. I could not doubt the existence of the Adepts after having been in communication with them; but I denied the existence of such beings as the Mahatmas were misrepresented to be.—H. ([return to text](#))

7. The representative of the Society for Psychic Research was awfully angry because the "Mahatmas" could not see the importance of appearing before him with their certificates and producing a few miracles for his gratification. See *The Talking Image of Urur*. — H. ([return to text](#))

8. In many minds the misconceptions regarding the "Mahatmas" gave rise to a superstitious fear and a false reliance upon unknown superiors. H. ([return to text](#))

9. A certain German professor and spiritualistic miracle-monger, who never could see a forest on account of the number of trees.—H. ([return to text](#))

10. These papers, filled with the most absurd denunciations against me, were concocted by Babajee out of jealousy and national hatred. — H. ([return to text](#))

The Path

DEVACHAN — *Bandusia Wakefield*

Devachan means literally the land of the Gods, and is probably so called because it is only the diviner aspect of man that can be in this state. It corresponds in some respects to what is called Heaven, being a state of happiness which is experienced after death. Such being the case, the question will probably at once arise, "How do you know anything about it, or that there is such a state?" Though it is the province of this paper only to tell what is taught in Theosophical literature regarding this state, yet it may be well to give a few of the reasons for believing in its existence and its ascribed character. And first, soul itself, being the highest, worthiest thing we know, would surely not be blotted out of existence, when even matter is known to be blotted out of existence, when even matter is known to be indestructible. In fact, no essence can be destroyed, though it may change its form.

Everywhere in nature we see alternate periods of activity and rest, subjectivity and objectivity. We see it in human as well as in lower forms of life on earth in the alternate periods of sleeping and waking, which are but copies of still greater similar periods. Nature conserves her energy as much in holding to one plan of progress as in any other way, and there is more reason to believe that she does it with the human soul than to believe the contrary, and that subjective spiritual states of being alternate with objective material ones. Then there is direct testimony regarding subjective states of consciousness of a high order, as people experience them under certain conditions even during earth-life.

An anesthetic which paralyzes the lower principles leaves the consciousness wide awake on higher planes, and the experience is most blissful, giving a taste of what the happiness of self-

conscious being on spiritual planes must be. Sometimes a high type of dream where all the lower principles are inactive does the same thing; and sometimes the lower instrument on coming to activity again is able to receive the record of the higher experience. The same thing also occurs under some trance conditions.

In the *Psychical Research Reports* (part 25) Prof. Ramsay tells of his subjective condition when *partly* anaesthetized. He says the tendency of his mind when not under this influence is that of scientific scepticism. "But under the influence of an anaesthetic all doubts vanish. . . . It is as if the veil which hides whence we come, what we are, and what will become of us, were suddenly rent, and as if a glimpse of the Absolute burst upon us. An overwhelming impression forced itself upon me that the state in which I then was, was reality; that now I had reached the true solution of the riddle of the Universe; . . . that all outside objects were merely passing reflections on the eternal mirror of my mind."

There was with him a "vivid conception of the ideal foundation of the Universe" and "immediate knowledge of his individual eternity;" but upon the cessation of anaesthesia and return to bodily sensation, he was again on his ordinary mental plane. This is the common experience, save that the memory of it is usually less vivid, being "often only an impression of having gone through an immensity of experience." Ordinary people have the experiences already given; but there are people whose evolution has been carried on far beyond the stage of ordinary people, and who can at will raise the centre of conscious activity from the lower to the higher planes and bring back the record of the higher experiences. They thus know what spiritual life untrammelled by the lower principles is, and it is from their teachings, so far as understood, that the present paper is written.

If what is said seems reasonable and fits in with the facts we know, it is certainly worthy of respectful consideration.

We find rest in a change of occupation, or change from one form of activity to another. In this sense Devachan is a state of rest. It is not cessation from all activity, but only from the lower forms which prevail on earth, while the higher forms are here much enhanced. Whatever belongs only to a physical body is of course left behind with that body. Hatred, envy, jealousy and all lower desires, the producers of pain, are left behind dormant and with them the pain they bring; while all pure, unselfish desires and feelings and all the nobler activities of the mind, being spiritual in their nature, continue without let or hindrance in a spiritual state. Whatever forces of this character were set in motion during earth-life will now go on to full and free expansion. Any pursuit of an ideal or abstract nature, such as poetry, music, art, philosophy, may still be carried on and progress made. Pure unselfish love here strengthens by exercise, and its waves reach down to earth in helpfulness. Devachan is not a condition of purely abstract spirituality, but of personal spirituality. It is an idealized continuation of all that was best and of a spiritual character in the last earth-life, and a realization of unfulfilled spiritual aspirations, a subjective state of unalloyed happiness. The spiritual aspect of the desires and lower mind unites with the higher triad, or spiritual principles, and gives color to the Devachanic entity and its experiences. According to its weakness or strength will be the poverty or richness of Devachan for any Ego, but for everyone, it will have all the richness, variety and happiness which that soul is capable of experiencing. There are as many degrees in this state as there are differently developed Egos, and each Ego is exactly suited. In no other sort of heaven than the one which each soul makes for itself could this be the case.

We know that on earth the same scenery and the same surroundings have very different effects upon different people, are interpreted in very different ways. One may be entranced with the beauty of a landscape, while another may see only how many dollars and cents there are in the forests and fields. To one certain vibrations are music, to another, noise; to one, other vibrations are a beautiful harmony of light and shade, color and form, that stirs the depths of his soul, while to another, the same vibrations are mere patches of color that touch no deeper chord than the external sense; but even the sense of color is an interpretation of the mind, for all that comes from without is vibration. Thus the appearances of this earth, which we account so real, are but the interpretations of the mind of the great world of vibrations that pour in upon it; and this mind continues its method upon a higher plane and still interprets the vibrations which reach it, but here only those can reach it which mean to it harmony, beauty, friends, friendship, love and other noble ideas and sentiments, for only such belong to this plane, and here only the higher aspect of mind is active.

Devachan is a subjective state compared to life on the physical plane; but there are many degrees of subjectivity, and this is not the highest. Being a subjective state, the ideas of space and time as we know them here are not applicable there; yet everything on that plane has as much reality and objectivity to the consciousness there as have the appearances of earth to the consciousness here. It is a natural state in which the soul finds itself on the removal of the limitations of the lower principles. The psychic and spiritual energies generated during earth-life are only partially carried out on earth, owing to material limitations, and on the removal of the latter these energies come into unhindered operation. They have their rise, expansion, decline and exhaustion in the Devachanic state, and when this is

accomplished, then other energies generated in earth-life, whose field is the physical plane, begin to operate, and the Ego is drawn back to rebirth.

Generally speaking, the length of time an Ego remains in Devachan depends upon the amount and strength of these psychic and spiritual energies. An Ego whose previous life had been wrapped almost entirely in material interests would have a short Devachan, while one whose life had been absorbed in spiritual interests would have a long one. The average length is said to be about 1500 years. There are exceptional cases of advanced Egos who are helped out of Devachan by Adepts before the natural expiration of their time, for the purpose of hastening their development and helping humanity.

Only advanced Egos are strong enough to endure this treatment; for not only is Devachan a natural state, but it is essential to the development of the great mass of Egos. The soul needs the rest which this change brings, it needs the opportunity to sift, correctly estimate and assimilate the higher experiences of earth-life, and to make progress in ideal lines already begun. Devachan supplies all this, refreshes and strengthens the soul on the spiritual side so that it is better fitted for its next struggle on earth. It gives a needed rest after the strain of earth-life, and is as necessary in the great life of the soul as sleep is in the short life of the body.

As a matter of justice to the Ego, Devachan is also essential, for it is impossible during earth-life to reap the effects of all the good thoughts and deeds and high aspirations of the soul, and this second field on the soul plane, which is really the field where the causes are sown, is also needed for the reaping of their effects. Here too are generated forces which have their effects in the period of embodiment, strengthening the spiritual aspect of the

next earth-life. The reason this field requires so much more time than the physical is because the more spiritual the more enduring anything is.

Through all we see a purpose in Devachan, and it is to help on the evolution of the soul through furnishing an opportunity for the adjustment of all karmic effects not adjustable in earth-life.

In these intervals between earth-lives we have closer touch with Reality, are nearer the plane where all selves are in unity than on earth; but we have to learn to feel this oneness on the plane of greatest separateness, so we come again and again into earth-life, with its confusions of personal interests, to accomplish the task.

To the extent that Devachan is removed from the Absolute Reality, to that extent it is an illusion; but it is much less an illusion than the physical plane, which is still farther removed from the eternal and unchangeable Truth. The farther any plane is removed from the One Reality the more illusory it is, and the more transitory all that pertains to it. So the objective life on this physical plane, which we are accustomed to look upon as so real, is but a passing illusion compared to the more spiritual and permanent life of Devachan. The denser the veils of matter, the more is Reality hidden. As there are still veils in Devachan, there is still illusion there, but these veils are thinner than on earth. The use of the word "dream" to describe this subjective state has led many astray, because the wrong meaning has been attached to "dream." Dream has been regarded in the west as something purely fanciful when not the result of a disordered stomach, while the fact is that the dream state when not affected by the body has more of reality in it than the waking. When the body is in a favorable condition these dreams are sometimes remembered. In these the soul is on its own plane, the very plane of Devachan. It sees about it loved ones who have passed from

earth, as well as those that are still embodied; and this is no delusion, for the soul-plane is one, and sympathetic souls are in touch whether embodied or disembodied. The delusion comes in waking hours when one thinks there was no reality in the dream experience. The death of the body simply removes one personality from the presence of others; it cannot change the relationship of the individualities, the spiritual selves. If these were united by strong ties of spiritual love and sympathy, the mere removal of an obstruction, of a few veils of matter, does not make them any further apart. To them there is no space, and the spiritual, magnetic currents between them still hold. Hence it is that the unselfish love of a mother in Devachan is a protecting influence to her child on earth. The higher Ego of that child is on her own plane, and it is no illusion that she should sense its presence, and as that presence to her on earth wore a certain garb, she clothes it again in the same, the body of her child. Though this higher connection and inter-relation remains, yet being as it is on the plane of the higher Ego, there can come into it nothing pertaining to the sins and sorrows of earth, and so the happiness of the Devachani is secured.

The laws that operate below are but reflections of those on higher planes. Here we are susceptible to currents of thought, are more or less open to receive whatever is in harmony with our own trend. Why should not two souls of like aspiration and pursuit, dwelling each in its own Devachanic world, mutually influence each other by the sympathetic currents between them? It must be so, as that plane is still nearer the Reality where all is One than is this plane of separateness, the earth. There is a real and continuous interchange of thought and feeling of the purest kind on the inner planes between the dweller in Devachan and his real friends whether there or on earth, and this is not merely memory, though it "goes on under conditions made up of the memories of

earth." Every transmitted wave of thought or feeling from a friend is clothed by the mind with the form of that friend. This little dress may be called illusion, but the continuous intercourse of soul to soul is a transcendent reality. Our illusion even here on earth is the "taking of the outer form for the thing itself."

This unbroken connection of souls remaining, we see the possibility of souls in bliss giving help to those still struggling on the earth. For strong loving thoughts and desires for their highest good are in a measure felt by embodied souls who are thus stimulated to higher endeavor and protected from their own worse selves. Those who on earth worked for some cause for the good of men still carry it on in thought, the radiating energy of which may inspire others still on earth and take expression in their words and deeds. Here for us is a great hope in beginning any true work for humanity. We do not lay it down, but help to carry it on in another way, till we are ready again to take it up once more on earth. And death too is stripped of its terrors, for there is no cessation of the higher activities, no stop to true progress, no severance of real friends. Death is truly a "benediction of nature upon all that is good in us."

"Never the spirit was born; the spirit shall cease to be never;
Never was time it was not; End and Beginning are dreams.
Birthless and deathless and changeless remaineth the spirit
forever;
Death hath not touched it all, dead though the house of it seems!"

"Nay, but as when one layeth
His worn-out robes away,
And, taking new ones, sayeth,
'These will I wear today!'
So putteth by the spirit
Lightly its garb of flesh,

And passeth to inherit
A residence afresh."

The Path