

# THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

KATHERINE TINGLEY, EDITOR

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THE DUTY of the Theosophical Society is to keep alive in man his spiritual intuition. — *H. P. Blavatsky*

## H. P. BLAVATSKY ON THE MISSION OF THEOSOPHY: by H. T. Edge, M. A.



THIS quotation from H. P. Blavatsky is chosen for a starting-point because it so aptly sums up her conception of the purpose of the Society she founded. The welfare of man is dependent on his recognition of the Divinity of his essential nature; and when he forgets this, he lapses into materialism. The Theosophical Society was founded for the express purpose of preventing materialism from proceeding to such lengths as to destroy civilization. Such movements have been initiated, with the same object, many other times in human history.

The word "spiritual" has unfortunately lost most of its meaning, through being used in a vague theological sense, and through being applied to things which are only psychic or astral. What it meant in the mind of H. P. Blavatsky is shown by the following:

From the Theosophist must radiate those higher spiritual forces which alone can regenerate his fellow-men.

Great powers are often the impediments to spiritual and right conceptions.

This is enough to show that the spiritual intuition meant is not of the vague unpractical kind or of the vainglorious kind. And as to intuition:

Nature gives up her innermost secrets and imparts true wisdom only to him who seeks truth for its own sake and who craves knowledge in order to confer benefits on others, not on his own unimportant personality.

In short, it is clear that by "spiritual intuition" H. P. Blavatsky meant the will and the wisdom to do right and to live unselfishly. The relation between spiritual and other powers is shown here:

Through Theosophy man's mental and psychic growth will proceed in harmony with his moral improvement.

The order of words in this sentence unmistakably indicates that the moral improvement goes first; otherwise the order of the words

would have been inverted. But in any case there is the most ample evidence throughout H. P. Blavatsky's writings that such was her meaning; upon no point is she more insistent. This indeed makes all the difference between Wisdom and false knowledge, or between the use and abuse of faculties. Man's whole life is a contest between right motives and the impulsive forces of selfish desire; and when the crisis comes, and he must choose definitely between these powers, as to which shall rule in the future, there is danger that he will choose wrongly and will make all his faculties subservient to desire. He thus enters upon a path which leads him ever further from the light, and he must either lose his Soul or painfully retrieve his steps. To guard against this possibility, it is essential to have a firm moral basis; or, in other words, to observe those Spiritual laws of nature which underlie all other laws.

The ancient doctrine, as thus stated, suggests a "heresy" — namely, that mental and psychic development should be aimed at, in the hope, or under the plea, that moral improvement will be the logical sequel. This is proved both philosophically and by experience to be wrong. The history of people who have tried to follow this path is one of self-undoing and self-deception, ending in catastrophe. Perhaps the fault is licentiousness. Having failed to overcome this, yet loath to follow the beaten path of profligacy, seeking to gratify at once their desires and their self-respect, they at last take refuge in an unholy alliance of sanctity and indulgence, and *deify* their passions. Thus have been invented many profligate and licentious cults, since the world began, and instances of such we see in our day. Or perhaps the obstacle is love of approbation. This motive has, let us say, been lurking behind every thought and deed of the aspirant to knowledge; and instead of being rooted up, has been suffered to grow. At last it waxes strong enough to overthrow all better motives, and the aspirant forsakes the path of duty and enters on a career of self-glorification. But "the Devil drives a hard bargain," and the career is short-lived and full of tribulation. Desperate expedients are resorted to, in order to secure the coveted adulation, so necessary to life. Vanity, grown inordinate, warps the judgment and blinds the eyes to what otherwise would be obvious folly. In this way many wild and weird gospels have been preached, since time began; and such again are heard in our own day.

Theosophy is intended to benefit individuals and races; hence it

teaches the eternal truth that moral principle always has the first place.

Important and excellent are the Spiritual powers in man, about which we have the following:

The Spirit in man — the direct ray of the Universal Spirit — has at last awakened.

Let once man's immortal spirit take possession of the temple of his body, and his own divine humanity will redeem him.

The Theosophist must himself be a center of spiritual action.

The powers and forces of animal nature can be used by the selfish and revengeful, as much as by the unselfish and all-forgiving; the powers and forces of Spirit lend themselves only to the perfectly pure in heart — and this is DIVINE MAGIC.

It has been said that sacrifice is the only *real* deed that man does. On such occasions the real Man comes forth and acts. The mind realizes that human nature contains something that is better than personal desire. And the deed is done in fulfilment of this higher incentive. We have had about enough of the doctrine that desire rules the world and is the final law of life. It is nothing of the sort; such a universal strife and struggle could but end in universal destruction. But it is easy to discern in nature the law of sacrifice, if we only look for it. Those who aspire to spiritual powers, said the Teacher, must be ready to recognize this fundamental law; otherwise their efforts will result merely in the intensification of their own weaknesses. The psychic, in alliance with the passional, is a terrible foe to man. Moreover, H. P. Blavatsky's message was for humanity; and the uprooting of selfishness is the only medicine for society. The development of psychic powers is no way to uproot selfishness.

To merit the honorable title of Theosophist, one must be an altruist above all, one ever ready to help equally foe or friend, to act rather than to speak, and to urge others to action while never losing an opportunity to work himself.

Altruism is an integral part of self-development.

The one terrible and only cause of the disturbance of Harmony is Selfishness.

Theosophy gives to every sincere man or woman an ideal to live for.

Theosophy is the quintessence of duty.

Theosophy is the most serious movement of this age.

Theosophy has to inculcate ethics.

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

Theosophy teaches self-abnegation, but does not teach rash and useless self-sacrifice, nor does it justify fanaticism.

The Theosophical idea of charity means personal exertion for others.

The above quotations, which are but a few samples from an exhaustless mine, show beyond doubt H. P. Blavatsky's purpose, and also the source of her heroic strength. She surely was endowed with Spiritual powers. And these are the powers to be coveted by the aspirant to enlightenment. And what man or woman, who has felt the gloom and airlessness of self-satisfaction, the hopelessness of the pursuit of mere personal happiness, and who at times has glimpsed the nobler diviner possibilities of life, could be attracted by those ideals of self-development which only add to the burden of self-consciousness and shut the personality off more than ever from its unity with the race? The Divine Harmony is the only goal that will satisfy; and Duty, rather than pleasure, is the guide.

The Spiritual Intuition of humanity is indeed in need of being kept alive, if it is not to be strangled by the pursuit of false ideals. We see individuals and nations losing all that is of real and lasting value, in order to grasp things which they cannot keep and whose value is fictitious and uncertain. Balzac said that the only things which gave life and vigor to individuals and to nations were great ideals, whereas nearly everybody was absorbed in himself and the age had become "utilitarian." It is a common enough saying, and we can hear it preached anywhere; but how about the remedy? Mere exhortations will not suffice. The Theosophical movement is a titanic force poured into modern society and it touches life at all points, awakening man to new activity on every plane. It is an intellectual force as well as a moral force — and the two are really one, when each is sublimated.

The Theosophical Society will permeate the great mass of intelligent people with its noble ideals.

The ethics of Theosophy are the essence and cream of the world's ethics.

Theosophy *alone* can eradicate the selfishness ingrained in Western nations.

These quotations show what H. P. Blavatsky thought of the mission of Theosophy, and the following show how strongly she insisted on altruism as the indispensable quality of the aspirant to Wisdom.

Self-Knowledge is of loving deeds the child.

We have never attained or even understood the powers of the human heart.

Self-sacrifice is the highest standard of Theosophy.

It is not by studying Occultism for selfish ends, for the gratification of one's personal ambition, pride, or vanity, that one can ever reach the true goal — that of helping suffering humanity.

Compassion is the Law of Laws — eternal harmony.

To feel "Compassion" without an adequate practical result is not Altruism. The first of the Theosophical duties is to do one's duty by all men.

For every flower of love and charity you plant in your neighbor's garden, a loathsome weed will disappear from your own.

There is no happiness for one who is ever thinking of self and forgetting all other selves.

The duty — let alone happiness — of every Theosophist is certainly to help others to carry their burden.

A Theosophist should gain the wisdom to help others effectually, not blindly.

The human heart has not yet fully uttered itself.

If unable to toil for humanity, work for the few who need your help.

The principle of Brotherhood is one of the eternal truths that govern the world's progress.

Step out of sunlight into shade to make more room for others.

The dynamic force that alone can move the world is Divine Compassion, with its twin, Divine Intelligence; and each one of these two evokes the other. Theosophy wages war against ignorance and mistaken beliefs, as well as against want of heart. Theosophy can stand by a man in that bitterness of soul when all life seems a cruel mockery — a crisis that comes to every man of feeling, whatever his circumstances. This travail of the soul is like the pangs of a new birth; and though we may rebel, we can endure it and pass safely through it, if we know that back of the storm-clouds there shines the eternal light of the Spirit — our very Self which is striving to reveal itself to the tottering mind.

Thus Theosophy is an invincible power, for it must touch men's hearts everywhere, and influence permanently even those who at first reject it. For the truth strikes home and is recognized. And Theosophy will survive all its counterfeits that are trying to live on it and exploit its benefits; for the latter are very mortal, while the truth is immortal. Finally let us give the following quotation from H. P. Blavatsky:

Do you not think there must be something very noble, very exalted, very true, behind the Society, when the leaders and the founders of the movement still continue to work for it with all their strength? They sacrifice to it all comfort, all worldly prosperity and success, even to their good name and reputation, to receive in return incessant and ceaseless obloquy, relentless persecution, untiring slander, constant ingratitude and misunderstanding of their best efforts, blows and buffets from all sides — when by simply dropping their work they would find themselves immediately released from every responsibility, shielded from every further attack.

**POMPEII: by C. J. Ryan**

THE unexpected discovery of the ancient harbor of Pompeii, which has quickly followed the wonderful discoveries in the Street of Abundance, has attracted wide attention in the last few months. Vesuvius, that terrible monster that shook itself out of an age-long sleep one day and overwhelmed the gay city, is again an object of apprehension. According to Professor Alessandro Malladra, of the Vesuvius Observatory, the daring explorer of the interior of the smoking crater, the signs point to the fact that a new period of eruption has begun which will probably not end without a violent outbreak.

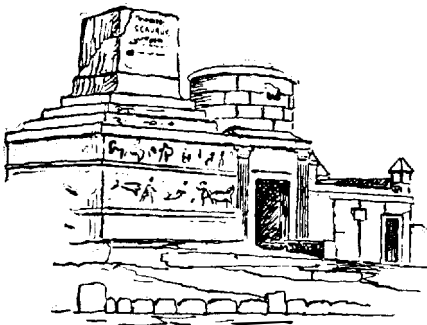
While the excavation of Pompeii is steadily going on, that of its sister city of Herculaneum has languished, but recent reports say that Herculaneum is now to be thoroughly explored. The cost will be great, for it is buried deeply beneath about one hundred feet of extremely hard volcanic tufa. Shafts sunk in 1684 led to the discovery of a few statues and columns of great beauty, but the work was so costly and difficult that it was soon abandoned. In 1748 the excavators were accidentally attracted to the easier digging of the softer material under which Pompeii is buried, though no one knew the name or the importance of the remains they had hit upon. Within seven years 738 pictures, some of great interest, 350 statues, and 1647 other objects were recovered and placed in the Royal Museum at Naples, and from that time, with short intermissions, the work has never ceased.

Vesuvius, to which we owe both the destruction and preservation of Pompeii and Herculaneum, had been peaceful for many centuries before the great eruption of 79 A. D. In fact, though the volcanic nature of Calabria was well known, Vesuvius was supposed to be quite extinct. Strabo, in 25 A. D., described it as clothed with fertile soil right up to the nearly level summit, which he says was stony and apparently at some distant time had been subjected to the action of fire (Bk. v, chap iv, §8). The slopes were overgrown by luxuriant vegetation and the wooded landscape was a fit retreat for the gods. The beauty of the view from the top was extolled by Tacitus, who speaks of the succession of picturesque towns which stretched for miles along the shores of the bay (*Ann.* iv, 67). Spartacus, the revolted gladiator, and his band of ten thousand slaves, took refuge in the fastnesses of the sleeping crater in 73 B. C., and descended from its shelter upon the praetor Claudius Pulcher to destroy his camp and defeat his troops.

With the tremendous outbreak of 79 A. D. the scene was completely changed. Since its first taste of blood within the historic period the fiery giant, Vesuvius, has not long been content without fresh victims. Till about 1130 A. D. there were frequent and severe eruptions, but after that time there appear to have been five centuries of comparative quiet. In 1631 it again broke out with great violence, and has continued to be more or less active ever since. Owing to its quiescence in antique times it is not remarkable that the classic poets did not associate it with supernatural terrors, but during the Middle Ages superstitious fears arose, and the belief became general that in its fires and smoke the boundary of hell was visibly advanced among the living. Legends related that the wicked were sometimes plunged into its sulphureous abysses almost before the breath had left their bodies, and when any prominent and wealthy sinner died the peasantry declared that its flames belched forth with extra fury.

The great earthquake of February 63 A. D., which partially wrecked Pompeii, was the first premonition of danger, and it came as an astonishing surprise to the inhabitants, who were only accustomed to slight shocks in the summertime, if at all. For some time they were doubtful whether it was worth while to repair the damages, but after a while, finding that all was quiet, they set to work with vigor, and the private houses and most of the public buildings were all rebuilt when the final catastrophe came and put an end to their labors.

Pompeii is about twenty-one miles from Naples, and stands on rising ground surrounded by a fertile plain, and close to the navigable stream Sarno. The ancient road leading from the direction of Rome



is very impressively bordered by large and handsome tombs of Pompeiian notables for a long distance from the city, which is entered by the unimposing Gate of Herculaneum. Several of the highways which leave the city in other directions are also lined with tombs, and future excavations will probably show that all the roads were decorated in the same way. The an-

cients looked upon the memorials of death with more wholesome feelings than we do.

Upon entering the city the twentieth century seems to vanish, and

one seems to be living in the days of the early Roman Empire. Its decline and fall are far off in the future; the Rome of Nero has just been destroyed by fire, the Colosseum and the Arch of Titus are in



process of building; Christianity, then merely another insignificant Oriental sect among many, has made no impression upon the world, and the checkered centuries of barbarism, of change and revival, which we conceitedly fancy the most important of all human periods — the Middle Ages and their modern successors — are still in the mysterious womb of Time. The great Egyptian civilization is outwardly firm and will last several hundred years, though its vitality has gone, and the Sacred Mysteries will be at least formally celebrated in Greece for many generations. The

modernity of Pompeii is startling. It has lain wrapped in an enchanted sleep awaiting the spade of the excavator for its awakening to what is almost a re-embodiment, at least in outward appearance.

The history of Pompeii is a brief, and until its last years, an uneventful one. The city owes its small measure of importance to its defensible position and its situation near the mouth of the Sarno river. It was the port of the neighboring towns in the interior. Mythology says that Campania, once peopled by giants, was colonized by Hercules. Whatever historical foundation this may have, we are first on firm ground when we hear of its conquest by the Samnites, the previous inhabitants having been Oscans, Etruscans, and Pelasgians. About the third century B. C. it was conquered by Rome, and for a while it increased in wealth and population, equipping itself with handsome public buildings and fine houses. Pompeii took sides against Rome in the Social War of 91-88 B. C. and endured a long siege under Sulla. After its fall, Sulla partially dismantled the fortifications, but for some unknown reason did not severely punish the inhabitants. Stabiae, its neighbor to the south, was razed to the ground, and Pompeii succeeded to its trade, flourishing exceedingly until the first stroke of disaster, the earthquake of 63 A. D. The whole of Campania suffered from this, but the heaviest blows fell



upon Pompeii and Herculaneum; the Roman Senate seriously considered whether Pompeii should be allowed to rebuild. In spite of the rapid restorations that were finally carried out, the traces of the earthquake are very clear. The temples and other colonnaded buildings suffered most severely. When the last day came the Forum was still an area of rebuilding; the Temple of Apollo was just finished; but the great Temple of Jupiter was in complete ruin. Many of the private houses show a curious juxtaposition of the old and the new, and nearly every building was covered with fresh stucco to disguise the repairs, and decorated anew in what is called the Fourth or Intricate Style of painting. Though its life was very short, this late style is what is generally associated with the name Pompeian, for most of the earlier work had perished, being replaced by the newer, lighter, and more fanciful designs.

The general plan of Pompeii was an irregular oval; its walls were about five kilometers (3 miles) in circumference; they contained eight gates, two still covered. The arrangement of the streets is fairly regular, the principal thoroughfares crossing at right angles or nearly so. Though the streets are narrow from a modern standpoint, the city is a good example of rational town-planning. Mercury Street, the widest, is only 32 feet wide. This want of breadth was probably not considered important in view of the shade obtained thereby, and there must have been need to economize space within the confining walls. The streets were carefully paved and had sidewalks and stepping-stones for use when they were flooded with rushing water. In some of the principal thoroughfares wheeled traffic was not permitted. Sixteen hundred years later the streets of Paris and London were in far worse condition, though rather wider, than those of Pompeii.

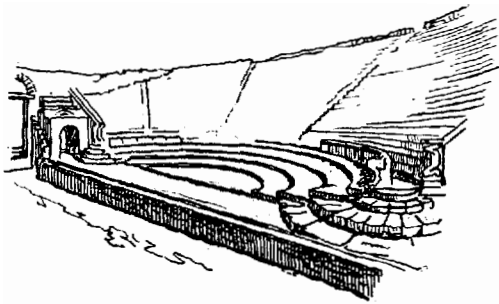
As the stores are exposed to view, the various trades of their occupiers are frequently traced by means of painted signs, tools, remains of food, etc. Several taverns and wine-shops have been found with heating apparatus for providing the warm drinks so popular with the Romans. The inns were not of a high class because the wealthy traveler expected to stay at his own villas, of which he would have several, or be entertained at a friend's house. Cicero had a villa here. Next to the fascination of being able to walk in the actual streets of a town of antiquity, so marvelously fossilized for our study and enjoyment, comes the possibility of examining a multitude of the small ob-

jects of everyday life constantly being discovered. By means of these we have proved that the ancients had nearly all the conveniences and most of the luxuries of a modern city. In fact, the people of even such a second rate place as Pompeii had far more comforts and means of satisfying the artificial desires of a complex civilization than the inhabitants of large cities during the Middle Ages and later. The list of trades and occupations is a very long one. It includes all the essential trades such as building, carpentering, pottery-making, tailoring, shoemaking, tanning, laundrying, furniture-making, baking, carriage-making, barbering, and dyeing. Banking was a well-established business, and there were numerous goldsmiths, fruit and poultry merchants, fishermen, muleteers, porters, and apprentices. Pompeii was famous for its fish-sauces. Olive oil was manufactured in the vicinity; the farm-villa at Bosco Reale, where one hundred and three silver vases were recently found, has a complete plant for this purpose. Among the tools which fill the cases of the Naples Museum a number of very modern-looking surgical instruments in bronze are conspicuous.

The Forum was, of course, the focus and center of the life of the city. It was surrounded by colonnades and dominated by temples, and decorated by numerous statues. Near the Forum were the markets, one of which, the Macellum, was a magnificent building, containing Carrara marble columns and statues, and walls painted with scenes from Homer and the classical mythology. At the west end of the Forum stands the Basilica, the center of the legal and administrative activities. It is the largest and one of the earliest buildings in Pompeii. It is one hundred and eighty feet long and eighty feet wide. Twenty-eight handsomely painted Ionic columns, over thirty-three feet high divide the interior into a nave and two side aisles with a space at each end. Pompeii had a splendid water supply, and three large public bathing establishments have been found. These baths are in far better preservation than those in Rome, and, although they are on a smaller scale, it is from them that we have derived accurate knowledge of the methods of heating and other interesting details of these characteristically Roman buildings.

The temples of Pompeii are more interesting historically than aesthetically. The temple called (without any foundation) after Hercules, in the Triangular Forum, near the two Theaters, is in the pure Greek Doric style, and is very old, but, unfortunately, there is very little left of it. It stands upon a commanding site and when perfect must have

been a striking and magnificent building. There are two semi-Greek temples in Pompeii, but the majority of the temples are distinctly Roman in design. The finest of these was the temple of Jupiter at the northern end of the Forum. It was raised high upon the customary Roman *podium* or basement and had a portico of six very large Corinthian pillars. It is in complete ruin. A small temple dedicated to Isis of the Egyptian cult, rebuilt after the earthquake, is in fair condition. It is of particular interest on account of being the only existing temple of the mystic cult in Italy. It originally contained a beautiful statue of Isis with the sistrum in her hand. Tablets with hieroglyphic inscriptions were found on two altars, and the style of decoration has a decidedly Egyptian cast.



The theater was an essential of life to the Romans, and Pompeii possessed two, one an open-air theater holding 5000 people, the other a smaller covered one with 1500 seats; both were of the ordinary semi-circular shape. Little is known of the kind of plays that pleased the Pompeiians,

but they were probably of the lighter sort as a rule, though an occasional heavy Latin tragedy gave opportunities for political points to be brought out. From an inscription on a metallic ticket of admission it is supposed that the noble dramas of Aeschylus were sometimes presented. The names of a few favorite actors have been found, and even that of an actress, Rotica.

The great Amphitheater, used for gladiatorial combats and such spectacular displays, held 20,000 people, and is remarkable for being the oldest structure of its kind in existence. It was here, during a performance, that a free fight took place between the Pompeiians and visitors from Nuceria, which resulted in the Roman Senate, under Nero, forbidding any gladiatorial shows for ten years.

Interesting and instructive as the remains of the public buildings in Pompeii are, it is the wonderful preservation of many of the private houses that make the fossil city of unique importance. The habits of the people have been revealed and the technical terms and obscurities of Vitruvius and other writers on architecture made comprehen-

sible. The most complete Pompeiian house of the later time consisted of two interior courts, surrounded by rooms, and an upper story of less important chambers. The *Atrium*, the court nearest the street, had an opening in the center of the roof to let in the light and air.



The rain which penetrated this *Compluvium* was caught by a shallow tank which formed a beautiful decorative feature in the center of the mosaic floor. The second court, open to the sky, and with flowers growing in the central space, was surrounded by a colonnade, hence the name *peristyle*. Beyond the Peristyle there was another garden, if space permitted. If not, trees, flowers, and birds

were often painted on the back wall. The whole interior of the house was colored and decorated with mural paintings of great beauty and interest. Architectural effect has been carefully studied in the design and decoration of the Pompeiian house, a vista of nearly three hundred feet being obtained from the outer door to the garden wall, varied by a pleasing play of light and shade upon the richly colored surfaces, and productive of a more beautiful effect than has been obtained in almost any modern building. In sharp contrast with the richness of the interiors is the simplicity of the exteriors, and, although glass windows, and, as the new discoveries in the Street of Abundance have just proved, handsome balconies, were frequently introduced in the upper stories, the ancient principle of lighting and airing by means of interior courts was not greatly departed from. The Moorish houses still existing in Spain present many of the Pompeiian characteristics. Built into the front and sides of the Pompeiian house we commonly find a number of small shops not connected with it, but let to merchants.

Pompeii has provided us with more knowledge of ancient painting than any other source. The private houses, the temples, and other public buildings, were adorned lavishly with wall paintings and mosaics. The subjects include elaborate compositions of figures, historical and mythological scenes, and representations of the daily life of the people. Though art was not at its highest level, there is reason

to believe that it was not decaying, and the pictures were not mere reproductions of ancient Greek masterpieces. Bright and picturesque landscapes were popular, many being Egyptian scenes. Perspective,



afterwards lost until the Renaissance, was fairly well understood. The charming little cupids, the "little loves" of Theocritus, that flutter through Greek Alexandrine literature, are everywhere in Pompeii. Riding, fishing, hunting, or playing at business, these elfin mockers of mortal folk offer a sportive commentary on all the occupations of contemporary life. The pictures are not exactly frescoes, but are painted with colors mixed with lime laid upon a very fine stucco made of powdered marble. Several famous bronze statuettes, such as *The Dancing Faun*, and *The Listening Dionysus*, were found in

Pompeii. When we consider the good taste and artistic feeling shown in the best pictures, statues, and decoration, of such an unimportant provincial town as Pompeii, we cannot but wonder what must have been the glories of the neighboring large and opulent cities of Neapolis and Capua.

Until lately Pompeii was looked upon as a great archaeological mine from which all the treasures were to be carried off to be preserved in formal glass cases in collections. For more than two centuries the city was ransacked for marbles and building material as well as for art treasures. A change in policy has now taken place and the efforts of the excavators are now directed towards the preservation and reconstruction of the remainder of the city. For instance, every fragment of a house lately found by Professor Spinazzola near the Gate of Nola has been carefully preserved and put together with such care that the mansion stands now, with its furniture, almost as it was more than eighteen centuries ago. The skeletons and the impressions in the hardened ashes of the bodies of the escaping occupants are to be seen in the places where they fell, and even the name of the owner, Obellius Firmus, is visible, scratched on the walls in a childish hand. One of the servants had climbed a tree, but the branch broke under him, and he was buried while still clinging to it. In the Street of Abundance, Professor Spinazzola found many houses with balconies — a most un-

expected discovery — and one was decorated with spiral columns, hitherto unknown in Pompeii. Another contained a bird-cage. It has been made clear, from the recent discoveries, that the streets were not so dull and monotonous as was formerly believed. Many buildings have their walls covered by inscriptions recommending candidates for the municipal elections; some contain the names of women as nominators. Electioneering — in which women took an active part — was a fine art in Pompeii.

While there are many unexpected revelations to be looked forward to in Pompeii, the exploration of Herculaneum will probably bring to light a higher class of artistic products, and possibly some unknown manuscripts, if we may judge by what has already been found.

Only a few short years ago Troy was regarded as a mythical city, and the magnificent ruins of Central America and Peru were unknown. Pompeii and Herculaneum were apparently lost forever. When we consider how few relics of antiquity remain or have yet been discovered in comparison with the vast number of objects that once existed in the great civilizations of the past, we ought to be very modest in our criticism of the customs and conditions of the vanished races. The evolution of man is a very slow process; as far back as we can go in ancient Egypt human nature seems to have been much the same as it is today.

### THE ESSENTIAL IN THEOSOPHY: by Osvald Sirén, PH. D.,

Professor of the History of Art, University of Stockholm



**I**F one should ask me the question: What is the essential in Theosophy? I should without hesitation reply: "The Life." Theosophy is not, in respect to its essential nature, a new system, but it is a practical thing, an ethical movement, a positive force, which does not come to mankind saying: "You shall believe," but saying: "You shall *be*"; "You shall *live*." It does not tear down anything true and good; it does not oppose honorable and sane conditions which in any way might be employed to elevate and ennoble individual life. Theosophy is not in the ordinary sense a religious form, but it is religion for the reason that it is life.

Religion, or more correctly, the several church creeds which by slow

stages become established, consists, generally, of a small kernel of life enclosed in a shell of theological formulas which are considered necessary, in order, as far as possible, to distinguish one church from the other churches. And it is incorrect to refer to Theosophy as being heathenism or as being Christianity, because either a heathen or a Christian can be a Theosophist if he is conscious of the divine essence in his own heart and faithfully tries to follow its promptings; or, to quote the noble heathen in *The Lost Athenian*, "the difference between what is holy for thee and what is holy for me refers only to the form, not to the spirit." And since Christ's efforts were chiefly devoted to arousing mankind and teaching mankind that they were all God's children — that is to say, that each possesses a higher divine nature — it must be that his real successors are rightly called Theosophists, their lives, their fidelity to the divine Self, is what makes them Theosophists. To the Theosophist human brotherhood is a fact in nature and the divine is a living reality in his heart.

In theological and philosophical questions a Theosophist may entertain whatever opinions he chooses, provided only that in thought, word, and act, he cultivate his inner divine nature — the imperishable in man, which survives and is mightier than all creeds, that which is in all and which gathers together the whole of humanity into one great family. It is consequently erroneous to think that Theosophy signifies or enforces any one creed; it signifies only an appeal to reflection, to sincerity, to courage to follow the highest persuasions, the cleanest motives, of which we are capable. To him who loyally listens to such an appeal is unfolded also the Christ spirit. For him no longer does the value of religion lie in mythological or theological conclusions; his conclusions are not affected by those who tear down, or build up only with words.

It is now perhaps easier to realize why it is that the essential in Theosophy is life — or, more accurately stated, something which can only be expressed through life: it is this which constitutes the foundation for all high moral conduct, and which, popularly stated, takes the form of brotherhood; it is the antithesis of selfishness and egotism. We assert that brotherhood is a fact in nature, therefore that a common divine life permeates the whole of nature — that in which "we live and move and have our being." In this at least there is nothing foreign to Christianity. Let us take an example.

When do we consider that a human being reaches the highest?

When does he most clearly and entirely express the noblest characteristics of human nature? Is it not when he forgets himself for something greater? when, through self-conquest, through courage and devotion, he becomes a hero in the trials of peace or of war? when he sacrifices himself (his lower personality) for an inspiring cause? when he goes to his death, perhaps, for his country, or for a fellow man? We bestow on such a man our applause and our honors independently of what creeds or what views of life he may have entertained. His example becomes a support and an incentive to others. Such a man has, through firm resolution, or by long-continued loyal work, or through profound devotion, reached forward to the point where life's lower inclinations no longer enchain him, and so the indwelling higher power is able to act untrammled and to raise him to the heroic deed.

When we see this in life and deeds, we call it *honor* and *heroism*, and we are forced to admit that human nature is not so utterly ruined as certain theologians and pessimists teach. There is evidently something — let us call it heart-force — which is able to break through all forms of belief and mental dogmas — a creative power whose expression is action and whose essence is life. At core it is the same power which enlightens the artist in his noblest creations, which blossoms in the verse which springs from the poet's heart; and whether this fruition is the result of a momentary flaming transport or is the consequence of a long loyal life strife, in either event it is in essence, life — an uplifting, inspiring power. It is when this power is liberated that the human being first truly begins his career as a god-illuminated being. It is for such an enfranchisement that Theosophy strives, but the work can only be wrought through the agency of our conduct.

In doing this, education is the first great factor, a true knowledge of human nature is of the most momentous consequence. Much of such knowledge is overlooked in the (in large part) materialistic intellectuality of the period. Theosophy seeks to restore this neglected education by emphasizing the essential truths which are to be found in the great world-religions, and to be found also in many of the greatest thinkers of the ages. And, quite naturally, we find it in the Christian teachings.

Jesus has often in metaphor alluded to this inner power, which, as I have said, Theosophy is striving to awaken into activity. He calls it "the Father's Will," or "God's Will." "Because every one who



does the will of my Father which is in heaven is my brother, my sister, my mother." This is a distinct reference to the spiritual unity which binds mankind into a single family. St. Paul calls it "the Spirit of God which dwells in you," — "for as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God . . . and if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." (*Romans*, viii, 14, 17.)

If this spiritual power is a fact — a proof of God's existence in the widest sense — let us not dwell on profitless speculations as to whence it came or on its ultimate definition (if such a definition is indeed possible), but let us rather agree that this power is inexhaustible and that it is intended for our use in the sense that we are able to manifest it. When human beings create the gods they always create them after their own image however much they may afterwards seek to adorn and idealize them. The human conception works out the Supreme in outline: ideas are as little able as art to exist without a personal form. When mankind meditates on God or on God's existence, or the like, it is only about the forms of thought that the battle wages. Life itself, which lies behind, which upholds all, which flows through the human heart, is not reached by words and precise definition; it can only be symbolically stated. In a sense the Theosophist also speaks of God but he knows that so soon as he defines God, God no longer corresponds to the Reality. Ideas stand in the same relation to the divine principle as do garments to the person: they are outgrown or burst asunder simply from the force of the life within.

We outrage patience and peace in our speculations about the universe and It which is omnipresent therein and thereover. We ought to study our own inner natures more. All light comes from within; from without only other people's opinions reach us. Each one who deeply meditates is conscious of a presence within beyond the reach of thought, of a power for good which speaks with the voice of knowledge and commands to nobler effort. This power has its source in our divine primeval Self — the divine Ego — the true Self. The divine Self rises above all conceptions of God because these last-named are no more than the highest ideas which the power of thought can reach and they bear traces of the imperfections which inhere in the originator's mind. If it is possible for a man to become so ennobled as to raise himself above thought into a higher and clearer consciousness it would be for him a revelation which would cause all speculation over the divine nature to seem paltry and foolish. (*Theosophical Manual* No. 4.)

I have already, in the introduction, emphasized the fact that The-

osophy cannot be considered as a "confession of faith" (it has no ecclesiastical dogmas, it has no churches, no priesthood, and membership in the society requires only an earnest effort to live according to the principles of brotherhood); it cannot be considered as a form of religion but rather as a manifestation of the religion of the human heart. This also indicates that the essence of Theosophy is life. Religion is derived from *religare*, to bind together, and almost certainly signifies the binding together of humanity or the uniting with the divine. This is, popularly expressed, religion's purpose. Religion would show the way or the means by which we may reach a union with the higher consciousness.

To reach this point can the theological definitions of God's attributes, and of the nature of God be of any help? For those who sincerely seek a union with the divine, or, according to the Bible form of expression, seek to live with God, must this (God) finally cease to be something lying outside — a more or less sharply-defined personality — it must by degrees become an inner reality which can be perceived in moments of deep introspection or when we are subjected to the severest trials. Finally it must be something which we can evoke at will to our help. "In short we may say that the divine human ego is a ray from the universal spirit; through this divine ego it is that man may reach the spirit and win knowledge and light." In the *Bhagavad-Gita* this is stated in the familiar words:

In every creature's heart, O Arjuna, dwelleth the Master — *Īśvara* — who through his magic power holds all things and all beings in action on time's eternal circling wheel; take refuge in him with all thy soul, O son of Bharata; through him shalt thou win the highest felicity, the eternal place of rest.

In the New Testament the divine human ego is called "the Son," and the Universal Spirit "the Father." The Galilean Initiate has several times described the birth of the Christos: how it can be won by each human being as certainly as that Christ — in the real sense (the sense in which the word is generally employed in allegory)—lives in every human heart; it is present as a potentiality, a spark, a ray from the divine source of light. That this spiritual, helping, saving power, according to Theosophy, has entered as a voluntary sacrifice on the part of certain more highly developed beings, stands in easy consistency with the symbolical representation of the redemption-idea as recited in the Bible. Let us, however, not interpret this in a too materialistic fashion; let us not seek to limit the light to a form, when

its essential nature requires that it freely glow in order to warm and enlighten.

This living Christ is in essence also one with the Holy Ghost; it is the power which finds expression in and through the "Son of Man," that is to say, through every true human being. Jesus clearly refers to this difference when, among other similar statements, he says: "And whoever shall curse the Son of Man it shall be forgiven him; but whoever shall sin against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him either in this world or in the world to come."

St. Paul often speaks of "the Christ" in man, thereby implying the divine radiation which dwells in each human heart. This is the only form in which we directly and immediately may learn to know the divine — God. All other efforts to present it become metaphors or fancies, fetiches or idols; perhaps lower reflections from the divine, the old nature-spirits and human heroes which are worshiped and get the name of Gods.

The hierarchies in the divine world-system are endlessly numerous, but the divine Self is one and universal, the essential foundation of all that lives; its most general expression is life, and nature is the Great Law which, in part, we recognize in our hearts and conscience as responsibility, brotherhood; in fact we perceive it as the building, leading, compensating power in life which surrounds us. Through the "Great Law" life is regulated; we reap what we sow, we get the experience and the lessons which are necessary in order to go forward in life's school. So, little by little, the character is strengthened, the dross of the lower nature is burned out, and the pure gold in the soul's rich mine shines out more beautifully. But this comes about slowly and through persistent effort. We must first attain self-knowledge, afterwards self-control and self-reliance, before we can really expect to make the right use of the highest possibilities of our natures. Christ said:

When you pray go into your closet and shut to the door, and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who is in secret will reward you openly; and when you pray you should not be many-worded as the heathen are, for they think they shall be heard on account of their many words; but do not like them because your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

It is in the heart's innermost chambers, in the deepest silence that we must seek the Father who dwells in secret (the divine spirit, of

which each of us is a ray) and we must close the door — that is to say, we must shut out the disturbing pictures which the restless mind, the desires, and all the conditions which the surface life induces. It is no longer the many words, but uprightness and the trust in the justice of the Great Compassionate Law which is the essential in prayer. Neither our desires nor our prayers can move the Law; it takes its course despite us, it knows what we need before we ask. It is the sincere effort which in the Silence attains to the deepest insight into the processes of the Divine Law which procures consolation. The truest prayer therefore runs, “Not my will but thine be done,” this followed by corresponding action. Such an attitude involves a complete surrender of the selfish personal will to the Divine Law.

Generally prayer is only a formulated desire of a more or less personal nature; but the desires are many and conflicting, and so at other times the petitioner is in the grasp of other restless desires which more or less cancel and obliterate the force of the former; and so it goes with the next petitioner. The kind of prayer which is nothing other than an act of desire most necessarily calls forth a great many conflicting streams of energy with like conflicting consequences. This is particularly manifest when two armies pray to the same God, each for victory for itself and defeat for its antagonist. Even God cannot answer both prayers favorably. A prayer for a definite object cannot but imply an interference with the plans of providence.

It is seen logically, therefore, that it is foolish and vain to pray for a particular thing; but we can seek to bring our lives, our wills, our thoughts, into harmony with the divine Law. It is said in one of the Theosophical Manuals: “Action is also in such a case better than words; we need not pray for an opportunity to do this or that, but we should immediately take hold of the thing at hand, ‘for a good beginning is a work half done.’” Wait and pray? For what? For a savior’s intercession? For deliverance from our own responsibilities? Is this worthy of the god-born beings whom Jesus directed to strive for perfection? No time should be lost, no energy should be wasted in pitiful acknowledgment of sinfulness and helplessness. It is when we lose faith in Christianity’s central truth of the inborn human divinity that we begin to call upon outside powers and to have recourse to selfish prayer which weakens moral fiber. Therefore wrote Tegnér in *Church Ordinations*: Bow down and pray? No! stand up and love.

Know then he shineth for thee in the Sun,  
 Ripens the harvest, cools thee with the spring,  
 And moves above thee in the tops of groves.  
 Each time for thee a flash of higher thought  
 Strikes on the mind, dispelling all the gloom;  
 Each time a purer, deeper feeling comes  
 Than those of daily life with its mean cares,  
 Entering thy heart, and bringing with it wings  
 Which lift thee from the earth that thou mayest stand  
 To drink in heaven and walk upon the clouds  
 Submerged in bliss — thou wishest then to press  
 Each fellow mortal to thy faithful breast:  
 Know thou it is his might which moves thee so;  
 It is his spirit near and over thee,  
 His glory seest thou, it is his voice —  
 Not from without he comes — but from thyself.

### MODERN PROBLEMS: by Cranstone Woodhead



HERE are times in the life of every thoughtful man when the surging life in which he plays a daily part, seems to recede from his consciousness and he finds himself wondering what it all means. The work of the busy hands, perhaps even of the brain, stops for a moment. There is no longer an urge to do anything. And then he longs fervently for a key to the problems of life, a password which shall admit him to realms of realization and enlightenment. In some vague way he knows that there must be somewhere an explanation of it all, which, could he find it, he could grasp with his own soul and apply it to the general need.

That this pressing need for some all-convincing philosophy of life is largely recognized in every phase of modern civilization, is plainly shown by the general trend of present day literature, and by the opinions of the world's contemporaneous artists, politicians, scientists, and philosophers.

One great scientist proclaims that we are on the point of discovering the origin of physical life, and that thus we shall be able to construct living organisms! Another is both praised and condemned because he announces that he is convinced of the continued life of the personality after death. The worlds of art, medicine, political economics, and public morality, are over-run with extremists

who are enthusiastically supported by thousands of men and women, and as violently derided by other thousands. There is confusion and discussion everywhere. In their distress, the seekers for some exit from this *impasse* rush from one extreme to another and demand proof. "Prove it! Prove it!" they shout, and when no proof which satisfies them is forthcoming, they rush off in further search.

The question at once arises: How is any one ever convinced of anything at all? Where shall we seek for truth, and how shall we know it when we find it? How shall we recognize it? The human family is all one in essence. More or less progressed they may be, but "a man's a man for a' that."

Wherein lies the basic idea of this difference in progress? Very little thought will convince us that it does not lie in outward possessions. For there is nothing to prevent a wealthy man from being a degenerate and a menace to his kind. Nor does it lie with civic or political power.

History has abundantly shown that the great men who have left their mark upon the world as teachers, leaders, and benefactors, have sprung from every class of society, and more often from the ranks of the lowly than from any others. And yet they had a quality and an influence which touched the hearts of men and enlightened their understandings. Such men have left a legacy of progress which commands the respect and admiration of all future generations. If this be so, whence did that quality spring within them and how do we recognize it? What proof do we require that these men have changed the course of civilization for the better? If we know it, how do we know it? What is the kind of progress which we attribute to these men?

It would seem as if in the present day we had lost the touchstone with which we might prove ideas in order to see whether they be good or not. If such a touchstone exists it must be possessed by all men alike, though in different degrees. If each man possesses it, in virtue of his humanity, it necessarily conveys with it the power and right, as well as the duty, of individual judgment. If another man comes along and tries to impose his ideas by force they will be rightly rejected. There can be no authority except that which arises from a well-considered respect for the superior wisdom of another. And if the methods and crystallized ideas of our immediate forefathers, with which our daily life is soaked through and through, no longer respond

to the changing demands of universal progress, then there is only one course open to humanity. And that is, for each man to pause and look well into his own heart, that he may deliberately, wisely, and forcefully take his right part in building up the new conditions of the age.

If it be asked upon what grounds we believe that man has lost the key to right discernment, we would say that it is because he has lost the knowledge of his own divinity. Perhaps this may be made clearer if we briefly call to mind the teachings which were common in the schools of antiquity.

It was therein taught that man was the result of a double evolution. That on the one hand the physical body had slowly evolved through countless ages from the lowest forms of life until it reached a certain point of readiness or perfection. That at this time the body was ensouled by a divine being from other spheres, so that its evolution might continue towards perfection; and that these divine beings are our real inner selves — the Christos crucified in every man.

This knowledge possessed by the ancient Sages is the basis of all the allegories of the “fallen angels,” and “the stars that fell from heaven.” They did not rebel against “god” in any real sense. They carried out the purposes of the Supreme by sacrificing themselves for man’s salvation. Upon this knowledge, which was the foundation of the ancient Wisdom-Religion, all the religions of the modern world — with their iron-bound creeds and dogmas — have been founded.

If man were once convinced of his dual nature and *of its origin*, of the divinity dwelling in the animal body, most of the present world problems would be on the way to solution.

It is the divine within us which leads us to know and realize all truth. No proof is required. We know it, gradually, slowly, when we appeal to that which lies hidden within our own hearts, “the still, small voice,” which is heard through the thunderings and the lightnings of the Modern Babel.



O MAN, thou thinkest thyself alone, and free to act as thou wilt. Thou perceivest not the Eternal dwelling within thy heart. Whatsoever thou dost, It sees and notes all. The Soul is Its own witness and Its own refuge. It is the Supreme eternal witness of Man. Offend it not. — *From an Upanishad*

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES: by Archaeologist**

## MODERNITY OF ANCIENT EGYPTIANS



THE following is quoted from Professor Flinders Petrie's address on the excavations of the British School of Archaeology at Ghizeh:

Our work has proved that the culture which was the possession of the people of that part before the founding of Memphis was higher than is popularly supposed, and was very like the culture of the people of the present day.

The last remark was also made by Dr. Arthur Evans in reference to the newly discovered Minoan civilizations. Such admissions form part of the cumulative evidence going to show that human progress follows a "spiral" path. The proper geometrical name for the curve in question is, however, "helix." A helix is a curve consisting of a number of whirls in the familiar form of the corkscrew; progress along this curve is accomplished by a series of alternate rises and dips. So with evolution. For an example we may take the familiar cycles of time: the progress of the year is accomplished by a succession of days and nights. Civilization also has its days and nights, yet advances all the time.

Moreover, as there are many different peoples on the earth at one time, and as these people are in different stages of their progress, the matter is complicated, and we find that civilization has a local or geographical distribution as well as a distribution in historical time. Civilization has been said to march around the earth from east to west.

Another useful analogy is that of a wave in the sea. The wave sweeps onward, mile after mile, until it breaks on the shore. But the water does not sweep onward; it merely executes a small gyration and stays where it is. And so the ancient Egyptian civilization mentioned rose and fell and died away; those Egyptians are in their tombs (or in the British Museum), but the life-wave that caused the civilization has rolled on. That life-wave is simply the mass of Souls that were incarnated in that race; where are they now? Each has its individual destiny; yet, as they all belonged to one race and lived at the same time, the law of rebirth would tend to bring them back together. So it is the less surprising that ancient civilizations should resemble modern civilizations more closely than do many civilizations which have intervened between the two ages.

No definite statement, however, is here ventured; whether we are or are not those ancient Egyptians is a matter that may be left open.



But the principle is the same; the working of the laws of reincarnation must result in the cyclic progress of civilization and in its reappearance in various parts of the earth.

People often speak of modern civilization as though the phenomena it presents were new; and while some of them are new, very many are merely repetitions. Some say modern civilization is the foe to progress and they advocate a return to naturalism. But this is a peculiarity of all civilizations. It is simply due to the fact that all things earthy are mortal. A human body cannot live for ever, but must wear out and die; but the Soul passes on. And so civilizations must wear out and die; but not so the Souls (that is, the Race) which tenanted them. But our civilization is probably not near its dissolution; it perhaps has merely an infantile disease and will recover. Very likely we have for some time been following a course that, if continued, would lead us to dissolution; but we can tack, and there are signs that we are doing so.

If it be asked whether we are farther on or farther back than the ancient Egyptians, the answer may be that we are behind them in one sense and ahead of them in another. For perhaps we have not yet reached the same height in our cycle as they reached in theirs, and yet our cycle is farther ahead in the curve than theirs was. And even if we have greater evils and difficulties than they had, this may be that we have attempted greater tasks—incarnated more deeply into materiality. There is no call for pessimism, neither for complacent self-satisfaction.

This idea of the reincarnation of races is interesting, if only because it takes our mind from dwelling overmuch on the personal aspect of reincarnation. As each individual is one of the human family, it is necessary to consider him as such; otherwise we shall fall into fallacies. And this is probably the reason why people sometimes get perplexed over the question of reincarnation.

These ancient Egyptians may have possessed knowledge which we have not yet recovered; and later on we may be in a better position to understand their lore.

#### BAALBEK

A SCIENTIFIC contemporary contains an illustrated account of Baalbek. The columns in the Great Temple are  $7\frac{1}{2}$  feet in diameter and 70 feet high (including bases and capitals); the shafts are each composed of *three* stones. A wall has its lower courses built of stones of moderate dimensions, but as we ascend they increase in size until

we come to a row of three stones, the shortest of which is 63 feet and the longest 65 feet in length, each being about 13 feet by 12 feet in the other dimensions. In the quarry near by lies a still larger block, which was never detached from the rock beneath; it is 70 by 14 by 13 feet, and its weight is estimated at 1,100 tons.

The attempt to explain the transportation and raising of these blocks by mere multiplicity of human labor has always seemed a feeble theory; the difficulty of course being to explain how the combined strength of so many men could be brought to bear, or what materials could have been found adequate to the strain. But there is enough evidence that the builders were able and cultured people; hence we may reasonably *infer* that they had engineering means equal to their culture. The same applies to other cyclopean builders, of which the world offers so many examples from China to Peru.

It has been a puzzle why little or no mention is made of Baalbek by Greek and Roman writers. Its origin is lost in the mist of history. It was associated with the Ancient Mysteries, and the name signifies that it was dedicated to the Sun. But the use of the expression "Sun-worship" is apt to suggest to the casual reader the degraded rites afterwards associated with that name and with the name of Baal. The worship of the fires of animal vitality is the polar opposite of the reverence for the Spiritual Sun. Sacred symbols and pure rites have always been subject to profanation. The sacrifice of a mannikin, intended to signify the offering up of the lower self in devotion to the great Cause, has found its travesty in human sacrifices. Yet, as regards Baalbek, we must give due weight to the fact that during the spread of Christendom it was a stronghold of "Paganism," and has probably been much maligned and misrepresented by zealous chroniclers. Even in our day the most egregious calumnies can be solemnly uttered with reference to worthy causes. Prejudice and fixed habits of thought blind men's eyes, so that they do not see things. These monuments of antiquity tell a tale which we do not yet want to hear. We prefer our familiar view of the world and of human history.

## THE GODS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD: by Kenneth Morris



**N**O doubt but we are the people, and wisdom began with us." Certainly a most comfortable doctrine — for a fool. But if it is a decent self-respect that we need, and not the blind, bumptious egotism so characteristic of our age and civilization, we should do well to exalt humanity, and not merely our own little section of it: we should seek for godhood wherever we come on the human; and take pride in belonging to the line whose fount and origin was divinity, and whose destiny it is to become again divine.

You know the story of the farmer in the Middle West who was contemplating the sky one night at the time of the presidential election? "Say," he said, "Is it true that all those millions of stars up there are suns like our own?" "Yes," said the astronomer, "they are suns, and many of them a thousand times vaster than our sun." "And every one of them the center of a solar system, with planets, worlds like ours?" "Every one of them has its planets." "And the planets, are they inhabited worlds?" "Undoubtedly," said the other, "thousands of them must be inhabited worlds." "Say," said the farmer, "I don't see that it matters so much after all whether Taft or Wilson becomes president."

We have our cities, our states and nations, our business and politics, science, inventions, and money — everlastingly our money; and all these things so crowd our consciousness, that we forget the universe we live in. The mountains, the sky, the stars, the solitary places of the ocean, the two vast defiant desolations of the North and South Poles; old Earth herself and the consciousness that animates her; the abounding life in the vegetable world — what are all these things to us? We are cut off from them by our petty concerns, and make no excursions into the largeness of life. Our passions, our greed, our miserable personal thinking and feeling hedge us round from the Infinite and keep us from our heritage of divine life.

Sons of this mighty and divine universe, how mighty, how divine might we not be, were the mess of pottage not always more tempting to us than our birthright of divinity! For we live in a vast sea of life, and its waters wash us through and through, and there is extension infinite on all sides of us; and within, inward and inward, there is infinite extension too — distances that stretch from here, from the next little thought that comes unbidden into your mind, right up to the Central Spiritual Sun; right up, in theological language, to the Throne

of God; and whatever consciousness exists, even to omniscience and infinity, that too we might come to share in.

Up from earth's center through the seventh gate  
I rose, and on the throne of Saturn sate,  
And many a knot unraveled on the road,  
But not the Master Knot of Human Fate.

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.

Then of the Thee in Me who works behind  
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."

And there Omar found the key to the door, and vision through the veil: blind the *me*, the personal self within thee; stifle the voices of the flesh; still the insistent clamor of the brain-mind, the personality, the sense of separate selfhood, and the path to the divine is made known to you; the world of the Gods is open before you; the greater Self, which is the Self of the Universe, becomes the only self of you.

When we speak of the ancients, we mean commonly the humanity that lived in pre-Christian times; and the term brings before our mental vision, as a rule, perhaps, indistinct pictures of Greek and Roman vices and corruption — as if we had no vices and corruption of our own; of Egyptian "superstition," as we are pleased to call it — as if we ourselves were freed from all ignorance and erroneous belief; of Gothic and Northern savagery — as if we had long since quite abolished war. But we ought to remember that the race of man is old, old, old: that Egypt had her millenniums where Europe has had but her centuries; and that there were long civilizations before Egypt, and other long civilizations before them. Egyptian religion, that now we connote with divine crocodiles and mummified cats, had fallen to decay many times, and had many times been renewed, before Cambyses came; there were, indeed, many religions there, rising one after another, and in their turn withering and falling; so that to speak of the religion of ancient Egypt would be like speaking of the religion of Europe, and including under that term our modern Christianity, and old Greek, Roman, Celtic, and Gothic Paganism. In Greece, too,

successive waves of religion rose and fell before the coming of Christianity: Homer stands not at the dawn, but in the twilight of Greek glory; before him were the great ages of Crete and Mycenae, compared with which the Hellas of history was but a bagatelle, a waning splendor, the sunset flush of a long day. Before Homer and Hesiod had recorded the Olympic mythologies, Orpheus — a name perhaps almost as remote and mysterious to the Athenian mob of the days of Pericles and Cleon as to ourselves: a name that stands, perhaps, not only for a Teacher, but for a whole vast hierarchy and literature — had established the Mysteries of an older and purer religion; and that religion had grown ancient, and its origin wrapt in myth. And in Rome, the old Religion of Numa, the pure, antique Italian religion, had practically vanished, except in remote places, before Christianity had made any great headway. And everywhere, Paganism gave place to Christianity because it had lost its hold on the people; because it no longer taught vital truth; because it had grown old, senile, and corrupt, and had to combat with a force that was young and vigorous; but we do a huge injustice to antiquity when we confound the thought and aspiration of all its ages with the cynical, frivolous systems of its declining years; or when we judge Paganism not by its Plato, Socrates, Julian, or Marcus Aurelius, who sought to restore its purity, but by such men as Alcibiades, Nero, Vitellius, and their like, who hastened its fall. Menes is reputed the first king of Egypt, and heaven knows what vast antiquity must be assigned to him; but we find one of his successors speaking of him as having been the first corrupter of Egyptian manners, the initiator of the decadence of Egypt, after the long ages of her grandeur and truth and simplicity; and again we find Plato blaming Homer for obscuring the ancient truths about the Gods of Greece, where we consider him almost as the creator of those Gods.

Supposing that, in some far distant age people were to treat us and our Christianity as we now treat vanished Paganism. Supposing some one were to write, in that time, that the Christians were evidently immersed in the grossest superstition, worshipers of animals, adoring in their churches the lamb and the dove; while at the same time, such was the inconsistent nature of their "civilization," there was evidence that they esteemed the flesh of one of their gods as an article of diet, while the shooting of the other was among their favorite sports. *We* know how unfair and ridiculous such a statement would be; because we know that the lamb and the dove are but symbols, chosen for their

beauty, to express certain divine ideas; but how could that future critic, supposing him to be inspired, as we are, by an infinite conceit of his own age — how could he fail to light on such a titbit and appetizer for his vanity, if our hymn-books were open to his inspection? We should do unto antiquity as we would be done by by posterity: we should be just and sympathetic, trying to understand and get at the facts — for our own sake, because pride comes before a fall; because the lofty attitude of superiority that we take towards the ancients is just a part and nourisher of the great disease of the age: unbrotherliness, egotism; because by fostering our own conceit, we do but shut the door of true progress in our own faces. The bright goal that shines before us now is the realization of the oneness of the whole human family; and it is unbecoming in a man to vaunt himself as against other men; or in a race or nation to vaunt itself as against other races and nations; or in an age to vaunt itself as against other ages. It is our glory to be human, and to share in all the achievements of humanity, past, present and to come.

Again, supposing some cultured person were to come to you from China, or from Kamchatka, or from Mars for that matter, and make inquiry as to the religion of our race and age, Christianity. To what would you refer him? At first thought you answer, perhaps: to your own particular church or chapel. But after further consideration, that would seem too limited and partial a view, and you say: to Christendom as a whole. “What!” he replies, “your religion is then responsible for the slums, vice, armaments of the age? For the Balkan War and the Mexican situation?” “No!” you answer; “you must not think that the religion which is responsible for these things is Christianity; for Christianity you must go to the Gospels; you must read the life of the Founder of our religion, and his teachings; the evils of the day are not to be attributed to Christianity, but to the decline and decadence of Christianity; it is because people no longer believe in the teachings of Christ that these things happen.” And you would be right; and believe me, the decay of Egypt, Greece, and Rome, the vices and corruption that we read of, were not due to Paganism, not to the religion of the Gods; but to the fact that people no longer held to Paganism: no longer understood, as once they had understood, the great bright Gods of the Ancient World. It was for lack of Paganism, the sublime Paganism of her Mysteries, the Wisdom of the ages, that Egypt fell under the heels of the priests, the Persians, the Macedon-

ians, and the Romans. It was for lack of Paganism — the old, bright, luminous, beautiful Paganism of her Orpheus and her Plato, her pre-Homeric poets and pre-Phidian sculptors — that Greece became ridden with graft, treachery, and foul vices. It was for lack of her austere, duty-worshipping Paganism, so closely in touch with the forces of nature and the wide, free life of the universe, that Rome went down in an orgy of debauchery, the easy prey of the barbarians.

Everywhere, in order to understand Paganism and reap the harvest of its glorious ideas, you must treat it as you would have Christianity treated: you must go back and back, seeking its origins; you must realize that it began as the expression of certain eternal truths, just as Christianity did, just as all religions do; that it was first proclaimed by men who had insight into — nay, sure knowledge of — the hidden things of this universe, the mysteries of life and death and eternity; that its mission was, as that of Christianity was at *its* inception, to bring mankind nearer to the heart of things, to make human life after the fashion of, and very close to, divine life.

Or, as the grand old Pagans would have said, to bring men nearer to the Gods.

That is a conception that we have lost, that of the Gods; and I think it has been a loss indeed. For now we consecrate Sunday to divine things; but then, each day in the week was sacred to its God, to its aspect of divinity: the Sun's day; the Moon's day; Mars' day; Mercury's day; Jove's day; Venus' day; Saturn's day. And now we consecrate religion alone, of all the departments and activities of our life, to the divine; but then, every department, every activity, was linked on to divinity by its presiding God. The man who painted a picture, or who carved a statue, wrote a drama, a poem, or a history; the merchant, the husbandman, the soldier or the sailor; each, in engaging on his own duty, entered thereby into the service of a God as surely as the priest did, and consecrated himself and his work to the divine. Where we see the sea, the mountains, or the trees and flowers, they saw the palaces of grand, mysterious and beautiful beings, aspects again of the divine: the primrose on the river's brim, that to us is a simple primrose and nothing more, was to them a gateway into the dwelling-place of God. Beauty, that divine thing, that Star of Bethlehem to lead us to the birthplace of the Eternal, our religion has too often and too easily banned and banished; but their's made it the aroma and exhalation of the Gods, a potent incentive, a mainspring of

human progress. Art and music, that to us are luxuries and the ministers of our pleasure, to them were a religion and the ministers of the Supreme. Commerce, which we have made the servant of and panderer to our greed, they made an act of service to the Divinity, and therefore to humanity. Agriculture was religion; and this old, green, beautiful Earth, to whose voices we are so deaf, whose pleadings we so pitilessly ignore, was for them instinct with living fire, divine, conscious, linked with humanity by the closest community of interests. Try to imagine the richness and fulness of such a life; contrast it with the barren poverty of our own.

And were they not justified? Who of you is mountain-born and nurtured, and after long dwelling in the plains and the cities, comes again among the mountains; does there not rise up something within you, indefinable but most potent, an emotion too deep to be called emotion merely? What is it? A mere bringing back to memory of old times, of the joys of your childhood? Here is what the Pagan would have said: In me too is a spark and seed of Godhood: a fragment of the life of those Divine Ones, whose body and outward being are yonder mountains; and that which rises within me now, is consciousness of that exalted kinship.

I think it was Huxley who said — whoever it was, he said it very truly — that if evolution be a truth, then there must be beings in this universe, as far evolved above man, as man is above the humble bacillus or the blackbeetle of our kitchens. In this statement you have the scientific justification of the Pagan Gods. Evolution is a truth; but a far more mighty truth than our scientifics and Darwinians imagine. You must not dream for an instant that Theosophy indorses exoteric paganism — or any exoteric religion. But it does uphold truth everywhere; it does proclaim the Divine everywhere, and the soul of man, and the spiritual nature of the universe, and that the universe exists for divine purposes, and is the field of an eternal progress towards divinity, an eternal warfare of the Hosts of Light against Chaos and Darkness and Evil. Evolution is a truth; but it is not merely matter and our bodies that evolve; spirit also breathes itself down into matter, informing it, acquiring experience and self-consciousness in it; and it is this involution, this coming in of spirit and consciousness to mold and work upon material forms, that is the cause of evolution.

Your materialist fondly imagines that when he has said Evolution, Natural Selection, Survival of the Fittest, and the like, he has con-



veniently explained the universe, and left no place in it for God or Gods or the Soul of Man. *Here is your amoeba; there is your man: evolution has done it, et voilà!* To which we reply: *Here is your war-canoë, there is your Superdreadnaught; here your coracle, there your Mauretania: Evolution has done it, and it would be absurd to suppose that there are such things as men, dockyards, shipbuilders, or arsenals.* But evolution is the name of a law, a method of working; and we know very well that Laws do not build houses or navies; they do not write books or make men; has a law hands and feet, that it should go here and do this? Has it a tongue in its head, that it should speak? Men, working under the laws of architecture, of naval construction, of literature, do these things; without agents, no law could accomplish anything.

So the ancients saw that the universe was under the reign of Law; and being a thousand times more logical and careful in their thinking than we are, posited Agents of the Law. They beheld the marvelous architecture of the universe, and they knew there would be a great Architect; but they knew very well that it is not the Architect who mixes the mortar, and carries the bricks on a hod, or chips the stones to shape and lays them in their places. There would be builders; in the Law they recognized the Universal Will, as we say, the Will of God; but they held that there would be agents to carry out that Will. So, under the Great Architect of the Universe, they posited the Gods: beings of all grades of divinity and power, from the fairy of the daffodil bloom, to the Cosmocratores and Regents of the Stars. They beheld divinity everywhere, divine law and order everywhere.

They did not imagine omnipotence as a quality of their Gods; they saw evil and oppression in the world, and were logical. Oh, no doubt in the exoteric tales of the later mythologies, truth was confounded, and the Gods were represented as living apart, selfish and sensual, letting the world go hang, so they should have their own pleasures. But I am speaking of the original, the esoteric side of Paganism; of the spiritual basis and rationale of it, if you prefer it put that way. And then too we must remember that those very exoteric tales of the mythologies began by having their inward meaning; they were symbolic, just as our pictures of the Lamb of God, and of the Dove, the Paraclete, are symbolic. Whoso would search deeply into them would find in them portrayings of recondite laws, the images of truths concerning the natural and spiritual worlds; and it was when men forgot

to look for these inner meanings, made light of the concealed truth and lived no longer by the law, that paganism grew corrupt and ceased to be an efficient aid to human evolution.

That the Gods should be worshiped? No, not in any sense that we give to the word nowadays. Honored, aided in their grand mission, communed with and brought into men's lives — there you have the inward objective of the old Pagan rituals, before they were defiled. We must think what the philosopher would mean, when he made sacrifice to this deity or that. He descried spiritual potency in the sun; he knew of a light, beautiful with flashing and gentle colors, that might illumine the soul, and run, a flame of inspiration through the imagination; dwelling upon and evoking this light, he paid his tribute to Apollo. He knew of a Warrior and heroic quality within the heart, one sworded and invincible against evil, who, let it be awakened into activity in our consciousness, makes us invulnerable to all temptation; intent upon so awakening this Warrior, he made his sacrifice to Mars. He held that there was an outer and an inner side to every action; that all the duties of life were sacramental, an outward and visible sign, and an inward and spiritual grace. You might go to your seed sowing, or your following the plow; and according to what was in your heart and mind at the time, so would the harvest be merely material, or there would be certain elements in it to nourish the spiritual sanity and well-being of the people. If the sower and the plowman sacrificed to Ceres or to Proserpine, it was that they might go spiritually to their work, evoking the divine side of things in it; doing it, as we say, as unto the Lord.

Ah me! the richness that might come into a life so nourished, so deflected from personal, trumpery, and selfish ends, to a consideration perpetual of the beautiful, the grandiose, the divine and quickening! Would the harvest be no better — dare you say it would be no better? Dare you say that the life of the people would be inspired by no diviner ichor, were the plowman to follow his oxen, not dully brooding on his dinner, his gains, his desires indifferent or bad; but alert with a consciousness of flaming and beautiful being in the air that he breathed, in the sky over his head; of Apollo shining upon him, of Proserpine and august Ceres breathing up through the broken clods that his plowshare might be cleaving? Shall we do evil in the Temple of the Lord? Shall we stand before the Burning Bush, and concern ourselves with the pride of the eye, the sinful lusts of the flesh? Take off thy shoes

from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. There you have the attitude of the Pagan: the dome of whose place of worship was the infinite blue; and its floor, the continents and islanded seas of the world.

There is a divine quality in and beyond human consciousness, called heroism; bring that into your life, and you are worshipping the Immortals; you are invoking an Immortal; you are making sacrifice to that God who is the Heartener of Heroes. There is compassion: let your heart flame with it, and you cannot choose but be invoking that brooding, mother-hearted divinity, that quality, that conscious quality of Godhood. Why, how shall you doubt that these be the Immortals? Consider Joan of Arc at the stake, the flames leaping up around her; and she suddenly concerned and anxious — for what? For her soul's safety? No, but lest the priest, holding up the cross to her, should be hurt by the flame. She is to die; she cannot die; she is immortal; she is united with the Immortals through that compassion, that care for others that flames up in her to light immortal ages, a thousand times more brilliant than the flame that is to destroy her bodily form. Consider the patriot of the Italian War of Independence, the Garibaldian taken prisoner. He is on the gallows, the rope about his neck, the Austrian soldiers and executioners and priests are around him. What is his word for the priest who is bothering him about his soul? For the soldiers, the executioners, the hushed, mourning crowd in the little square? Just this: *Viva Italia!* Good heavens, what's Italy to him, or he to Italy — he that, as you believe, is either to be a senseless clod in a minute or two, or to have parted company with Earth and her nations forever? This is what Italy is to him: the Goddess, the Immortality to which, in his devotion, in his utter forgetfulness of self at that supreme moment, he has united himself, attaining immortality, attaining God-being; because making himself, his personal consciousness, one with the divine consciousness that was always within him; that is always within every one of us, but commonly slumbering — commonly obscured beneath the turmoil and fuss of our personal thinking. So death is nothing to him; he is already immortal, and lives on in the life of his race.

The Japanese recognize this principle in a very beautiful way. When a man like Togo or Ito, or like the late Emperor, a great patriot and benefactor of the nation, dies, they make no bones about it, but declare him a God forthwith, and pay him divine honors; devoting

Christmas Day, I believe, to the memory of all such men become Gods. Wrap not about you the mantle of your Phariseeism; forget to thank God that you are not as these heathen. They are, in effect, exceedingly rational beings; they do wisely and very well. We must give up our notions of the heathen in his blindness bowing down to wood and stone — and I tell you that there is wood in this world, and stone too, that are a thousand times better than the vulgar gold that we bow down to so assiduously. Heathen and heathen there are, no doubt, and some of them worse than ourselves; but in this case the “blindness” is a very real spiritual vision; and the heathen are simply recognizing the fact that there is a God, a divine part, in every one of us; that it may be brought to dominate our whole being, to overshadow all our doings, and to make what remains so unimportant, that when death carries away the body, the memory that is left of the man is actually the memory of a God: a bright, divine incident in our history, a star and luminous example for our future, a note in the symphony of our national life that somehow trembled up to divinity, and made us aware of our divine possibilities. We too honor our Lincolns and our Washingtons. How do such men make themselves immortal? By service; by so loving the race that their personal being extends and loses itself in impersonality, and they become the symbols of the highest that is in the nation, our most sacred hopes and aspirations and memories. So dying, they live.

I think that the best and truest conception the ancient world had of its Gods was, that they were the grand captains in the eternal warfare against evil, chaos, and night. Here in this world we men participate blindly and stumblingly in that warfare, now allying ourselves with right, now, and more commonly with wrong; but in their world, behind the veil of the seen and the seeming, the Gods wage their war perpetually to guard the world of men. Camped out against Chaos on the Borders of Space, they repel forever the onslaught of the hosts of evil, lest the world of men should be inundated by untimely sin. And whoso of us will join ranks with them, shall not he too slay the mortality within him, cast the chrysalis of his humanity and imperfection, and emerge winged and flaming, one of the Immortals? Though you shall pass him in the street, and see nothing but the common clay of mortality, yet you are to know that he has his commission in the army of the Gods; he rides out splendid against Chaos, he breaks the battle of the hellions on the borders of Space.

This is an old druidic conception, held in ancient times by the bards of Wales. They taught that at the dawn of the world the Host of Souls, Sons of Gods and Morning Stars of Glory, woke in the World of Bliss at the sound of the Chanted Name of God, which called the Universe from sleep and latency into manifested being. Then those Blessed Ones, as they were called — those Blessed Ones who were ourselves — looked forth over the vast deep of Chaos and beheld afar beyond that howling darkness the Peaks of White Infinity and the dwelling-place of the Lone One, the Eternal; and they said: Evil upon us if we remain content with less than that. Their Chieftains sounded the Hai Atton upon their horns, the bugle-call of the gathering of the Immortals; and they rode forth singing in their chariots of fire to take Infinity by storm, to batter down the Gates of the Castle of God, and dwell therein forever, united with absolute Deity. But before they could come to that consummation, they had to conquer the Chaos that lay between; they had to wage vast warfare through the abysm of night; and until the whole waste of matter was conquered, they could not go on to the heights. And in the passage of that deep, they could not withstand the foes that assailed them; they fell, succumbing to the dreadful snares and temptations of the material world. They fell into incarnation: passing through slow ages through the mineral, vegetable, and animal worlds, until at last they reached the state of humanity; in which, gaining self-consciousness and the knowledge of good and evil, we have the opportunity of remembering again our ancient mission and purpose: of sounding again the Hai Atton of the Gods, and taking arms mightily against Chaos and evil.

But there were some that did not fall, and never ceased to remember; or if they fell, they were swift to rise again; they carried on their struggle perpetually; they never let go of their purpose, nor allowed the battle of the ages to cease for a moment. Either they never lost it, or they quickly or slowly regained their divine nature; and they are the Gods, our Brothers, whose labor is to gain auxiliaries for the eternal warfare from among the ranks of men. They, said the Bards, are our protectors, our allies, our captains and generals against evil: call not upon them for help, but rather seek to help them; for the weight of the universe rests upon them; they are the vanguard of our battle and take the blows and fury of Hell upon their shields. They protect humanity, that should be, and one day will certainly be their effective ally, but now is dreaming or playing traitor.

And it is when we shall have awakened and joined ranks with them; when Chaos at last shall have been conquered, and the whole dominion of evil mastered by us, transformed and added to the Empire of God; when in all our ranks there shall be no one left unconscious of his divinity or less than lord of himself; it is then that our great army, Gods and men, but all Gods then, shall ride forward again in triumph, and enter in, gay, triumphant, singing, through the Gates of Peace.

We wandered in Bliss in the World's Golden Morning,  
 The bardic, lone Stars sang hymns in our praise;  
 The insignia of Gods were our proud brows adorning,  
 And dark Chaos glowed as we went on our ways.  
 What though while through Hell's self our war-way we winged on,  
 In ages oblivion-o'erladen, we fell?  
 It was heaven that we deemed too inglorious a kingdom,  
 It was we that made choice to build new heavens in Hell.

There were some that o'ercame when the deep rose to slay them,  
 And flame against flame, they waged high war with Night;  
 Dark Chaos and hell had no power to dismay them,  
 Nor Night had no spell to dim their proud sight.  
 The ranks of the Warward Gods shine with their glory,  
 They turn from delight to their stern, agelong war,  
 Lest the brightness at heart of the ages grow hoary,  
 And the spirit's sun rise o'er the world-brink no more.

### TRUE SELF-REALIZATION: by H. T. Edge, M. A.



**I**F society is to be saved from the confusion of thought under which it suffers, man must regain the sense of his own essential Divinity. All fixed standards seem to be vanishing, and people have lost their bearings amid the multitudinous deceptive lights that flash up through the fog for a moment and are lost again. It is universally understood that *character* is the only pilot that can steer us, and that all systems collapse unless founded on a firm basis of individual character. But no one seems to know how to restore character and give man back his lost sureness and dignity. There is one thing for certain which will *not* do this, and that is the philosophy which exalts above everything else the *animal* nature of man. Man *has* an animal nature and various animal functions; but he has also a self-conscious mind which can either be controlled by these animal functions or else can

control them. What is right and safe in the animal may be wrong and destructive in man, if he prostitutes his higher faculties to lower forces. Are we to change all the laws that govern human relationships, in order that animal man may have room to display these emotionalized propensities?

We are even being taught to revere these propensities as some sacred endowment from nature, but even the people who teach this draw the line somewhere; they would not have man eating like a hog or behaving in certain other ways in which various animals behave. So it may be taken for granted that all agree that man must restrain his animal propensities to some extent. The point of difference is — to *what* extent?

According to some evolutionists it was the animal propensities that developed the intellect — developed the intellect which is to restrain them; and even the moral sense is supposed to have evolved out of such passions as selfishness and fear. This seems a curious reversal of the order of precedence.

We find in ourselves plenty of proof of our animal affinities but we also find plenty of proof of our Divine nature. In fact, we find in man the evidences of his affinity with all the kingdoms; he is mineral, vegetable, animal, and Divine. From the mineral kingdom he has derived the solid substance of his body and the lesser laws which govern mineral atoms in their chemical and physical properties. From the vegetable kingdom, again, man has derived certain other and higher attributes; and from the animal kingdom he has derived a large and complex set of physiological organs, with their appropriate functions and the desires that reside in them. But he has derived much more than this. Man is a storehouse of evolutionary products, a synthesis of universal forces and qualities. From which kingdom did he derive his self-conscious mind, his reflective and introspective intellect? From which, again, his moral sense? Certainly not from the animal kingdom, which has these not. From the animal kingdom he derived that which it has.

The Divine Intelligence has existed from all time; or rather is beyond all time. It is present everywhere in the universe, and the tiniest atom manifests it in some degree. But man's mind is its highest vehicle — on our earth. This intelligence cannot ensoul the animals, because they have not the vehicle for its manifestation as such. But man is endowed with a faculty that enables him to reflect the

Divine Light to an unlimited degree. He has the power of self-development. He can consciously invoke the Divine. This supreme faculty places him far above all the lower creation and can make him absolute lord over all the animal propensities in him, however violent or however colored up by specious philosophy and high-flown sentiment.

Possibly this may seem dogmatic to some people; but nevertheless, if man really wants to control himself, there is no other way than by acknowledging his Divinity. So there is the choice. And there would be no great harm — or danger — after all, in assuming as a rule of life that man has a Divine nature.

Of course the Divine nature is not that which makes a man puff himself up and put on airs and preach about “higher powers.” That is only his lower nature over again. For with his animal nature man has acquired a large collection of animal peculiarities, among them those of the peacock and the parrot. Only, whereas these propensities, when exercised by the animal, are simply its little best, in man they are follies. A peacock probably wishes to please his mate, and knows no better way than to exhibit his plumage; but a man knows better. The Divine nature is sufficiently well expressed in the familiar words:

“Charity” suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.

But perhaps it is better expressed by certain words not so familiar to piety as to chivalry: Honor, Loyalty, Fealty, Chastity, Fidelity, Courage, and the like. They are the very backbone of human life. Whether we got them from the monkeys or from God or wherever else, we *must* foster them or we shall decay individually and collectively.

There are certain forces, always at work, whose influence is hostile to humanity. Their effect is to destroy, if possible, man’s faith in himself. This is the only way in which humanity can be destroyed. These forces are very subtle, for they sometimes lurk unsuspected behind what are apparently lofty and beneficent teachings. They work through human agents, some of whom are conscious vehicles, others unconscious; some single workers, others banded together. There is no need to point the finger at anybody or any society or institution; the forces are recognizable by their tendency and effects. These are the forces against which we must beware; the forces that tend to



make us believe we are powerless or corrupt, helpless or depraved. If we are depraved, we need not stay so; if we are weak, we can become strong.

Humanity looks for a Savior to help it out of its difficulties. Some expect a Messiah to come in the flesh; others fondly hope that a spiritual outpouring of some kind will take place; and others think the great God evolution will produce something out of the melting-pot of human fatuities. *But the true Savior is ever present in his ancient temple* — the human heart; and it is difficult to see how he is to help humanity without humanity's helping itself.

We may often see sermons like this in the Sunday corners of periodicals and elsewhere, but they amount to little because there is no definite teaching behind them, and also because they are inconsistent with currently accepted theories of life. But Theosophy can do much more than preach moral sermons, for it has its teachings to back up its precepts. Wordsworth could feel his intimations of immortality and pre-existence, and give them utterance in poetry; and so have many other intuitive souls. But they have always been hindered by their limitations. For the fact is that the ordinary theories of human life and destiny *do not* consist with the intuitions of truth which we obtain from the Soul within. Also many have complained that life seems a cruel and meaningless farce. But these contrarieties disappear in the light of the ancient wisdom now called Theosophy. It is the Divine man that is the liver of the life; his are the purposes, and they do not fail. If the fond delusions and desires, engendered of our composite nature, do not fructify, it is because they are not in accordance with our real Will nor our real interests. Pious people have often said: "It is Thy Will," or "Thy will be done"; but in saying this, they have always thought of an external power, not of their own true Self.

Can Theosophy restore the faded ideals of Honor, Loyalty, Truth, etc? Yes, because it can bring about the conditions necessary to their existence. Civilized humanity has to a great degree mastered the idea of a collective interest in hygiene. We realize that our health is interdependent, and that each one of us has duties with regard to the community; and we take steps to insure that these duties shall be performed, and we ourselves are glad to perform them. We have begun to develop a sense of unity in this respect. But it is so in morals also.

If every man realized that his acts and thoughts perfume or pollute the atmosphere which his fellows breathe, he would thereby acquire an unselfish interest in being pure. Theosophy, with its teachings about man and nature, could render this a tangible fact.

Theosophy may be said to be demonstrating its teachings about the essential Divinity of man by the success of the Râja-Yoga method of education, founded by Katherine Tingley on lines also laid down by H. P. Blavatsky; as well as by the effects which it produces among the grown-up residents at the International Headquarters, and upon all who embrace it. The children are taught to rely upon their own inner strength from earliest years; which is a very different thing from teaching them to rely on their personal will. The great Law of helping and giving is impressed upon them, and they respond readily; for children are, as the poet has sung, fresh from the Divine, and only need to be guarded and kept from being educated in the way of selfishness.

*Is it right to permit children to grow up in ignorance of their Divine nature, and to send them out into the world thus crippled by ignorance?*

Theosophy answers the call of those who yearn for something better than the ordinary ideals of life and who cherish impersonal aspirations. It shows us how to call forth latent powers and qualities which may be used impersonally and for the good of all. Its limitless horizon of knowledge prevents it from being a mere system of quietism, as is the case with so many consolations that are offered; nor need it postpone its promised boon to realms beyond the grave. And after all, what has eternity to do with time, that we should so crudely imagine that the one begins where the other ends? An eternal Now is no more related to the future than it is to the present.

Sometimes people imagine that their Higher Self is but an extension of their personality — so deeply ingrained is the sense of personal possession. But surely it is not right to lay so much stress on the salvation of individual souls or the development of separate personalities? The path of light and liberation does not consist in a climax of egotism. What is needed is to get away from that overwrought sense of separate personality, that prison that shuts us up each in his own little sanctum. For this, there is nothing like impersonal work, solidarity. For, though Theosophy does not teach annihilation or absorption into the universal, but on the contrary maintains that the

Individuality (not the personality) of man remains the same throughout the cycle of rebirths — yet the consciousness of the Higher Self cannot be limited like that of the personality, nor can there be any such feeling of separateness from other creatures as we feel in our habitual state. So perhaps we may approach the Divine by this way of forgetting the personality in impersonal work. No one will deny that life grows smaller and narrower for the selfish man; and the converse is true — that for the unselfish man it grows greater.

One day in the future, humanity in the mass will have reached the point of definite and final choice between two paths; it will be the day when humanity wins its triumph and fulfils its real destiny. But before an aggregate of humanity can reach this point, individuals may reach it. We must all reach it sooner or later, for it is an inevitable stage in the destiny of man, the Divine Pilgrim. It is as though he grew up, reached maturity, passed a crisis, and was reborn. Jesus, in his private conversation with Nicodemus, the man who came to him for instruction, says that man is born a second time: the first time of the flesh, the second time of the Spirit. Thus is the history of the race repeated in the individual; for man had “two creations”: the first of the flesh, the second of the Spirit.

But moments of choice occur to us every day, when we may follow either path. And it is important, in this age of sophistication, to have the facts clearly before us. Then we may know that there is something in us even more sacred than those desires which bewildered philosophicules would have us reverence; and that a true Man may be willing even to deny himself “self-realization,” for the sake of a greater Self-realization.

It is indeed high time that the Divinity of man was taught anew and with stronger appeal, if we are to withstand the “divinity” of man’s intellectualized passions (what a misuse of the word “intellect”!). And there is nothing that can make this ancient truth a living reality except Theosophy. How drab and dreary does our modern life seem by comparison with what it might be if the glory of humanity were restored. What pigmies we are. Nothing sublime can flourish in such surroundings, but either fizzles away in mawkish sentiment or is buried in cynicism. The Divinity of man cannot manifest itself in an atmosphere of selfishness, and the only condition of attaining to beautiful ideals is that we should not seek to make them into personal possessions or private enjoyments, as men usually try to do.

## SAINT-GERMAIN AT THE FRENCH COURT:

by P. A. M.

### III

*Souvenirs sur Marie Antoinette* (d'Adhémar).

Vol. IV, p. 185.



TO depict what happened at Versailles from the first news of the riot in Paris would be impossible. A panic terror, an unimaginable fear came over all of us; no one preserved any energy, or firmness, when we had heard the horrible cries "*Down with the Queen! Down with the Polignacs!*" uttered for the first time.

Every instant terrifying news was brought. They brought the lists of the proscription; all the men of the Duchess's acquaintance had their names written therein, and when the certainty of the murders of MM. Flesselles and de Launy was established the bravest trembled.

It was no longer a question of resistance. One went to another asking for safety and help; supporters were chosen among the members of the *tiers état*, they spoke to them of patriotic sentiments, people lied to their conscience through excess of fear.

The Queen sent for me and I hurried to her. She was lying on her couch; tears fell abundantly from Her Majesty's eyes, they drew tears from mine. Seeing to what this great princess was reduced I fell on my knees, and taking her hands, I kissed them again and again. I was choking with sobs. We remained in this painful silence for some minutes, which seemed to me to be hours, then the Queen said to me:

"Poor countess, your affliction does me good, for it proves to me that you always love me — and I have great need of love. What will become of me, my God! How can I tell you the commission which it is indispensable that I must give you?" She stopped. I assured her of my affection, of my zeal.

"The excellent Duchess," continued the Queen, "is my friend; she only gives me good advice. Well, my detractors — those who desire my ruin — have sworn to ruin her also. They have put a price on her head."

I made an exclamation, in spite of the respect due to Her Majesty, who without noticing it, said:

"Yes, they will kill her, that is certain, and her husband and children with her. They are victims that have to be sacrificed; we must snatch them out of the hands of the assassins. Take this duty, dear Countess. Go and find the Duchess for me, and tell her that I conjure her to leave France for a little time. I will give her letters of introduction for Vienna, she will be in the bosom of my family, and they will receive her with open arms. In the interval we will avert the storm, we will persuade the mutineers to return to their duty, and then I will hasten to recall her to me. Assure her that she will not lose my friendship, nor her position, and that she will retain the office of governess of the children of France, and that her husband will be the first peer that the King will appoint."

I heard what the Queen said to me with an inexpressibly heavy heart. Certainly this commission was a difficult one to carry out. How was I to go to tell a person established at the pinnacle of favor that she was to fall from it, and

pass from absolute command to a distant exile? However, I could not refuse Marie Antoinette, and moreover my attachment for the good Duchess would soften the blow.

I rose, and showing the grief that this commission caused me, I went to Madame de Polignac. I should have preferred to find her alone; but I found her husband the Duke, her sister-in-law, the Comte de Vaudreuil, M. l'abbé de Ballivière. Judging by my solemn manner as I entered and my swollen eyes still damp with my tears that had been mingled with those of the Queen, they did not doubt that I had come with sad news; the Duchess gave me her hand.

"What have you to announce to me?" she said. "I am prepared for any misfortune."

"Not at all for that which is about to fall upon you. Alas! my gentle friend, accept it with resignation and courage..."

The words expired on my lips, and the Countess continued:

"You are killing my sister a thousand times with your silence. Well, Madame, what is it?"

"Yes, what is it?" said the Duchess, "since I must know."

"The Queen," I said, "wishes that to avoid the proscription which menaces you, you and yours, that you should go for some months to Vienna."

"The Queen drives me away and you announce it!" cried the Duchess, rising.

"Unjust friend," I continued, "let me tell you all that remains for me to tell you." Then I continued, and repeated word for word what Marie Antoinette had charged me to tell.

There were more tears, more exclamations, more despair; I did not know what to make of it. M. de Vaudreuil showed no more firmness than the Polignacs.

"Alas!" said the Duchess. "It is my duty to obey. I will go without question, since the Queen wishes it, but will she not permit me to renew to her with my own mouth the gratitude I owe her for her endless bounty towards me?"

"Never has she thought of your going without being able to console you first," I said. "So go to her room. Her reception of you will make up for this seeming disfavor."

The Duchess begged me to accompany her and I agreed. My heart was bursting at the sad interview of these women who so ardently loved one another. There was a deluge of lamentations, of weeping, of sighs; they embraced so warmly that they could not be separated. It was really pitiable to see.

At that moment a fancifully sealed letter was given to the Queen. She glanced at it, trembled, and then said to me:

"It is from our unknown."

"In fact," I said, "it seemed strange to me that in such circumstances as these he kept quiet. In any case it is not for lack of having warned me."

Madame de Polignac, by her expression, seemed anxious to know what was so familiar to me. A sign I made gave the Queen to understand this. Her Majesty then said:

"Since my arrival in France, and at every event in which my interests are concerned, a mysterious protector has revealed to me what I had to fear. I have told you something about it, and today I do not doubt that he advises me what I ought to do."

"Take it Madame d'Adhémar," she said to me. "Read this letter; your eyes are not so tired as those of Madame de Polignac and mine."

Alas! the Queen referred to the tears which she did not cease to shed. I took the paper, and having opened the envelope I read as follows:

"Madame:

"I have been Cassandra. My words have assailed your ears in vain and you have arrived at the times I announced to you. It is no longer a question of maneuvering but of opposing with energy the storm that is growling ahead; it is necessary for that and in order to increase your strength, to isolate yourself from the people you love the most, so as to take away all pretext from the rebels. Besides, these people are risking their lives. All the Polignacs and their friends are doomed to death and pointed out to the assassins who have just cut the throats of the officers of the Bastille and the Provost of the Merchants. M. le Comte d'Artois will perish; they thirst also for his blood. Let him take care. I hasten to tell you this. Later I will communicate further."

We were in the state of stupefaction into which such a threat necessarily plunges one when M. le Comte d'Artois was announced. All of us started; he himself was dumbfounded. We questioned him, and he, not being able to keep silence, told us that the Duc de Liancourt had just told him and the King that the men of the revolution, in order to consolidate it, wanted his life (that of the Comte d'Artois) and that of the Duchesse de Polignac, of the Duc, of MM. Vaudreuil, de Vermont, de Guiche, of the Ducs de Broglie, de La Vauguyon, de Castries, baron de Breteuil, MM. de Villedeuil, d'Amecourt, the Polastrons, in a word a real proscription.

"My brother," said the Queen, impetuously, "I do not know what the King has ordered you to do. But I beg you to save yourself. Go, with the good Duchess; you will return together in happier times."

*Souvenirs sur Marie Antoinette* (d'Adhémar).

Vol. IV, p. 253.

When the troubles of the approaching revolution were thickening around Marie Antoinette, she advised Madame d'Adhémar to leave her and Versailles.

"Go to Paris for the present," said that excellent Princess.

"Ah, Madame," I replied, "Paris for me is where you are."

"Do not expose yourself, do not compromise your husband."

I bowed, and my expression indicated that the morrow would see me again in my place.

As I went to my apartment, a note was given me. This was it.

"All is lost, Madame la Comtesse, this sun is the last that will set on the monarchy. Tomorrow it will exist no longer, there will be another chaos; anarchy

without parallel. You know how I have tried to give affairs a different turn. They have disdained me and today it is too late. I wanted to see the work which *the demon* Cagliostro \* prepared; it is infernal; keep yourself apart. I will watch over you. Be prudent, and you will exist after the tempest has beaten down everything. I resist the desire I have to see you. What should we say to one another? You would ask of me the impossible; I can do nothing for the King, for the Queen, nor for the royal family, nothing even for the Duc d'Orleans, who will triumph tomorrow, and who in due course will cross the Capitol to be cast from the Tarpeian rock. However, if you are particularly anxious to meet an old friend, go at eight o'clock to the Récollets, and enter in at the second chapel at the right.

“I have the honor to be . . .

“Comte de Saint-Germain.”

At this name, already guessed, an exclamation of surprise escaped me; he still living, whom they said died in 1784 and of whom I had not heard for long years, had reappeared suddenly, and at such a moment, at such an epoch? Why had he come to France? Would he never have done with existence? I knew old men who had seen him at the commencement of the eighteenth century with the features of a man of forty or fifty years old.

It was one o'clock at night when I read his letter; the hour of the rendezvous was in the morning, so I went to bed. I slept little. Dreadful dreams tormented me, and in their hideous fantasy I saw the future without comprehending it at all. At the approach of day I arose weary. I had told my chief valet to bring me very strong coffee and I took two cups, which put a little spirit into me. At half past seven, I called a sedan-chair and followed by my confidential servant, I went to the Récollets.

The church was deserted. I posted M. Laroche as a sentry, and I entered in the chapel indicated. A short time afterwards, and just as I had gathered my thoughts before God, a man came towards me. . . . It was he in person. . . . Yes, he with the same countenance as in 1760, whilst mine was full of wrinkles and marks of decrepitude. . . . I was struck with astonishment; he smiled, advanced, took my hand and kissed it gallantly; I was so much upset that I let him do it.

“You there,” said I. “Where do you come from?”

“I come from China and Japan.”

“Or rather from the other world!”

“Pretty nearly so. Ah! Madame, *down there* (I underline the expression), nothing is so singular as what is passing here. How are they dealing with the monarchy of Louis XIV? You who have never seen it cannot make the comparison, but I . . .”

“I catch you there, man of yesterday!”

“Who does not know the history of that great reign? And the Cardinal de Richelieu, if he returned . . . it would drive him mad, the reign of the rabble! What did I tell you, as well as the Queen, that M. de Maurepas would ruin

\* Compare THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH, February, p. 93.

everything, because he compromised everything: I was Cassandra, a prophet of misfortune; where are you now?"

"Eh! Monsieur le Comte, your wisdom will be useless."

"Madame, he who sows the wind, gathers the storm; Jesus said it in the Gospel, perhaps not before me, but in any case his words are written; people have not been able to profit by mine."

"Still! . . ." I said, trying to smile; but he without replying to my exclamation, continued:

"I wrote to you: *I can do nothing, my hands are tied by one who is stronger than I*; there are periods of time when it is impossible to retreat, others in which when HE has pronounced the decree, the decree must be executed; we are entering into that time."

"Will you see the Queen?"

"No, she is doomed."

"Doomed! To what?"

"TO DEATH!"

Oh! that time I could not repress a cry. I rose in my seat, my hands pushed the Count away from me, and with a trembling voice, I said:

"And you also! You! What! You also!"

"Yes, I . . . I, like Cazotte."

"You know . . ."

"What you do not even suspect. Return to the château; go and tell the Queen to look out for herself, that this will be a fatal day for her; there is a plot and murder is contemplated."

"You fill me with terror, but the Comte d'Estaing has promised. . . ."

"He will be afraid and will hide."

"But M. de Lafayette . . ."

"A balloon filled with the wind. At this moment they are determining what they will do with him, if he is to be an instrument or victim; at noon all will be decided."

"Monsieur," I said, "you can render great services to our King and Queen if you wish."

"And if I cannot?"

"How?"

"Yes, if I cannot; I thought I should not be at all understood. The hour for repose is past and the decrees of providence must be executed."

"Definitely, what do they want?"

"The complete ruin of the Bourbons; they will be hunted from all the thrones which they occupy, and in less than a century they will again enter the ranks of simple private people in their different branches."

"And France?"

"Kingdom, Republic, Empire, mixed state, tormented, agitated, rent; from clever tyrants it will pass to other ambitious people of no merit; it will be divided, cut up, split in pieces; and these are by no means pleonasms on my part. The near future will bring about the overturning of the Low Empire; pride will



dominate or abolish distinctions, not from virtue, but from vanity; it is through vanity that one will return to them. The French, like children, playing at "*pou-cette et á la fronde*," will play with titles, honors, decorations. Everything will be a toy to them, even the trappings of the national guard; people of great appetite will devour the finances. Some fifty millions today form a deficit in the name of which a revolution is made. Well, under the directory of philanthropists, rhetoricians, fine talkers, the State debt will increase to more than several milliards."

"You are a terrible prophet; when shall I see you again?"

"Five times more. Do not wish for the sixth."

(Note. I have seen M. de Saint-Germain again, and always to my inconceivable surprise: at the assassination of the Queen; on the approach of the 18th Brumaire; the day after the death of M. le Duc d'Enghien; in 1815 in the month of January; and the day before the murder of M. le Duc de Berri. I await the sixth visit, when God wills.)\*

I confess that a conversation so solemn, so mournful, so terrifying, inspired me with very little desire to continue it. M. de Saint-Germain weighed upon my heart like a nightmare; it is strange how we change with age, how we look with indifference, or even disgust, upon those whose presence formerly charmed us. I found myself in this position. And then the present perils of the Queen worried me. I did not insist enough with the Count. Perhaps if I had begged him to do so, he would have come to her. There was a time of silence, and then he spoke again.

"Do not let me detain you longer. There is already a disturbance in the city. I am like Athalia, *I wanted to see, and I have seen*. Now I am going to take the post again and leave you. I have a journey to make in Sweden; a great crime is being prepared there, and I am going to try and prevent it. His Majesty Gustave III interests me. He is worth more than his reputation."

"And they threaten him?"

"Yes; they will no longer say 'happy as a King,' nor as a Queen, above all."

"Adieu then, Monsieur. In truth I wish I had never heard you."

"So it is with us people of truth. One entertains deceivers, but fix on those who say what will be! Adieu, Madame; au revoir."

He left me, and I remained plunged in a profound meditation, not knowing if I ought to inform the Queen of this visit or not. I determined to wait until the end of the week and to say nothing if it were fertile in misfortunes. Finally I rose, and when I found Laroche again, I asked him if he had seen the Comte de Saint-Germain as he passed.

"The minister, Madame?"

"No. He died a long time ago. The other."

"Ah! the clever conjurer. No, Madame. Has Madame la Comtesse met him?"

"He went out a moment ago; he passed close by you."

"I must have been thinking of something else, for I did not see him."

"It is impossible, Laroche. You are amusing yourself."

\* Note written by the hand of the Countess, attached by a pin to the original manuscript, and dated 12th May, 1821. She died in 1822.

“The worse the times are, the more respect I have for Madame.”

“What! He did not pass there, close by you, out of this door?”

“It is not that I deny it, but it did not strike my sight.”

He had then made himself invisible. I was nonplused.

I quitted the church. He had not deceived me. I recognized that the populace of Versailles was becoming uneasy. It was nothing yet. I met M. de Cazalès. He came to me and his exquisite politeness caused him to show concern for my health. Then he spoke to me of the Queen.

“Ah! Madame, how great is the number of her enemies! What has she done to them?”

“Good.”

“That is a wrong towards bad people. They will never pardon those who force them to gratitude, who put them under an obligation.”

The justice of this thought struck me; it is the counterpart of that excuse of selfishness, so poetically expressed by Racine:

A benefit reproached is always a possible offense.

Thence we passed to the circumstances of the day.

“What do you think of them?” I said.

“We must see.”

“And wait, must we not? The rascals have less patience. They act.”

“Do you think, Madame, that if the King deigned to ask us to come to his support, we should not fly to his orders? What can we do? They neutralize us, they paralyse us, and the time will come when people will blame our inaction. A King whose crown is threatened ought to hold it on his head with one hand and draw his sword with the other. Yes, when the sword of the King is in its sheath, the subject only draws his with lukewarmness. One should preach by example — it is the best kind of eloquence.”

At this moment, to our unbounded surprise, we saw at a distance of two paces M. de C — L —, dressed as a servant, in the livery of M. le Comte de Bourbon. His disguise did not hide him so well that I could not recognize him, as well as M. de Cazalès, as he was one of the “âmes damnées” of M. le Duc d’Orléans. He may have thought we did not recognize him, and continued on his way.

As for us, a look given and taken depicted our astonishment.

“Well, Monsieur!”

“Well, Madame, that man comes like a huntsman on the track of the beast, assuredly. I am going to run to the assembly, where perhaps I can serve the King.”

“I am going to place myself at the side of the Queen; let us do our duty and then let come what may.”

Book 28. The Days of October, 1789.

I went to the Queen very early. She appeared to me to be less agitated than the evening before. I soon learned the cause. The Marquis de Lafayette had just written to M. de Saint-Priest and as I had a copy of the letter, I insert it:

“ Monseigneur,

“ M. le Duc de Larochevoucauld will have told you of the idea they put into the heads of the grenadiers of going to Versailles tonight. I sent to you to tell you not to be disturbed, because I counted on their confidence in me to destroy this project, and I owe them the justice of adding that they had counted upon asking my permission, and that several thought they would make a very simple march and that it would be commanded by me. This weakness was entirely dissipated by the few words I said to them, and nothing has remained except the inexhaustible resources of the plotters.

“ You ought to regard this circumstance only as a new indication of evil designs, not as a real danger.

“ Send my letter to M. de Montmorin.

“ They had circulated the letter among all the companies of the grenadiers, and the rendezvous was for three o'clock at the ‘ Place Louis XV.’ ”

The usual formulæ followed.

When I had finished reading this, the Queen turned and said with some satisfaction :

“ There is a respite.”

I did not know how badly these words made me feel. For so great a Princess to congratulate herself, not on her complete tranquillity, but on a delay in the execution of a crime! I did not wish to take from her her moments of repose, only too certain that it would be disturbed before her last hour; nevertheless, I proposed measures of prudence. The Queen then, with a sort of impatience which was not usual with her, replied :

“ But there is a respite. Must I repeat it? Let me breathe for a few days.”

I was silent. At the same instant M. Fersen entered. He also came from Paris at full gallop; he had followed the first battalion of the insurgent women.

“ I have taken part in the revolt,” said he, “ in order to know it better. I marched on the Hôtel de Ville. We took it. MM. Lafayette and Bailly lost their heads. The National Guard assembled and there is only one cry, ‘ Go to Versailles!’ ”

“ And when?” said the Queen, paling in spite of her great energy.

“ Immediately, Madame, without respite!”

At that word employed by Marie Antoinette, but in an opposite sense, Her Majesty looked at me with an expression of despair. I turned away to hide my eyes, which were filled with tears; I recognized how much M. de Saint-Germain, that inexplicable person, had told me the truth; the subsequent events only too clearly demonstrated the truth of his prophecy. Meanwhile I must keep to the narration of the events of Monday, 5th, and Tuesday, 6th, of October, 1789.

The factious party, delighted with the pretext that the court furnished them with, decided to deliver a final blow. So they gave the order to the bakers not to light their fires. Bread was lacking, without there being a famine. One of these workmen, less cowardly or more honest, having served his customers, was hanged to a lamp-post.

He was saved by M. de Gouvion, who cut the rope at the risk of his own life.

*(To be continued)*

**THE LEGEND OF VISINGSÖ: by Oscar Ljungström**

EVERY Swede knows Lake Vättern — the wide clear inland sea, a diamond among lakes — and all have certainly heard of Visingsö, the pearl of Vättern. But perhaps all do not know that in olden times the royal residence of Sweden was situated here on this beautiful island, which was the seat of several of our old kings, chief among whom was Magnus Ladulus (Magnus “lock the barn”). In these times, when legend changed into history, the metropolis of the North was situated at the southern end of the island. In remote antiquity, however, when legend was true and history unwritten, the metropolitan center even then was in the island, though at its northern point.

One summer I journeyed to Visingsö and turned my steps to the old fragments of the walls in the south, which are all that is left of the royal castle. Antiquarians and their helpers were busy digging, and had brought the immense walls to the light. On the outside they found the barbs of decayed arrows that had been shot against the castle when it was stormed by hostile forces; inside they found charred wood remnants, dating from the day when enemies had set the castle on fire. In front of a niche in the tower-chamber a small ornamented bronze key was found. Maybe it once belonged to the jewel-box, in which the diadem of the royal bride was kept.

From the south I turned my steps to the place of memories in the north. I wandered in dreams through immense oak-woods out into pine-regions, where the tall trunks reminded me of columns in a fairy temple. As in an old church one treads on gravestone after gravestone all the way to the altar, so the ground below the crowns of pines was strewn with barrow on barrow, in their hundreds. The people of the saga had found here the path that leads through the underworld over the Gjallar-bridge and Bifröst up to Valhall.

Half-way to the place in view I passed a stately view, surrounded by gigantic ramparts and ditches — Earl Brahe’s Visingsborg. The castle was burnt one Christmas Eve in the time of Carolus XII, being set on fire by captive Muscovites. Now lofty trees covered with leaves were to be seen growing from the ground up through the hall of knights, and forming vaults from wall to wall. Though not following the plan of the architect, yet they were in keeping with the whole, conforming to its style — a ruin style!

At the extreme north a memorial stone is standing, which was erected by Earl Brahe: “Here our forefathers had a castle in olden

days," it says. Dark forces, however, try to destroy such memories and turn them over to oblivion. Storm-waves dig and dig until the stone falls down the steep and becomes buried. Several times it has been erected anew, and each time at a greater distance inland from the shore.

But this is not the true memorial stone. One hundred fathoms from the shore, deep down you must seek the "Borga-stone" — this stone of which the legend speaks. Some of its words still live in the legends of the people and in ancient chronicle — they give some scattered features. When listening to the temple-song of the wind in the pine-wood among the barrows; when standing on the shore with the clear little wavelets whispering at my feet; when rocking in the billows on the way to the Borga-stone — then my mind was filled by the echoes of bygone days. And my soul heard the legend that has been handed down in a trustworthy manner from generation to generation, though now it is half-forgotten.

Thus it runs:

In ancient times Vättern did not exist. Where its cool waters now extend, there was a wide, fertile valley — a whole country, covered by houses, fields, and woods. This was long, long ago, before the time of discord, and then all men were happy. Thus joy and peace reigned in the valley, and as king there ruled a wise old king who still remembered the days when Heimdall wandered among men. The king's name is not known in our time. He had two sons, Vise and Vätte.

When the old king went away he left the kingdom to his sons. They should rule it together, so he decided; but Vise, as the oldest and wisest, should have the highest power. Vise was to give the counsel and Vätte to respect it. At the *thing* Vätte might speak, but Vise was to have the judgment when judgment was difficult.

Now Vise built his castle on a high hill in the midst of the valley, and Vätte his down in the valley. Vise's castle was beautiful to behold, with arcades, vaults, and domes; and it stood there as a token of the happiness and joy of the land, visible to all around. Its splendor was mirrored in a small clear lake at the foot of the hill, while beautiful groves surrounded the castle.

In the midst of the courtyard stood a mighty *thing*-stone. Often it happened that when Vise mounted the stone crowds of people in festal attire came to hear his laws and listen to his words. Mighty

and wonderful sounded his voice, and deep wisdom flowed from his lips, seeming to emanate from his whole being; it penetrated the hearts of the listeners and many minds were turned to manly and noble acts.

King Vätte was a great warrior and at the head of his army he defended the borders of the country. When he rode in his shining armor to King Vise's castle to take advice of his brother, he was stately to behold and many a maiden followed him with loving eyes. In the lake a sea-maid had her dwelling. Hidden in the reeds with love in her heart she had often seen the bold warrior passing up the hill, and this was the cause of the sighs that rose from out the water as Vätte passed. But he who becomes subject to the love of a sea-maid and hears her sighs can never more be happy in the company of men.

As long as Vätte continued to ride to his brother and followed his wise counsels everything was well in the valley. But Vätte's heart was unreliable, and falsehood slumbered in its depths; and further his mind was dulled by the sighs of the sea-maiden. In his heart jealousy began to rankle. He could no longer be satisfied with conditions in which his brother had greater power and dignity.

One day Vise brought home as his bride a lovely maid, and a sweeter queen had never been seen. But Vätte's jealousy turned to hatred, and his thoughts ever centered themselves on the queen. Wild with passion, he decided to dethrone Vise, capture his bride and make himself the sole sovereign of the country. Then came a time when Vise went far away to another country to give his good laws and wise rules to its people. With words from the heart he desired to fill the minds of listening crowds with knowledge. The castle he entrusted to the care of a faithful servant whose name was Bard. Further, he invited the sea-maid to the castle to solace his young bride with her wonderful songs. Bard too was a master of music, and there was a remedy for her longing in the sea-maid's song and in the play of the harp.

Vätte now thought it was the right time to carry out his infamous design. He gathered together his sworn champions and rode to the hill. But Bard saw the dark warriors at a great distance. He knew secretly of Vätte's jealousy and guessed what would happen. With great dispatch he took the queen out of the castle, saddled the horses and dashed off with her to where he knew King Vise was.

When Vätte arrived it was an easy thing for him to take the castle. In the keep he found the sea-maid. As everyone knows, a sea-maid can easily change shape, and now she had taken the shape of the queen in order to meet the desire of Vätte. Being himself false, Vätte could not readily see the falsehood of others, and thus he was gratified in having attained his goal. We can imagine that the sea-maid most willingly followed Vätte to his castle in the valley.

Soon the thought came to Vätte that he ought to destroy the castle of Vise, so that the latter might not have a stronghold when he came back again. Thus he rode once more to the hill with his champions, but nowhere could he find the castle. The Vana-gods of the underworld had taken Vise's castle under their protection. Only the great *thing*-stone was still visible, and it became from this time a memorial for future generations, standing on the site where the castle once had been.

King Vätte now ruled the whole kingdom, but the golden age had passed away. The dark king did not rule in peace. At his castle in the valley he lived with his sea-maid. Years rolled by, and in time she began to long for her old servants and playmates, the billows of her home — the clear little lake at the foot of the hill. Once when she was singing her wonderful songs her longings grew with a strange force. It was carried by the magic power of its tones out over the valley, and the billows of the little lake began to tremble when they felt the urge of their queen. They had no choice, they must obey her secret call, and so one after another they glided over the brink of their home. Soon thousands of waves rose from the hidden spring in the depths of the lake and followed their comrades out into the valley, which finally they wholly embraced in their arms.

We name the valley Vättern because it is the land of Vätte, and the hill above the water, Visingsö — the remnant of Vise's land — the land of old, where the people were ruled by a king filled with the wisdom which Heimdall once brought to the races of men.

King Vätte and his queen still live in their castle at the bottom of the sea. When the sea-maid is singing her charming songs the surface of the lake is quiet and beaming. The clear little waves touch the shore with melodious sounds. But Vätte is a king full of wrath, and his raging champions, following his command, storm against the shore in the dark blue storm-waves. Full of rage for not having been able to destroy King Vise's castle, he sends them against the island to

dig and dig until the whole hill shall be swept away in the depths. Thus it is his hope to destroy the castle that must be found within the hill.

If you take a boat along the strange rocky shore of the island you can sometimes see parts of the sunken castle, laid bare by the washing billows — here a stair, there a gate or column. In time they become undermined by the waves, and one after the other falls into the depth, down into the kingdom of King Vätte. Even the mighty stone on the courtyard from which Vise used to teach the people is now partly covered by the water.

However, as long as it is still visible above the water King Vise can come back.

They who have received the legend as a heritage from their fathers and who faithfully tell it to the next generation, are hoping he will reappear some day. Then shall the castle of the saga once more rise above the crest of the hill. Over clear shimmering waves its golden domes and high arcades shall be seen from the distant shores of the mainland. The ancient *thing*-stone shall then be brought to its right place and once more inspired crowds from afar and near shall listen to the wisdom of primeval times.

## SCIENTIFIC ITEMS: by T. Henry

### DISCOVERIES IN AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE



HOW often does some art, which had seemed to be completely mastered, unexpectedly reveal new possibilities of such extent as to suggest the idea that instead of having learned all about it, we have barely begun to learn at all! Agriculture may have seemed to be merely a mechanical process, with perhaps a little knowledge relating to manure added. But now we have learned to study intimately the treatment of the soil under three different headings: the physics of the soil, the chemistry of the soil, and the bacteriology of the soil. Consequently the problem has become indefinitely complex and far-reaching.

The plant has long been regarded by our science as a living thing. But not so the soil. Mineral life seemed too far removed from what we are accustomed to regard as life. Nevertheless there is mineral



life.\* What reason, indeed, can there be for regarding anything in nature as dead? We have begun to find out that the soil is not simply so much dirt, into which the plant is stuck; but that the soil too is alive and busy, co-operating with the plant in a "symbiosis" or mutual life, each helping the other in the ceaseless work of evolution and creation of new forms. Allusion is here made particularly to zeolites.

Zeolites are a family of minerals that have resulted from the alteration, especially the hydration, of other minerals, chiefly feldspars. They occur in the cavities of the rocks from which they have been derived, as amygdules and veins and as minute specks. They are produced by the action of heated water, and a study of this kind of action reveals the existence of a slow but active mineral life, as intelligent and busy in its way as the life of the forest and jungle. Plants absorb from the soil nitrates, phosphates, sulphates, and carbonates, of potassium, calcium, magnesium, and iron, which must be dissolved ere the root-hairs can take them up. How is it that these salts are not all washed away by the rain-water? According to the explanation of Professor O. N. Witt, it is because the zeolites act as storehouses and distributing agents of the salts. They are double silicates, having alumina as a permanent base, and one of the above-mentioned metals as a replaceable base. The replaceable base can be changed any number of times; it is not chemical affinity that determines the change, but "mass-action" — that is, any solution containing a certain base in excess will introduce that base into the zeolite in exchange for the zeolite's base. Hence this mineral is capable of taking from the soil any salt of which there is too much, and giving to it any salt which it lacks. It exercises a similar economy upon the plant. The roots not only absorb but excrete; the zeolites take up the rejected matter and give food in return.

In the winter, when the plants rest, the zeolites have a chance to renew their supplies from the decomposing minerals about them; thus being ready for the plants again in the spring. But if exhaustion should occur prematurely, the plant can take up temporarily salts of a kind that it cannot use directly in the building of its structure, keeping these until it has a chance of exchanging them with the zeolite for

\* The U. S. Department of Agriculture says in one of its Bulletins: "The soil is not a dead mass controlled entirely by chemical and physical laws, but . . . it is a living thing. It is the scene of the activities of living organisms (bacteria) which have a most important influence on its fertility. In the soil, as in the animal body, beneficial and harmful organisms are constantly struggling for supremacy."

the kind it does use. This explains the known fact that plants do take up salts which they do not need. Such a fact as this last is hardly to be explained by any theory based on the instincts of the plant alone. The work is co-operative between plant and soil; and, if we are to have a psychological explanation, it must be one that includes the soil. It is quite like the act of storing up money, or surplus goods for barter. Lesser lives, like that of the plant and that of the minerals in the soil, doubtless form integral parts of a larger life which embraces both; just as the life of an individual man is not entirely distinct but bears relation to the life of his family and of his race and of his kind. Again, when we consider the equal parts played by plant and soil in the transaction, it seems unwarrantable to speak of the plant as alive and the soil as dead.

But it is when we pass from chemistry to bacteriology that we get the most striking evidence of the universality of life, even in the so-called inorganic world. It is now known that many actions, once believed to be chemical, are in reality due to microscopic animals or vegetables or animal-vegetables. H. P. Blavatsky goes further and states that *no* action whatever can take place in nature, except through the action of tiny invisible "lives." And this seems the only logical view to take; since, if we deny the existence and operation of such lives, it becomes necessary to invent some other power or force capable of taking their place and doing what they do. Even in inorganic chemistry it has been found that combinations and reactions of the most apparently vigorous and inevitable kind will not take place at all if the substances concerned are perfectly pure. If oxygen and hydrogen are perfectly dry — that is, pure — they will not combine, even when heated. Here, in the mediation of the moisture, we have an analogy to the work of the zeolites. The same is true of ammonia gas and hydrogen chloride. Incandescent gas mantles of thoria do not glow brightly unless the thoria is impure from the admixture of 1% of ceria. Sulphur dioxide and oxygen are made to combine by the use of a catalytic agent; and so on with many other instances, all tending to show that agents of some kind are required in every operation. We do not yet discern any bacteria in these operations, but in some other cases we are more fortunate. For, passing to organic chemistry, we find that the elements carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, and sulphur, pass by a series of steps through endless combinations, effected by microbes. The proteids, fats, and sugars of dead plants and animals are converted

into organic acids and aromatic bodies. The yeast cell is one of these organisms; but it has been found that the substance in the yeast cell has the same fermentative power as the yeast itself. Büchner mixed barm with very fine sand and subjected the whole to great pressure; the cells were crushed, and the liquid which flowed out fermented saccharine solutions. Hence it is said that the action of the yeast cell is due to an enzyme; and later we acquired the terms diastase, zymase, invertin, ptyalin, etc. But, as a writer says:

Like many other *termini technici* with which we are familiar, these expressions, ferment, diastase, enzyme, or what-not, must be understood historically.

True; and now it is in order to ask what may be inside the enzyme. One is reminded of an ancient rhyme ending with the word *infinitum*. Fermentations have been closely imitated by means of finely divided metals, such as platinum and gold; though here a different system of nomenclature is used. But a rose is just as sweet whether we call it enzyme or catalysis, to quote another ancient proverb. Are molecular actions vital, or vital actions molecular? Is life a fermentation, or is fermentation life? Certainly it is better to think that one's beer is alive than that one's body is fermenting. The biological, chemical, and physical maps of the world need co-ordinating.

The tubercles or nodules on the roots of some leguminous plants contain bacteria which have the power of drawing nitrogen from the air and fixing it, thus providing sustenance for the plant. Some years ago a scientist succeeded in preparing a culture of this bacterium, and this can now be distributed in convenient form among farmers for the inoculation of their peas, beans, etc. Nitro-bacterine keeps well, when sent out as a prepared powder together with the necessary chemicals to impart vitality to the bacteria. By its means plants have been grown in soil otherwise non-productive for them.

This application, however, has not come up to expectations; for, though attended with good results in certain poor soils, it has proved useless for ordinary soils. But six years' research in the Botanical Laboratories of King's College, London, has (says the *Illustrated London News*, which gives some interesting illustrations of the process) resulted in the discovery of a *medium* which, when saturated with the nitrogen-fixing bacteria and added to the soil, brings about nitrogen fixation in ordinary soil. To make this medium, peat is treated with certain aerobic soil-bacteria, which decompose it and render its acids neutral. This result obtained, the aerobic bacteria are

killed off by sterilization and the medium is inoculated with nitrogen-fixing bacteria, and after a few days' incubation is ready for use. Excellent results are reported, and the preparation has other valuable properties; for in addition to adding active nitrogen-fixers to the soil, it stimulates the action of those already there, and also adds direct plant-food to the soil in the shape of the material of the peat. Besides this, it directly promotes the root-development and improves the mechanical condition of the soil.

All this shows how much there is still to be studied and learned about the mechanical, chemical, and biological conditions favorable to growth.

The co-operative interaction of different organisms has been christened with the name of "symbiosis," though it is doubtful whether the organisms concerned are aware of the existence of any such principle. The bee and the flower is the stock instance of the principle now called symbiosis. The medusa and the fish *Caranx auratus* form a partnership, the fish seeking protection amid the stinging appendages of the medusa and repaying the service by discovering the lurking foes of the medusa and hurrying it away from the place of danger. One has read of birds which get their living by picking the teeth of crocodiles. Lichens are now thought to be not a distinct plant but an association of algae and fungi in a state of symbiosis. The alga is adapted for producing an abundance of organic material by means of its action on the carbonic acid of the air, but it cannot easily decompose the soil. The fungus excretes acids which readily decompose the soil, but it is not adapted for obtaining material from the air. Each of these plants can flourish alone in its proper habitat, the alga on a marsh, the fungus on decaying organic matter. But should they be thrown together on a spot not specially favorable to either, they will combine their resources. Let it be a rock or tree-trunk, for instance. The fungus with its acid roots provides the sustenance from below, and the alga contributes to the common stock by its action upon the carbon dioxide of the atmosphere. A writer in *Prometheus* some years ago, commenting on such instances, extends the idea to the case where one of the partners in a symbiosis becomes unduly predominant, and then we get parasitism, also very common in nature. Such instances are food for the man who is in quest of evidence for a principle of destructive emulation; but as we see, nature contains so many things that unless she is studied on a large scale, we may easily get false impressions. Doubt-

less nature is neither god nor devil, but simply a collection of living things fulfilling their various functions, making mistakes and learning new lessons, and all evolving towards perfection. But destructive violence and selfish rapacity are certainly not the mainspring.

Much has been done in agriculture by means of plant introduction, and many plants have been introduced into North America from Siberia and China, and acclimatized. Then there is the enormous field opened up by experiments in plant breeding and the production of new varieties, such as Burbank has created. The question occurs whether mankind in far past ages has engaged in this kind of work to any great extent. We have fruit-trees which do not appear to have sprung from a wild stock, but seem rather to have been thus artificially created. It is surely possible that some of the great and capable races of antiquity may have progressed much farther in this science than we have so far. And possibly some of the marvelous plants, like the Eucalyptus, may owe their manifold perfections to the skill of past human races. When man considers himself as a co-worker with the other intelligences in nature, and works on lines of sympathy and intelligence, he may make many wonderful discoveries; especially when the order of human fellowship has assumed a less wasteful stamp than it bears at present.

#### GERMS AND SERUMS

A paper published in the cause of the humane treatment of animals draws attention to a confession made in a certain medical paper. An experimenter in serums complains of the great uncertainty of the serum method of treatment, declaring that nature's slow but sure processes of healing are to be preferred, especially on the ground that they render the patient immune against further attacks. The serum treatments, however, according to this experimenter, more than compensate the advantage of rapidity by the risk of further infection. But his most important confession was that the germs artificially bred in prepared cultures often become suddenly virulent, and are thus responsible for the spread of epidemics.

The above is a good illustration of the unsatisfactoriness of methods which involve cruelty, and of the hopelessness of seeking wisdom in such paths. But the point we wish to make at present is as follows. *How or why do the germs become suddenly and unaccountably virulent?*

The answer to this question concerns a very important principle.

It is often stated that diseases are the product of evil thoughts; and the fact that they are also traceable to physical causes, such as germs or dirt, does not in the least invalidate the former explanation. For the physical causes are merely a link in the chain of causation; and this link alone does not suffice for a full explanation — as illustrated by the cases just cited. Evidently there is something behind the germ, and the germ is merely a carrier of some influence. That influence may be mild, or may become suddenly and unexpectedly virulent; and the experimenter finds himself unable to control the situation thus created.

It is well known that various insects may be either harmless or poisonous, according as they carry deadly germs or not. Hence it will not suffice to blame these insects, but we must look to the germs which they may carry. And what do we know about the origin and conditions of propagation of these creatures? We can detect them when they are present, and we can tell a good deal about what will favor their reproduction, what will kill them, and what effect they will produce. But how did they start? Why do they sometimes gain no power, while at other times they spread with fearful rapidity? And why are they sometimes more virulent than at other times?

The natural explanation is that evil thoughts create such germs, or create still smaller germs from which the larger ones are in turn generated.

Sanitation and antisepsis are indeed essential and have accomplished wonders; but how much more effectual might they not become, did we but understand better the relation between physical cleanliness and moral cleanliness. Conditions prevail which are such a continual outrage upon the laws of cleanliness and wholesomeness, that the attempt to prevent the natural consequences by mere physical prophylaxis is like damming a torrent. In spite of all our science, care, and energy, we may even be fighting a losing battle. Some diseases are decreasing and others increasing. Does it not seem likely that potent causes, born of moral and mental impurity, if denied one outlet, will seek another? Or, if denied all outlet (supposing that to be possible) would they not fester in the mental and moral atmosphere?

The serum method is evidently not the best that could be conceived for combating the spread of disease. It would be wonderful if a method involving cruelty should result in benefit or knowledge. Moreover, if we are to believe what we hear, the vivisection of animals is already

leading in some quarters to its logical sequel — experiments upon living human beings. It is a line that leads downwards and not upwards, evidently.

What is needed by the opponents of this cruelty is a constructive program; hence we look forward to the discovery and advocacy of cleaner and more effectual methods of resisting deadly germs. Nature's curative processes can be helped by man's work; it is man's privilege to work consciously with nature.

It is disparaging to the fair name of science that it should be made a shelter for practices which violate humanity, and that it should become associated in the minds of many people with pitilessness. The true representatives of science should be anxious to free themselves and their cause from the stigma. Other fair names than that of science have been made a cloak for unseemly acts. No more than religion, can science rightly involve mercilessness; and that which prescribes cruelty as a condition of progress is not science but a travesty of it.

Thoughts are the primal causes of physical effects, and cruel deeds are the outcome of cruel thoughts. We can at least see to it that we generate no germs of cruelty by our cruel thoughts; else we may perchance create more evil by our thoughts than we can undo by our charitable deeds. The evil complained of is but a fraction of the great evil of the world, against which all loyal compassionate hearts are leagued in resistance. We must each do his best to spread light and healing around in the circles wherein we move. "A thought is far more potent in creating evil results than are deeds." "We have never attained or even understood the powers of the human heart," says H. P. Blavatsky.



Now that light which shines above this heaven, higher than all, higher than every thing, in the highest world, beyond which there are no other worlds, that is the same light which is within man. — *Chhândogya Upanishad*

WHEN this path is beheld, thirst and hunger are forgotten; night and day are undistinguished on this road. Whether one would set out to the bloom of the East, or come to the chambers of the West, without moving, O holder of the bow! is the traveling on this road. In this path, to whatever place one would go, that place one's own self becomes. How shall I easily describe this? Thou thyself shalt experience it. — *Jñâneśvarî*