

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

KATHERINE TINGLEY, EDITOR

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THEOSOPHY in its abstract meaning is Divine Wisdom, or the aggregate of the knowledge and wisdom that underlie the Universe. . . . and in its concrete sense it is the sum total of the same as allotted to man by Nature on this earth, and no more.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY, in *The Key to Theosophy*, p. 56

THE TREND OF INVENTION: by Philip A. Malpas



AS though in fulfilment of the fancy of a 'best-seller' of its season, an intelligent couple of Pitcairn Islanders visited London not long ago. They were vastly struck by the display of ingenious inventions the city has to offer.

"We didn't see any poor," says one of the visitors, "but that was perhaps because we were not looking for them. All the people did not seem happy with all these wonderful inventions around them. In Pitcairn everyone is happy and contented. There are no quarrels to speak of—perhaps a word or two; the next minute it is all over and forgotten. . . ."

Invention is a fascinating occupation described by Edison, it is said, as one part inspiration and ten parts perspiration, but as the Pitcairn Islander observed, many inventions do not bring happiness. Perhaps in this lies the answer to the puzzle: "If advanced students of the hidden mysteries of nature and of science exist, as they are said to do by some, why do they not make their knowledge public at once and have done with it?" As it seems that they do not, we punish them by believing them to be a myth. When occasionally they do, we want to burn them like Galileo, and he only said what could be found in many a volume extant in his time. What would have happened if he had told something quite new to the world it is hard to guess.

Motive is the key to it all. If inventors had in mind only the advancement of the happiness of the human race, many inventions would never have been published, and without a doubt, many more, and more important ones, would be known to the world at large. "For the sake of the soul alone the Universe exists," says a scripture. It is a medium for the soul to obtain experience. As training and experience, invention is an excellent thing; as a means of making money, the opposite, though perhaps not worse than a hundred other things necessary for our civiliza-

tion, if no injustice is done through its means, and no dangerous secrets of nature are revealed.

Unhappily for the vanity of those of us who, rushing to the Patent Office with the latest creation of our originality, think we have done something to make the world revolve, well, just a little faster, for the greatness of our 'something new under the sun,' it hurts us to be told that Solomon was right after all and that we are only now raking up the rubbish heap of old memories and there is never a new thing among them all. For this is the memory we used to deny when discussing re-incarnation and say that we ought to remember our past deeds for which we suffer now or enjoy effects. We thought that memory must be always mere brain memory, and supposed that we ought to expect some wonderful process to give us back without effort into one brain what we recorded on another, something after the fashion of a man who would record one song on a phonograph cylinder and expect to hear it from a totally different cylinder.

To quote from *Theosophical Manuals*, No. XI, p. 74:

We find that our boasted inventions are old and are largely derived from the astral storehouse of Atlantean or Lemurian antiquity where the principles that our inventors look for are preserved in germ. When the time is ripe, or in other words when the cycle has come round again, the principle breaks through into the seeking minds, and the last link desired for success comes in a flash, or by what is called 'a happy accident.' In America the rush of invention has been especially active, one reason being that the people are more receptive to the pressure of the stored thought of the past than Europeans. Then, again, sometimes men originate brilliant ideas but have not enough education or opportunities to push them to perfection; in such cases a receptive and well-qualified mind will pick them subconsciously out of the astral light by a kind of thought-transference and utilize them for the benefit of mankind.

Put in other language, the statement about America may in part be described as an assertion that the American memory of past lives is better than the European.

There is a very real connexion between the success of an inventor and his morality. Between the fashionable woman who would like to catch an angel so as to have new and rare feathers in her hat, and the humble inventor who would give his life if haply some invention of his could make the world, the children and the poor, happier, there is a vast difference. She may have her little social triumphs; he may have his little failures, in silence and unknown. But in the great world-memory, which never forgets, there are seeds sown for future opportunities and future increase of ignorance; time adjusts all things. The inventor who uses his whole power to make money or for selfish triumph is not necessarily fortunate when he is successful. Even in England, in 1916, "all the people did not seem happy with all those wonderful inventions around them," as our puzzled friend the Pitcairn Islander observed.

In the west it is difficult to enter fully into the oriental attitude that the knowledge of something not commonly known is no justification for its immediate publication and exploitation, but rather the reverse. It is even more difficult to realize that of the many inventions of olden time, now forgotten or imperfectly restored, a large number have been of set purpose concealed or encouraged to die out of memory, by those who have rather the moral progress of the world in mind than its financial or physical interests.

Our memories are so short, physically, that we forget how wonderful our most common exploits of today would have seemed to our imaginations of even twenty or thirty years ago, and we are liable to underestimate their importance. A tale by Mr. Judge of aeroplanes and airships fighting in the great war of which Plato and all the oldest writers speak, who dare, was about twenty years ago so childishly fanciful that, apart from the pleasant style in which it was written, it was, from the every-day point of view, hardly worth reading; it was too absurd and far-fetched. Yet he knew. And now we begin to know. H. P. Blavatsky within the last thirty years indicated, foreshadowed, almost detailed, many inventions and discoveries, some of which are today the wonders of modern scientific achievement. But somehow one misses the acclamation by the world of her priceless work during her lifetime, and even today we find men with famous names in all departments of knowledge using, whether consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, her inexhaustible store of information, and her name is conspicuously absent from their acknowledgments, if they ever make any. If an inventor or leader of thought will read through her books *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*, he cannot fail to find material and ideas and even direct statements of coming discoveries and inventions which are daily crystallizing into everyday shape, and for a hundred years to come it will be so. Seeking similar indications in other writers of the past of similar class, we can find many indications which are only now being realized. To continue the case of the airship, we find old Roger Bacon the physicist, seven centuries ago, telling us of many inventions he had seen, and among those which he knew of but had not seen, was an airship or aeroplane. I suspect that he claimed little originality in ideas, for he boasts of his researches into the Arabic wisdom, and doubtless through them he received much from the Greeks and Chinese, and they in their turn received much from old Atlantis, over 11,000 years ago at the least — some relics of whose scientific attainments we cannot equal today even with our fine instruments. Doubtless there were others throughout the ages who knew of the science of aviation as one of the oldest sciences in the known world, and their dim hints encouraged the search

for millenniums, until we in our glorious twentieth-century progress have at last reattained some beginning for the grand and glorious purpose of — war!! Were they right to conceal or are we right to publish?

Of the minor inventions, toys if you like (since to speak of the really important ones is not yet the fashion among the intuitional scientists, it would seem), we find traces throughout our very imperfect history of the lens — microscopes and telescopes. Bacon shows how the lens may be made to do harm to an enemy by burning, seven hundred years ago. In the early centuries of the Christian era we find Synesius with what appears to be a telescope pure and simple, for looking over the sea, hence called a 'waterscope.' In the gems of the ancient world *we find microscopic engraving*. In the world of untold antiquity we find temples dedicated to planets and stars, as symbols of their gods, and those planets and stars are some of them telescopic. Doubtless as far as the imperfections of so-called history can reach we shall find indications of the use of the lens, even in the, or rather our, night of time, when the three old Hyperborean ladies had only one monocle among them and had to pass it round when they wished to see a visitor from that promising little new country called Greece in after days, — the story is in all the mythological dictionaries. But really and truly to the intuitional scientists the lens is a child's toy. What need had a really clear scientific insight for such relatively crude instruments as microscopes and telescopes? They came in with the degeneration of the human development, perhaps that which is indicated in some of the old writings as the result of the awful 'flood' which destroyed Atlantis. The intellects of the best men became as 'those of half-grown babes.' Plato speaks of it in either the *Timaeus* or the *Critias*, where he says that for ages the struggle for life was too keen to allow of the luxuries of intellectual study, such as history.

Marvelous as are such discoveries and inventions, they are apparently despised by many of the brightest ornaments of human wisdom, towering minds which shine out through the lapse of ages and the worst fogs of dogmatism. Putting two and two together, may we not suspect that some of these, like the best of the alchemists, had got beyond such trivialities, and were really on the track of the 'one only thing' that mattered, as they joyously hint?

Really it does seem as if some such state of affairs did and does exist. Their humor bursts out irrepressibly in rare cases, as if to laugh at the mole-like efforts of the societies and academies, as in that huge joke of the eighteenth century where the modern cinematograph, *in color*, and so lifelike as to deceive the sight, is described in detail in 1760, in a fantastic sketch evidently intended to be a playful skit on the Pari-

sians, (the first foreshadowings of photography were not 'discovered' for forty years afterwards). That sketch in some of its most absurd and fanciful parts contains scientific truths to which our scientists have not yet come, though speculative writers have. This so-called 'happy anticipation' of photography by Tiphaigne de la Roche has always been the stumbling-block of photographers who dare to think. He evidently knew something, and not being able to keep it to himself according to the laws of his society, which was probably searching for more important discoveries and could not afford to have its members sidetracked by such minor matters and the absorption of public exploitation and adulation, put it forward as a joke, a dream. It is only a strong position that enables discoverers to ignore fame and the 'great men' of the day in this manner, and that society must have had something worth while in prospect to be able to afford to do it. Though perhaps this apparent neglect of official science was not really so severe as it seems, and quietly, unostentatiously, its members may have placed some of their minor, though to the world extremely important and epoch-making discoveries, at the disposal of that world. There seems to be strong indications of this in the medicines and chemical discoveries given to science by Paracelsus, Glauber, St. Germain, and others. They were not ungenerous, but they apparently saw no use in giving more than could be utilized at the time. Judging by the revenge the world took for what they did give, this view is not surprising. More often, perhaps, such discoveries, or the seeds of them, like those so lavishly sown by H. P. Blavatsky, were given to the world when the time came, so indirectly as to demand no acknowledgment from those who were so worldly (and therefore imperfect as scientists) as to seek honor for themselves for what they in their turn put forward.

Another type of such a discoverer, or rather inventor, is found in Jules Verne, the delight of our boyhood days. Without traveling far from home, he wrote volume after volume of fanciful stories for boys, full of the most wonderful inventions. Of course, we all knew such things were impossible — submarine voyages in the ocean, crossing Africa, finding the North Pole, airships mechanically propelled, the circuit of the earth in less than three months. The very boldness of the ideas made them unthinkable in real life, and he was not persecuted as a pioneer scientist or thinker would have been, had he dared to put these things forward as serious forecasts. There is room for suspicion that, directly or indirectly, he knew more than he cared to say, unless it were as a fantastic story of mechanical invention. Whether this is so or not, it is a definite method followed by such thinkers as Plato. What he knew otherwise, say, of Atlantis, he puts forward as a tale

told by Critias who says it was related to his great-grandfather by Solon and by the old gentleman to him when he was a boy. Even then the wily narrator mixes up and confuses both the story and the tellers and his 'memory' in such a way that it is hard to realize that he is in deadly earnest in what he says, unless one studies his method. Critias is said to have been very unpopular in Greece and a modern European University professor cannot understand why Plato treats him as a friend. May it not be that he does this precisely to avert from himself the unpopularity which Critias assumes, for any reason but the real one, that he had said more than was liked in describing the history of Atlantis, even in so obscure and confused and guarded a way as he did?

About thirty years ago much was made of the wonderful inventions and discoveries of a Philadelphia man, John Worrell Keely. They were really wonderful, but somehow there was a difficulty in getting them to work under the guidance of any but Keely himself or of one in touch with Keely. They indicated some such thing as wireless power generated in an engine that might be held in the hand — a power of almost inexhaustible duration. He tried to commercialize the force and instruments, and it was for that very reason he was told by H. P. Blavatsky that he would never proceed beyond a certain point, and would never succeed commercially. He went on with his work, and the next thing that was heard was that he was reduced to using wires for the conduction of his force. Even then there was no commercial success, and when he died, there was of course the usual howl of 'fraud' because the wires were found in the house and were supposed to have been used by him to cover alleged frauds as to the power being derived from his instruments alone. The whole affair is now almost forgotten, and, to the public, John Worrell Keely is not a man whose name bears any particular honor, rather the reverse. He seems to have been one of those who would have been more honored if he had maintained secrecy, as so many other originators have done when they were dealing with matters ahead of the age.

Coupled with her statement that the Keely motor would never be a commercial success, was the condition of success, namely, that it would have to wait, perhaps thousands of years, for the poor to need it more than the rich, before such a power could be trusted to the public, could be trusted to civilization: — the taint of money-making was its death warrant. Or what is almost the same thing, it could not be used for selfish purposes.

On the rare occasions when such retiring researchers as those whose efforts are directed to humanitarian ends and not individual profit are seen encouraging inventive effort, a careful consideration of their ac-

tions will usually show that the invention is a secondary purpose altogether, a mere tool for the formation of character in most cases. In the wonderful history of Count Saint-Germain we find him as an inventor on various occasions, but though apparently in command of unlimited wealth when he so desired, his personal wants seemed few. At times he appeared almost poor, and yet he often treated valuable diamonds as things of no value. Helping others to invent, he seems to have made little money by his greatest inventions or discoveries, if any. He could enhance the price of diamonds to an enormous extent, and yet he did not appear to avail himself of this power to his own enrichment, while we do find him inventing or helping to invent simple industrial processes, and even giving employment to many workers in a factory, but always there seems to shine through all that he did the one motive of helping others. He is hugely delighted when some royal pupil finds out something for himself in one of their investigations, and yet, with what he knows on other lines, it seems absurd that he should need to trouble about such matters, so trivial they are. It is as though a great captain of industry were to busy himself as an operative workman in one of his own factories.

All through history we read of alchemists who can make gold, and yet the evidence all seems to point to this power never being used for personal ends, even where it was sometimes convenient to allow the public to suppose that it was so made and used. Surely such a process in nature is not to be allowed to run to waste?

Supposing that such a power represents, however, a mere material symbol of a moral attainment of immensely greater value, which seems to be the case, then there is no waste. If we assume for the sake of example that the color of a flower attracts the pollen-carrying insect and so insures the propagation of the plant through ages, the color, though beautiful, is no waste effort of nature, though to the little child it may be immensely desirable, like gold to the man, while the preservation and increase of the species may be far beyond the brain's conception. Gold is useful in many ways, and it is quite possible to conceive of a distant future where it will be no longer a symbol of selfishness or undue power or greed or anything evil, as it is now, only too often. In such a civilization there might be no natural bar to an almost unlimited power to transmute other metals to gold, just as a gardener is now granted the power to transmute seeds into gorgeous blossoms even though they fulfil many purposes unsuspected by him, in addition to the obvious ones.

There seems to be a strong connexion between the Universal Law of Compensation, or Karma, and invention. If an inventor chooses to use his mechanical powers, by study and practice to invent some use-

ful article, it seems a worthy occupation from which he is as much entitled to derive fair returns as he would be in any other occupation involving work. And if he can combine with his work a desire to be of benefit to the community at large, so much the better. If he learns mental, intellectual, and moral discipline from his work, he is fortunate. But on the other hand, a gnawing desire for a wholly disproportionate profit, an unfair expenditure of energy on a selfish object, a dragging down into the market-place of faculties which have no place there, an intellectual stealing and sale of natural secrets that cannot be guaranteed to produce only good, must surely produce an awful burden or responsibility and worse.

The knowledge of such a basic law would seem to account for Roger Bacon's secrecy when he wrote in a secret anagram the formula for gunpowder, which he probably derived from the Chinese through the Arabs, even though he sought no monetary profit from the article. All the philosophers and scientists who have advanced far in their investigations seem to realize that everything they take must be paid for or *justified as a human benefaction*. If all inventors worked on these lines is it too much to suppose that in a hundred ways, accidental or purposeful, direct or indirect, the world would be trusted with inventions of the greatest value to humanity which have been taken away until we show at least a glimmering of moral purpose as a basis for scientific investigation?

In regard especially to explosives and the horrors of hypnotism, the words of a great Teacher written a quarter of a century ago are significant:

It is nigh time then that the psychologists and believers, at least, should cease advocating the beauties of publicity and claiming knowledge of the secrets of nature for all. It is not in our age of 'suggestion' and 'explosives' that Occultism can open wide the doors of its laboratories except to those who *do* live the life.

All the alchemists have arrived at the last at the point where they realize that 'the one only thing' is the only thing that matters. And to attain that 'one only thing' *the life* appears the only road, the life of morality in harmony with nature's law, morality as a real mode of living, not its pale counterparts of the sects. As the real inventor throws off brilliant inventions like sparks in his search for the great work of his life and cares little for them, so in the search for the soul (or sole, or sol, of the old philosophers, not the sentimental affair of — well, sentimental people) the true inventor is brilliant, though his real object be hidden, and until he finds himself, as the old Greek philosophers bid him do, he is unsatisfied. The greatness he seeks is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men. The greatness they give him he thinks of little worth. He is the Inventor *par excellence*.

THOUGHTS ON MUSIC: by Daniel de Lange *

PART V

MANY attempts have been made to give mankind a better system of musical training; great minds — as for example Dr. Hugo Riemann — have devoted a large part of their lives to solve the problem; but, although their efforts must be highly commended, and although their ideas on music and musical training are of great importance, yet they do not solve the problem.

One of the reasons why these most interesting and important attempts give such meager results may be that in music the attention of the student has generally been directed to the more material side of this art. If we glance at works on musical theory we find everywhere exercises for the development of merely intellectual skill, but very little attention is paid to the question of the real significance of music: in other words, to a certain degree, the spiritual meaning of it has been overlooked. Is it not because man has lost sight of the fact that he himself is of divine origin, that the language of the Gods has been neglected to such an extent that for the average man it has become a negligible quantity?

Surely the human race of today could hardly enjoy the beauties of musical art without a thorough development of its intellectual and material side; yet nowadays the influence of the intellect has become so prevalent that the spiritual side has been almost lost sight of; and this is a real block to a deeper conception of art. For if art becomes simply a display of intellect, cleverness, and skill, instead of being the expression of the most intimate feeling of man's soul, it cannot maintain its place as "the highest expression of a pure and harmonious life."

Without doubt, the spiritual side of art is the most important.

Real music is to be sought for *behind the sounds*.

But what is the spiritual significance of music? Who can give an explanation of 'the music behind the sounds' — that mystery of art?

Although these are the vital questions in art, no work on musical theory answers them. It matters very little whether the average man knows that the major chord is composed of a fundamental, a major third, and a pure fifth, or not; or that two consecutive fifths are not allowed. He must learn to understand *what lies behind the sounds*, just as people are only now beginning to realize what is the mysterious significance of a poem.

Illustrating this idea by an example, we ask: How is it that when

*Founder and ex-Director of the Conservatory of Music, Amsterdam, Holland, and now one of the Directors of the Isis Conservatory of Music, International Theosophical Headquarters, Point Loma, California.

Palestrina, Bach, Händel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Rossini, Verdi, Wagner, etc., use the same chord, the effect is different every time?

Musical scholars will tell you that the difference is the result of a different disposition of the said chord. This may be, but it is not always the cause; many times the disposition is not different and yet the effect is. It is difficult to find an intellectual reason for it, nor will you find any reasonable explanation, by means of the intellect, of the impression made on the mind or soul by a word or a sentence. Perhaps the mood in which the composer wrote these notes may exert a mysterious influence on the hearer's mind.

Behind sounds there is magic!

How can we discover the mystery of it?

An answer to this question is so difficult because we are searching for the way but do not know if we are searching in the right direction. Undoubtedly the great composer can show us the way, but many of the so-called good musicians, the well-trained men, do not understand the suggestions given by these great artists. The latter try simply to reproduce their divine inspiration in one or another musical form, while the former lay stress on what is merely the external form, and often forget to point out what is the intrinsic meaning. If the question is, how to give a thorough training to a young musician, to a musical scholar, who wishes to become acquainted with all the secrets of this art, it will be necessary to fathom all its technical, material, and intellectual mysteries; but all this cannot arouse in his soul the *intrinsic* meaning, the real significance of musical art. The latter lives in the spirit of everyone; it is impossible to imagine a man or a woman who does not possess in his or her own mind the faculty which can awaken music. And this has nothing to do with musical training in the ordinary sense. For example, if we compare a well-trained musician with a street-boy or with an Indian tribesman, we shall find that the musician can give us information as to how sounds may be combined to make a piece of music, while the boy or the tribesman will whistle or sing a simple melody, knowing nothing at all of the technical side of music. And yet their simple melodies may contain more music than the musical composition which is the result of the combination of sounds produced by the well-trained musician. One feels inclined to watch the musical utterances of those who do not know what the so-called music of the present time is, lest one may lose sight of what music really is. As for the boy in the street we can leave him and his music to their fate, but as for the Indian, and other so-called uncivilized tribesmen, they may be of interest to us because they prove that besides the musical training of the Western nations there still exist other ways which enable men to express their innermost feelings in music.

What are these ways? It is difficult to say, for we know very little of the means used by those tribes for the development of musical sense among their fellows; it is said that they learn music simply by ear. This may be true, but we must not overlook the fact that music has an entirely different significance for them from what it has for us. In our life, music is simply an entertainment of a lower or higher order; in the life of the so-called uncivilized tribes, music is a magic power, it is more or less the language of the Gods. Must we then go to them to have the mystery of music unveiled for us? Perhaps so. Surely, it may be a hint for us, that among the composers we see a propensity to take their inspiration from the folk-music of the different nations and tribes. If, however, we wish to profit by such a hint it will be necessary to study the question more earnestly. We must go to the bottom and trace the question to its origin. And this would only be possible by going to live with these tribes and by identifying ourselves with their life, and in this way becoming acquainted not only with their music and their ideas, but with the ideals that govern their existence. Then, and only then, we could begin to fathom the importance which music may have in their life. Possibly after such an experience, one's views would be sufficiently enlarged to provide an answer to the following question: What have we to learn from those peoples who not only consider music as the most lofty gift of the Gods, but who use that art according to that point of view?

Our Western civilization has lost sight of the significance of musical art from the point of view just above mentioned. For us it has become rather an entertainment, of a lofty kind it is true, but yet an entertainment; and surely we shall not be able to appreciate the real value of that art until we begin to treat it as one of the highest gifts of the Gods, as the genuine language in which our hearts can communicate with the Divine.

If we cultivate it in such a way it is self-evident that music will become something very different from what it has been to us up to the present time. It will become the loftiest form of whatever man wishes to express, when his soul is uplifted to a higher plane. It is only in moments of exaltation when earthly or mere brain-mind thoughts find no longer any place in man's soul that music makes itself felt. In these moments sounds of wonderful beauty and serenity are heard; sounds which awaken images of . . . Who can find words to describe such images? But although, one feels the impossibility of reproducing these *feelings*, yet one knows that these *images* are the sole reality, the truth.

How is it that these uncivilized tribes understand the meaning of art better than we, the so-called civilized nations? Is it perhaps because

the fundamental principle of their conception of life has not been shaken by the materialistic waves of western civilization? However that may be, let us take for granted that the culture of musical art, as those tribes understand it, — although at a lower stage of development if viewed from a technical standpoint — is much more in harmony with the purposes and principles of that art than ours is, so that we have to learn our lesson of art-culture from them, to which culture, of course, we can apply our higher technical development.

What, then, have we to learn?

We have to learn not that a scale is a scale, a chord a chord, an interval an interval, but that behind all these things, and in the combination of all these things, there is magic, a magic which we can use only after having purified our natures, after having built up our characters, after having developed the spiritual side of our being, after having learned to use our latent faculties which now we do not know how to use, faculties more powerful than anything in the world. H. P. Blavatsky speaks of them in *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, page 562. She says:

At one time the shareholders of the 'Keely Motor Co.' put a man in his [Mr. Keely's] workshop for the express purpose of discovering his secret. After six months of close watching, he [the man] said to Keely one day: "I know how it is done, now." They had been setting up a machine together, and Keely was manipulating the stop-cock which turned the force on and off. "Try it then," was the answer. The man turned the cock, and nothing came. "Let me see you do it again," the man said to Keely. The latter complied, and the machinery operated at once. Again the other tried, but without success. Then Keely put his hand on his shoulder and told him to try once more. He did so, with the result of an instantaneous production of the current. This fact, if true, settles the question.

Indeed, "this fact settles the question." Everyone has music in his soul, but he does not know how to bring it out; he is like the man who thought he knew how it was done, but who was not sufficiently developed naturally and spiritually to produce the current. If a true man "puts his hand on the shoulder of the one who thought he knew," all is right, and "the current is produced," but without "the hand on the shoulder" the current does not manifest itself. Why? Because the real spiritual touch is lacking.

Now, think of musical training. By what means are the spiritual faculties stimulated in the ordinary musical training of today? Do we find that the men or women, who devote their lives to art, have built up their characters in such a way as their position of priests of the Gods demands? Many are only able to reproduce, not to *recreate*. And how do they reproduce? They prove by their kinds of reproduction that they do not understand even the words of the creators; their reproduction seeming to be only meaningless sounds. And yet all these men and women have music in their souls; but, alas! they are ignorant; they do not

know how to use their faculties; they do not yet realize the divinity in their nature, and so it seems impossible to them to give expression to this quality — which they possess — unless “the hand is put on their shoulder.”

Yet let us not speak only of those who devote their lives to the study of musical art. Can we believe that art exists only for those who devote their lives to it? No, art belongs to everyone, for everyone is divine; and, because everyone is divine, and because art is one of the highest expressions of the divine in man, everyone must be able to use the language of the Gods, provided he has developed the qualities and faculties which enable him to feel and realize that the divine spark illumines every sense and thought. Have we ever been told that this is the first and the last word of all musical training, as it is the first and the last word of everything in life?

As soon as a child begins to lisp it begins to create its own music. Instinctively everyone agrees with this idea. Does not every mother and nurse sing lullabies to her little ones, and do we ask if they have beautiful voices, or do they need to take music-lessons before singing? Certainly they do not. A woman does not need a beautiful voice to be a good mother, and to sing the lullabies in the right way for *her* child. We would rather say, that, if a woman is really a good mother, her voice will naturally possess the qualities that *touch the soul of her child*.

So we see that in this case the real influence of the music does not consist in what we ordinarily call ‘beauty,’ but in what we call ‘soul-life.’ And, therefore, if we wish to awaken the musical faculties in the minds of our children, we have at first to awaken their soul-life; and to combine the expression of it with the music which the great musical creators gave mankind. If possible, let the child itself try to reproduce these messages of the Gods with its own voice, but arouse at the same time its musical imagination, so that it may learn to express the feelings of its soul-life in melodies of its own; because finally it is *these* which express the inspirations and aspirations of its soul-life, not the melodies of others, however sublime they may be.

And as soon as this young soul has evolved sufficiently to understand — not by his brain-mind but by spiritual comprehension — in what way soul-life and sound are connected (which can only be felt) the mind can be trained so that it becomes the natural instrument which the developing soul can use at will.

It is only along these lines that music can grow and become, after a certain time, a living power in our lives. And, without doubt, musical training must constantly be related to the development of spiritual life, for as soon as music is practised along other lines, egotism takes

hold of man's soul, and instead of being one of the highest expressions of the godlike spirit in man it becomes an expression of the lower passions of his nature. In such a case, the gift of the Gods changes and becomes a stumbling-block that evokes and awakes only mean thoughts and feelings in man's soul.

Heaven's dew-drop glittering in the morn's first sunbeam within the bosom of the lotus, when dropped on earth becomes a piece of clay; behold, the pearl is now a speck of mire.
(*The Voice of the Silence*)

THEOSOPHY AND RATIONALISM: by H. T. Edge, M. A.

IT is more than forty years since H. P. Blavatsky founded the Theosophical Society, and thirty since she began her work in London; and these years have marked a constant and steady progress in the permeation of the world of thought by Theosophical ideas. But society is great and complex; and it takes a long time for the tide, with its alternately advancing and retreating waves, to wash in successive surges over all the different strata of the complicated structure. And so we find, in looking over what purports to be an adverse criticism of Theosophy, in a small and sectional newspaper, a faithful repetition of what Theosophists have been accustomed to encounter during the whole of those past years, from the earliest beginnings; and, as far as this newspaper is concerned, it is as though Theosophy were now promulgated for the first time.

The attack, in short, is not an attack on Theosophy at all, but merely a fight waged against a man of straw, an attack upon a misrepresentation. As such, we recognise in it the familiar features. The objections are those which rise instantly into the mind of an inquirer on his first casual acquaintance and perfunctory examination of Theosophy, and which are dispelled in the light of better acquaintance and further study. It seems hardly worth while to trouble with them; what can one do but advise further study? There is of course considerable presumption in the idea that obvious objections, which would thus rise in the mind of the casual reader, would not also have occurred to the mind of those promulgating the teachings, and would not consequently have been fully met and provided for; this is human nature, but it militates against any claims of temperate judgment which the objector may make. As a matter of fact, of course, these objections have been made and answered time and time again *ad nauseam*; and H. P. Blavatsky, thirty years

ago, wrote a book in question and answer form, called *The Key to Theosophy*, for the express purpose of dealing with such objections; while, since then, Theosophical writers and lecturers have been continually employed in repeating the process. So, as said, it seems scarcely worth while to trouble about such objections. Nevertheless, as it does not behoove us to grow tired of repetitions before our assailants do, we can but go on repeating what has been said to similar objectors in past years — that one's claims to temperance of judgment are not vindicated by an attitude which permits one to attack a subject without first giving it a reasonably thorough examination.

Next, we observe that this writer not only assails Theosophy but a great many other things with it. He assails religion, belief in the soul, and belief in the after-life. This considerably weakens the force of his attack on Theosophy; for his objections smack of a dissatisfaction with things in general, and we begin to wonder whether the fault lies in the thing attacked or in the attacker himself.

Next, the critic assails things which do not pertain to Theosophy in particular, but are problems that attend any and every inquiry into the meaning of life. He attacks difficulties which are due to the imperfection of human understanding, and which Theosophy did not create and cannot be held responsible for. Theosophy, on the contrary, merely tries to throw a little light on them and deserves credit therefor.

But lastly, it is evident that this writer, has drawn his information from a wrong source. From some of the things which he mentions as being Theosophical teachings, it is very evident that he has encountered the writings of one of the cults which abound and which use with more or less freedom the familiar terms of Theosophy. This illustrates the injustice which such misrepresentations of Theosophy inflict upon the public, in putting off honest inquirers with spurious goods which not only fail to satisfy but also scare off the inquirers from further pursuit of the subject. We can only say, *Go to original sources*, and read *The Key to Theosophy*, or the manuals published by the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society — the original Theosophical Society as founded by H. P. Blavatsky.

We feel much sympathy with this inquirer, who is obviously seeking earnestly for a firm foundation of belief amid the quicksands of dogma and sham which encompass him; and in whose criticism we think we detect a certain reluctance and half-heartedness, as of a man who should say: "I wish I could think there was some truth in this!" More shame, again we say, on those who by faulty presentation or positive misrepresentation have so obscured the teachings of Theosophy. As an instance of the confusion of mind induced in the critic by his imper-

fect acquaintance with his subject, we may note that, while in one part of his article he assails reincarnation, in another part he unwittingly uses one of the commonest and best arguments in its support. This he does in the course of his attack on another Theosophical teaching — that of Karma. Theosophy enunciates these two doctrines, which are mutually dependent. Our critic, in attacking the one, unwittingly defends the other. In trying to upset Karma, he sets up reincarnation — which he has but just tried to knock down. Here is what he says about Karma:

In looking over the field of human activity for some evidence of 'absolute justice,' we find some hundred beings in high places, and others in low; some in the possession of wealth and luxuries without limit, and others in the lowest depths of poverty, wretchedness, and all-around misery. . . .

And more to the same effect, all showing the inequality of human fate and the apparent total lack of justice in the affairs of men. But this is the best and commonest of all arguments in favor of reincarnation! — as all who are even slightly acquainted with the subject know. Theosophy admits (as of course it must) the fact of human inequalities; but says that the injustice is only apparent — not real — because the Soul lives many successive lives on earth, and the justice can only be seen by viewing the life of the Soul *as a whole* — not simply within the limits of a single incarnation.

Again, in attacking (as he thinks) reincarnation, our critic really attacks other things as well; like a man wielding a sword at random and striking down friend and foe alike. It is, alas, all too common for disputants thus to use weapons which, though they may do damage to the opponent's position, can be used with equal effect to damage other positions, including that of the wielder himself. We often draw swords and then find that we cannot so readily sheathe them again. Thus, if we admit the force of his argument against reincarnation, we shall be logically compelled to admit the force of the same argument when it is used against — say, the doctrine that the human race is propagated by reproduction. He says: How absurd is this doctrine of reincarnation! Would people be born again and again for the purpose of killing each other in battle?

Think of the doctrine of reincarnation, where souls keep returning for the purpose of going to war and killing each other's bodies!

What is to prevent us from saying: "Think of the doctrine of reproduction, where human beings keep propagating human beings for the purpose of going to war and killing each other's bodies!" *Ergo* — the doctrine that humanity propagates itself by reproduction is absurd; go tell it to the marines. What difference is there between the cases?

We thus see that our assailant has hit the wrong target. It is a fact — hard and unwelcome, no doubt, but still a fact — that humanity does continue, age after age, to kill itself and undergo all sorts of other miseries. Does our critic object to this fact? We are sorry, but Theosophy did not make the fact; Theosophy only explains it. The real issue, as between reincarnation and the position which our critic may be supposed to hold on the question, is whether or not the people that are born in successive ages to undergo these experiences are the same Souls as before or entirely different ones. Instead of attacking this question, he has attacked the bare fact that people do thus continually suffer; he has hit the wrong mark.

But, as before remarked, we have a fellow-feeling with this critic, because he is so evidently burdened by the injustice and darkness of man's lot, and so honestly and anxiously striving to find light amid the darkness and a rock amid the quicksands. And, when he was sick of dogmas and was looking for something he could assent to, this pseudo-theosophical book fell into his hands and gave him — more dogmas. And this article is his weary protest at being once more mocked. And we sympathize with him. For Theosophy is the foe of dogmatism, and strives but to fix men's attention on the actual facts which they may discern in their own nature. This writer does not believe in a soul; does he believe in justice, conscience, love, compassion, truthfulness, purity, honor, courage? Or are these also mere folk-lore, invented by the few to enslave the minds of the many? If he does not believe in these, why does he talk about them; or does he perchance believe in their opposites and not in themselves? There is injustice and cruelty in the world; then why not let them stay there? Because we believe in justice and kindness. Now, the question we would put is: Are these higher sentiments facts or not? We may assume an agreement as to the answer; both our critic and ourselves desire to see these qualities prevail over their opposites, and are working to that end. But whence are these qualities? Do they come from the animal part of man's nature? Rather it would seem that their opposites — selfishness, rapacity, injustice, etc. — come from man's animal nature; for these are simply selfish instincts, such as are natural in the animals, because the animals do not reason about them, but become vices in man, because he does them with the full force of calculated intellect. We can see no escape from the conclusion that the critic is at one with ourselves in believing in man's better nature. If he denies that better nature, then he hands the world over to the vices against which he claims to be battling.

Now Darwin and others have sought to give us a philosophy of man's animal nature, and Theosophy seeks to give us a philosophy of man's

better nature. In doing so, it does not strive to impose dogmas, but merely answers the demand of humanity itself for an explanation. The writer says, "Give us facts." "By all means," we reply; Theosophy calls for nothing else. But we ask: "Are facts limited to those which are perceptible to the bodily senses, under the form of space and matter, and studied by science with instruments?" Or are there facts in human nature itself, not subject to the forms of space and matter, not tangible, not susceptible to scientific instruments of precision? In short, are not the better qualities in human nature facts, which ought to be accepted as a proper basis for a rationalistic philosophy? We must so regard them; and then the first practical question is, How are they to be fostered and promoted? Theosophy strives to show how, and it enjoins men to study human nature in themselves and others, and to *learn*. It offers the Theosophical teachings as an aid, to be rejected or availed of, as the inquirer may think fit.

The critic inveighs against dogmatism and superstition; but how are these to be defeated? By promulgating the truth, we say. We must meet error on its own ground, not abandon to it the field and rest our defence on mere denial and confession of ignorance. Otherwise dogma will prevail and continue to prevail. It is all very well to inveigh against religion; but those who care to set their backs against the mightiest force that has swayed men's minds through the ages, cannot be surprised at the difficulty of their task. What is to be thought of a man, who being offered tainted food, should reject all food and determine to try and live without eating? Why petulantly throw away husk and kernel alike, because the husk breaks our teeth? Religion is enthroned in the heart of man; he cannot live without it; he must and will have some religion, though he call it rationalism or materialism, agnosticism or positivism. It is grounded on a conviction of the innate good in human nature. It rests upon the assurance that, as man desires to better himself, so he *can* better himself, by his own efforts. In this Theosophists are certainly at one with their critic. Here is an extract from a genuine Theosophical book, which may appeal to minds like that of the critic:

There is a natural melody, an obscure fount, in every human heart. It may be hidden over and utterly concealed and silenced — but it is there. At the very base of your nature you will find faith, hope, and love. . . . All those beings among whom you struggle on are fragments of the Divine. And so deceptive is the illusion in which you live, that it is hard to guess where you will first detect the sweet voice in the hearts of others. But know that it is certainly within yourself. Look for it there, and once having heard it, you will more readily recognise it around you.

That is Theosophy. No dogmatism there. Simply a recognition of the *fact* that faith, hope, and love are in human nature, and a counsel

that each man should search for them within himself and within the hearts of his fellows. This is one of the eternal maxims of religion — so built around and obscured by dogmas and ecclesiasticism. But let us disentomb it and make it our own. Let us claim our heritage from the wisdom and earnestness of our past. Let us not throw away priceless jewels in a passion over their tawdry setting.

We want to help all earnest seekers for light. They cannot perhaps see their way to believing in the immortality of the soul. Very well, let it go; never mind. Let them fix their faith on the present realities in human nature, and we need not quarrel as to whether to call those realities a soul, or a mind, or a body, or anything else. Theosophy says, "Live your best, and you will fulfil the duty of man." If you find around you selfishness and the evils it engenders, seek to combat it first *in your own heart*. That is the battle-ground. It may be that some subtle form of this weakness is blinding your own eyes. Beware lest your disgust with dogmatism lead you into a dogmatic and intolerant attitude of your own. Wholesale condemnation is as unwise as wholesale acceptance. True discernment rejects the false and recognises the true. If sectarianism has striven to corner the bread of life, shall we play its game by refusing all sustenance? If I, a Theosophist, choose to believe in immortality, am I to discard my belief because some people have taught dogmas or twaddle about immortality? It is an ill lot to dwell eternal and piqued exiles in a dreary desert of negation and denial, because our rightful inheritance has been squandered. Theosophy's message is for those who find the atmosphere of negation cold and dreary; for those who want to believe, yet cannot see their way; for those whose intellectual affiliations seem to necessitate a rejection of things they know in their hearts to be true. It will be said that Theosophy has many doctrines; and this is true. But these doctrines are not dogmas, any more than are the propositions found in a treatise on mathematics or any branch of science. They represent the convictions of certain people, and are expressed under the generally recognised right of people to express their convictions. But, further, they are expressed in answer to a very real demand that exists for them; and this demand requires consideration, whatever may be the attitude of other sections of the public towards these doctrines. But in no sense are these doctrines forced upon anybody. And for this reason, Theosophists are not in the same position, regarding the demand for 'proofs,' as they would be if they were urging their teachings as dogmas for acceptance. A salesman who is pushing his wares on reluctant purchasers is not in the same position as a purveyor who has a commodity which the public is asking for. As to the oft-repeated question, "Where are your proofs?" — asked in con-

nexion with the subject of the soul and immortality — we simply say to the questioner: “What do you want? We believe in these things ourselves, and we have given in our writings the reasons for our belief. We can do no more than point out the possible means of arriving at knowledge — by study and experience. Study what has ever been written on the subject, and search your own inner nature for light from within. These matters are not susceptible of physical demonstration; our ignorance about them is due to the imperfection of our faculties. If you expect to find the proof at the beginning of your studies, instead of at the end, you will not get far in your reading. The idea of the provisional hypothesis is familiar enough to science; and all through the course of experience we have to accept many things on belief pending a subsequent demonstration. Take immortality as a provisional hypothesis; or take mortality as a provisional hypothesis; choose your method. Both are in the same position as regards proof.

Perhaps there are some who, on reading this, will say, as so many inquirers have said: “So this is Theosophy! I did not understand that before. I always thought Theosophy was — so and so.” Yes, there are many who get altogether false impressions of what Theosophy is — thanks to the work of irresponsible writers; but when they find out what it really is, they realize to their surprise that it is a friend and not an enemy. They find that they can read and profit by Theosophical teachings without having to identify themselves with any weird cults or dogmas. They discover that these weird cults and grotesque teachings are not Theosophy at all. You, my critic, have to contend against misrepresentation; so have we. Another bond of sympathy! But let us at least understand each other. Pilgrims alike, through the mazes of that strange life, in which *willy nilly* we find ourselves, we are each resolved to make the best of it according to our light. Foes alike of dogmatism and injustice, we seek the bedrock of fact. But Theosophists recognise no authority that says: “Thou shalt not believe!” or “Thus shalt thou think!” — under whatever flag that authority may sail, religious or scientific.

Claiming the right of criticism for ourselves, we take the following remarkable statement from our critic’s article. He says that Theosophy carries scientific methods into higher realms and applies them to facts that lie beyond the physical senses; and that “a more preposterous statement” than this was never made; for “Theosophists have no means of going beyond the reach of the physical senses any more than the rest of us.” We simply refer back to what we have said above about justice, conscience, compassion, honor, etc., and ask again whether these are objects of the physical senses. We say that, in our opinion, they are

not. Hence, again in our opinion, we say that both Theosophists and "the rest of us," in entertaining these notions, have gone beyond the physical senses. A world composed exclusively of physical objects would be a world so strange that, not being of a visionary turn ourselves, we leave it to the imagination of others more gifted in that respect. Possibly a beetle may live in such a world; a dog, scarcely; certainly not a Bushman. No, friend critic, you and I both live in a world of thoughts and feelings, which seem to occupy us quite a little; and though you may choose to dub them unrealities for theoretical purposes, they are real enough practically. Shall we apply scientific methods to their handling (in ourselves or others), or just let things slide?

Another thing which the critic says, and which sounds to us not unlike a dogma is that

Circumstances which blind fate insures are the deciding forces in all men's lives, and this fact is so clearly demonstrated that ordinary sense is forced to accept it.

Really? And the demonstration? But first, what (or who) is Mr. Blind Fate? Is this one of the gods of superstition? And what is the real meaning of the statement that circumstances are the deciding forces in men's lives? It looks like a good example of what the text-books on composition call 'tautology.' Circumstances determine circumstances — and blind fate determines both. It may mean something, but it does not mean much — not for practical purposes at all events. This philosophy amounts to accepting the facts of life without explanation. Holding such a philosophy of fatalism, how comes the writer to be so strenuous an advocate of reform? He is a fighter who petulantly throws down his weapons. Now, answering the implied question, Theosophy comes and says that the phrase, 'blind fate' does not mean anything much or anything useful, but is merely that very common thing, a re-statement of the problem, masquerading as a solution. And, not satisfied with leaving the matter in this hopeless state, Theosophists seek a solution, a *rational* solution, a solution that shall appeal to the reason. What practical program of reform can be built on mere fatalism — on the acceptance of an arbitrary deity called 'blind fate,' worse than the worst man-made god ever heard of? Human life is determined by natural laws, partly external to man, and partly inherent in the human character. That is a rational and scientific statement of the doctrine. The rational and scientific spirit impels us to investigate those laws, so that we may understand them and adapt ourselves to them. In this way there is hope that human circumstances may become harmonious, instead of chaotic as they are at present through our failure to understand the laws. Thus Theosophy is actually dethroning a deity called

'blind fate' and putting instead the reign of reason; how is this for rationalism?

It is paradoxical that people professing to rest their philosophy on human nature should show so little faith in human nature, and should fall foul of Theosophy, which teaches such great faith in human nature. If we are to cavil at the statement that man is his own savior, and at the same time to reject all other saviors, upon what *can* we base our hopes, or with what can our endeavors be inspired? The attitude seems quite unreasonable; yet, since it is actually adopted by men who can not be devoid of reason, there must be some ground for it. Is it not perhaps like the attitude of a sick man, who, though he desires to get well, has been so often deceived that he has lost faith in all doctors and waves aside all medicines?

The gist of the matter is that, if desired reforms are to come, we must abandon pessimism and fatalism and a philosophy of mere destruction, and turn our thoughts to faith in ourselves and in construction. Dogmatism is found everywhere, along with rationalism, irrespective of sects and classes; and a wider tolerance is needed. And the scientific attitude demands that we shall not condemn anything on a first hasty glance and without real knowledge of that which we are condemning.

THE VEIL OF BIRTH AND DEATH: by L. R.



NOW in the regions where the gods dwell in light and peace, the Earth was known as a far-off, sorrowful place. But that it reflected the sunshine, it might have been overlooked in the great heavens filled with starry worlds, many of them bright with an inner light of their own.

Though the earth was fair and wonderful, somehow things had gone wrong upon it. So the gods, moved by pity, had pledged themselves to share with the bewildered children of men their own light, and to carry it to them little by little even if it took until the end of time.

Thus it came about that, one by one, an endless line of Pilgrims left their bright home and bravely made their way earthward. Without fear or favor they took on human life just as they found it, entering alike into hovel and palace and all kinds of places and claiming kinship with rich and poor, with bad and good, with ignorant and learned, — for all were sorely in need of light. Mayhap they were guided in their choice by the heart light of mother love, which, alike in homes of cosy comfort or of cheerless want, guarded tiny living garments of earth matter made

ready for them to wear. Thus mother-love brings light to the earth.

These baby bodies that the incoming souls took on were fresh and sweet; but everything was so different from the existence of joyous freedom they had left behind, that often the first breath came with a protesting cry of dismay. Then, as the tender touch of sheltering mother arms pillowed the Pilgrim's head upon a loving heart, every sense was soothed, as by a fragrant memory of that foregone home of light and peace.

In long after years, many a man and woman Soul lost sight of the light they came to bring, and lost faith in their fellows; but few ever forgot that first touch of reality on earth which makes mother's love akin to the vital peace of the unseen world. To fall asleep in her arms was ever blessed rest; and often the aged, when dying, looked back to the beginning and longed to lay a weary head again on mother's breast as their eyes closed in a last long sleep.

The line of homeward bound Pilgrims was as continuous as the incoming stream, and to all of them the mystery and plan of endless existence were an open book. As familiar scenes faded and the senses ebbed from the dying, there came the liberating joy of freedom from a body which, at best, was but humanized dust. The only sting of death was the bitter regret felt by the released Pilgrim, who saw recorded upon the screen of time the full meaning of every event in the journey just ended, and realized where he had failed to use Life's chances when he was fitly embodied for Earth's work. But with this backward look, the outgoing Soul renewed its pledges, resolving that the next time, the light should burn more brightly than ever.

As Death stilled the Pilgrim's senses into a wise silence, the meaning of everything was so clear it seemed as if the Soul *could* not be confused or bewildered or forget itself, however deeply it might be veiled in flesh. But so it had been and must be, until the light of living Truth in every human heart shall overcome the darkness and delusion of despair, ambition and desire.

Life greeted each arriving Pilgrim, knowing them all full well, for they had come and gone, again and again, ever since the world was young. Upon the outspread screen of time he showed them where each could fit best into the great plan, to help fulfil its purpose. He had one message for all: "Remember that the veil of matter beclouds even the Soul's vision, so that, on Earth, you may perchance not know me as your friend. But I shall be with you everywhere and shall offer you opportunities at every turn. You will know what to do always while you keep the light burning in your hearts. Trust yourselves and trust me, and you will remember *who you are* and why you came."

Then Life touched the mystic curtain which is and yet is not a barrier between the seen and the unseen worlds. It is opaque to mortal eyes, but to the inner sight it is an open, pictured mesh of interwoven deeds and dreams. To Life, looking inward or outward through it, and knowing how the great Plan unites everything on both sides of it, 'tis only a name. When the Pilgrim passes it, bringing the gracious heart glow of pure creative dawn, men dimly feel a touch of eternal reality which ever begins anew — and this they call Birth. When the moving curtain marks a Pilgrim's return home, some radiant Truth from the center reaches the outlying Earth, dark with self-inflicted ignorance, with chill misery and cruel suffering from belittling beliefs and a universal blight of unlovely passions. Then vague, haunting memories of real home life behind the scenes make earth-bound, blinded men shrink from the ghastly farce they live, and their selfish grief follows the departing Pilgrim to burden and hold him back, — for this departure they call Death.

To the glorious, unconquerable Soul, the change into petty, unclean, and unsatisfying Earth-life is like the smothering darkness of Death; while release from the body is a royal rebirth into native light and freedom.

The curtain between the two worlds marks the time and place for Pilgrims coming and going, to change their garb. But to Life, which is older than Time itself, and is ever pulsating throughout space and in every atom of matter as well, the veil of Birth and Death no more begins or ends progress than do the figures on a dial.

The incoming Pilgrims still remember who they are, for a little while, so that the fresh purity and sweet trust outbreathed from baby bodies helps the diseased and weary world with renewed hope and courage. But as their bodies grow and the senses become stronger, even those who love them best let them drift into the unwise and bewildered ways of an unhappy world. The confused, insistent claims of the body and its brain-mind drown the Soul harmony in countless discords. Even so, there are flaming moments when the heart light warms and thrills the whole being with its native sense of pure creative power which yet shall make this world anew, as fair and wonderful within as it is without.



If the voice of the MYSTERIES has become silent for many ages in the West, if Eleusis, Memphis, Antium, Delphi, and Crésa have long ago been made the tombs of a Science once as colossal in the West as it is yet in the East, there are successors now being prepared for them. . . . The twentieth century has strange developments in store for humanity, and may even be the last of its name. — *H. P. Blavatsky*

SYMBOLISM IN NATURE AND IN ART: by R. Machell

(A School of Antiquity Paper)



TO those who look upon Symbolism as a mode of mystification, a means of hiding the plain meaning of things under an unnecessary disguise, it will seem strange to talk of symbolism in Nature. But to one who tries to understand the meaning of things the expression will seem reasonable enough. For one who does try to know the meaning of life in all its multifold manifestations, there is no doubt, there can be no doubt, that all manifestations of life are but symbols, or the external appearances of internal qualities.

But the ordinary person, I fancy, inclines to the idea that the external appearance of a thing is the thing in itself: and that its inner qualities are merely incidental attributes. Not so the Theosophic student, who looks on Nature as the manifestation of Spiritual energies upon the plane of Matter. To such an one every object is a concrete expression of spiritual energy: everything that exists is indeed to him a symbol, a mystery to be studied and to be understood. The faculty of understanding is man's chief distinguishing characteristic, and it is called into operation by the Will of Man to know Himself. To do this he must know the world of which he appears to be a part, and in which he finds himself called upon to play so important a part as to make it appear that the entire universe only exists for his experience. If this is so in fact, then Man himself must be something vastly more important than his rather insignificant little personality would at first sight lead one to suppose. That this is the case is the positive assertion of the Teachers of Theosophy in all ages, who declare that Man in his essence is Divine. That is to say that man himself is a symbol of Divinity. But the ordinary man is so accustomed to look upon a symbol as a figure invented for the purpose of convenient reference, that such a phrase as 'symbol of Divinity' will convey to his mind rather the idea that man is not divine but is merely a dummy that may be used to suggest the idea of something different; whereas to the Theosophic student it would mean that man is the natural expression on this plane of Divine energy and intelligence.

It is important to recognise at once these two different ways of looking at life: in order that one may understand the constant war of minds dealing with ideas from different standpoints, and the continual use of identical terms with different ideas back of them. The very fact that two people can use the same form of words with entirely different meaning shows that they do actually think in terms of symbolism, and that they speak symbolically whether they wish to do so or not.

Obviously all language is symbolic, it can not be otherwise, and language has a wide interpretation. The language of words, which has so many variations in different lands and which is so difficult to use clearly and intelligibly, is but one form of communication or one mode of expression. All Art is language in this sense; all music is language; finally all creation is expression; and of what is it the expression? Of THAT, which in itself is inexpressible but which is the cause of all Expression. The Divine, the Infinite, The Self Supreme. Therefore the ancients said: "Man, know thyself!"

But the ordinary man will protest that when he speaks of symbolism he means something artificial that men have invented and that is not a natural evolution.

Of course this would imply that man is outside of nature, and that what he does is not done in the ordinary course of natural evolution; which appears to me to be a big assumption bordering upon the ridiculous. Man is not separable from nature at any time. He is one of Nature's modes of expression, and all his acts are subject to natural law and are indeed themselves expressions of natural law.

The confusion of mind upon this subject is due to an arbitrary limitation of the meaning of that word *Nature*, as well as to a complete ignorance of the real meaning of man, and of his place in Nature.

This unfortunate ignorance of our own nature has led man to invent Gods of various kinds to fill the gaps in his understanding. A God is always used to account for anything that is not intelligible. Modern Gods are mere verbal symbols devoid of intelligence and quite impersonal, such as Chance, Fate, Luck, Accident, Force, and so forth, which have scientific names for those who prefer them, but which are none the less members of the modern Pantheon.

The old Pantheon was more interesting; if it was like a sort of transcendental zoölogical show, it was at least alive; whereas the modern theogony is more suggestive of a museum of curiosities such as one may see in the archives of the Patent Office, and in the show-cases of our great museums. The modern Gods *are* symbols in the sense in which the ordinary man understands the term.

I am not now pretending that there is no such thing as artificial symbology; far from it. The mind of man is continually busy devising substitutes for Truth. But however ingenious may be his perversions they always must be built upon some foundation of fact in nature. The most direct falsehood is but an inversion of truth, and the most pernicious lies are just distortions of fact. Truth being the *Thing-in-itself*, and the Thing-in-itself being the Universe, the mind of man must operate within these universal bounds; so that even the most perverted mind

is but like a very bad mirror, which if it reflects at all, must show some image of that which is presented to it. In fact falsehood is always founded on fact. So that the most artificial form of symbolism cannot entirely escape from the original and natural symbology which consists in the external manifestation of internal qualities.

When a man looks at the sky and tries to read the signs of the weather he is endeavoring to read nature's symbolism. When a man tries to read character by looking at a person he is testifying to his belief in the fact that the internal character of the individual must find expression in the outer form or in the modes of motion peculiar to the person. This is reading natural symbology. This art is an exercise of an inner faculty of the higher mind, which is sometimes called intuition, and its successful exercise depends upon keenness of perception and delicacy of sympathy rather than acuteness of intellect. This is art; but there is also a science of character-reading, in which intuitive perception is replaced by formulas, rules, tests, and other such mental contrivances, which may give excellent results and which may be of use even to one who also has the higher faculties of the true artist. Then besides this true Science, in which the results of experience are made the basis of rules, there are a host of more or less speculative systems, some of which are merely fraudulent, by means of which the ignorant attempt to get results without studying either science or art; but all alike are modes of interpreting natural symbolism. The phrenologist pretends to read a person's character by the bumps on his head, and may do so successfully; the palmist reads the symbols in the hand; he could read the soles of the feet just as well if he had the results of other people's experience to guide him; and so on, even to the ranks of the fakirs and charlatans: all testify to a belief in an obvious truth, which, however, is generally not recognised and is frequently denied, but which is simply this, that the inherent qualities of a thing or a creature express themselves spontaneously and naturally in the outer form of the thing or person. Every particle of a body must fall into place in obedience to natural law, which is the same thing as saying that the form of a thing is a symbol of its inherent qualities. And what are they but the attributes of the real self?

But as man is only a part of the Universe so his own manifestation of his inherent qualities is subject to the conditions in which he finds himself. The true man may be divine, but his body will be no better than the conditions of life allow. There must be thus a continual struggle for fuller expression of inherent possibilities. This is the tragedy of life: the possibilities of man, and the limitations imposed upon him by physical heredity, racial development, and social conditions. Every

man who has ever felt his heart throb in response to a high ideal knows the meaning of this tragedy, when he yields to his own weaknesses and fails to rise superior to the conditions in which he finds himself. Faith in his own possibilities makes a man great, but faith in the possibilities of other people makes him noble, and gives him real power. For with this faith he can appeal to a hostile world and win response to high ideals from men who did not know that they had it in them to recognise good when they saw it and who had lost faith in themselves. Such a person is a savior of men indeed, and all of us have the power to do just that in some degree, for all of us have undreamed-of possibilities in us.

The world we live in is made apparent to us through our senses and we see, hear, feel, taste, or otherwise experience contact with persons and things in this way.

But in our endeavors to communicate with one another, we are also limited to the use of these senses, because we have become so interested in external form and sensation, that we have lost the use of our inner senses almost entirely. So we have invented languages and arts to help us to find expression on this plane for internal qualities that demand expression, but which we do not yet fully understand. The desire for self-expression seems to be the fundamental cause of all manifestation. A plant expresses its own inherent qualities just as far as conditions allow. The gardener endeavors to improve the conditions in order to allow the plant its fullest expression. Why does the flower grow so? Because that is the fullest expression of its own character that it can achieve under these conditions. Consequently it is possible to know the inherent qualities of plants from their external appearances; and this art has long been cultivated and has been reduced to some sort of scientific form for the use of students of medicine. This is a science of natural symbolism. But when the doctor writes a prescription he falls back upon an artificial symbology for conveying to the dispensing chemist his ideas on nature's symbology and his interpretation of it.

When a man reads at a glance the character of one who is trying to deceive him, both of them are using for their own purposes this fact of natural symbology. When a man smiles to hide his anger, he is using his knowledge of symbology to deceive others. He trusts to the general acceptance of such a symbol as a smile as a token of certain value, while he may be really trying to pass off false coin. All through life we find this constant attempt of man to substitute false symbols for true, but we never get away from symbology until we leave the world of appearances in which we now live.

Even those who have no use for symbology use it involuntarily. They cannot do otherwise; they have no other means of expression.

Their words are symbols, they talk and act in symbols and they learn to interpret one another's symbology while inventing new symbols for themselves, so that every class has its own slang and a whole set of symbols constituting a jargon that is almost unintelligible outside that world of their particular class.

But when we come to Art we find that certain painters are classed as symbolists and contrasted with others who are called realists, but who are practising a different form of symbolism. What is the special meaning then of the term when applied to a particular form of artistic expression?

I think that the real difference between these two lies in the degree of penetration into the inner meaning of things achieved or attempted by each.

The realist feels certain emotions arising from his contemplation of nature and thinks that the best way to communicate those emotions to others is to reproduce (symbolically with paint) the main features of the scene that stirred the emotion in himself. He does not attempt to build up the actual scene. That would be impossible, for if he could transport the actual objects he could not bring the weather or the atmosphere or the light or the time of day which were so important in the original. He cannot even attempt to paint every detail symbolically. The most confirmed realist has to select, to simplify, to accentuate, to modify and arrange his picture, and then he has to paint it according to his own particular system, which is his form of symbolism.

But he limits himself to an attempt to reproduce certain essential features of a scene in nature with which he associates a certain set of emotions. And if the spectator knows that language or symbolism, then he experiences emotions that correspond more or less to those of the artist. The whole business is a matter of symbolic expression and interpretation. The most realistic painting has perhaps been accomplished in the execution of great panoramas, such as the famous one of *The Siege of Paris* shown in the Champs Élysées in Paris for many years. I remember how completely deceptive was the illusion when the spectator found himself on the central platform surrounded with actual buildings, on one of which he stood looking out over the city beneath. At first it was impossible to say where the made-up foreground of solid objects ended and the painting of the circular wall began. The illusion was almost perfect. And yet it was accomplished by pure suggestion, for the painting, if seen at close quarters, would have appeared as loose and unrealistic as does the work of the impressionist. I had an opportunity when working on a similar one in London to discover that the most realistic effect was to be got by the freest kind of treatment and

the wholesale omission of negligible details. I saw that even faulty drawing did not interfere with realistic results. Then I knew that what is called realism in art is merely suggestion aimed low. The realist aims at suggesting the material aspect of objects and at evoking in the spectator a common-place order of emotions, but the means he employs are purely symbolic. All expression is accomplished by some form of symbolism.

The understanding of such expression depends upon the familiarity of the symbols. Every nation has its own language, spoken or written, which is only intelligible to those who have learned the meaning of the symbols employed. Even within a nation we find special systems of symbology intelligible only to those who have need of such systems. Take for instance chemistry, or astronomy, telegraphy or any other system of signalling: all such systems have to be studied and made familiar or else they are unintelligible. The same thing is true with regard to the deeper sciences. Alchemy has a jargon of its own, the Kabala has its language, and the Sacred Sciences of Antiquity were all recorded in symbols which are as unintelligible to the uninitiated as the shorthand notes of a stenographer are to one who does not know the system. Yet people talk sometimes of these natural and common mysteries as if they were tricks used to deceive the public. There may be such tricksters in all branches of science and art. It is said that an oriental scholar once sent a Sanskrit prayer to a dispensary with a request that the prescription be made up at once and returned. A bottle of medicine came back with instructions for its use. This no doubt tended to confirm the scholar in his distrust of doctors and druggists, but it only shows how necessary it is to know something of symbology.

The art critic too often ignores the obvious fact that all Art is symbolic and that the language in which it is expressed must be studied to be understood.

Now this age is a practical one; it is essentially materialistic, and our whole civilization is built on the most material concepts of comfort and prosperity. It may be that in a short while all this will have passed and a new age be inaugurated, but for some centuries past and even for some millenniums, idealism, mysticism, and true religion have been falling out of recognition in the public mind. It may be said that this is not really so, but that the spread of wealth has diffused elementary education and brought into the area of civilized life a host of low-class minds that in former ages were outside the reach of literature, science, or art. These crowds now constitute the mass of the public, and the higher culture is apparently swamped by the flood of vulgar trash that is produced for this mass of partly-educated unintelligence. There are, however, races

still existent whose records show that the whole people had some familiarity with systems of symbology that are unintelligible even to the scholars of today because the religious science expressed in those systems is no longer known even to the students. Thus we find statues and carvings and paintings of holy men in the East which show a constant recurrence of certain postures in the figures, certain forms in the garments worn, certain colors employed, and certain strange creatures as well as plants, so carefully and systematically arranged, that it is hard to believe that students could fail to recognise in these records a system of symbology that was familiar to the followers of the religion prevailing at the time of the execution of these records. Now it is well known that each posture had a definite significance, which sometimes was far removed from the pictorial value of the design. We can see how these symbols gradually crystallized, lost their artistic quality, became scientific, and finally passed into a written language, which was used for common-place material purposes.

The use of symbolism implies the existence of ideas that seek expression, as well as of a public capable of understanding the language employed.

As I have suggested, the mass of the public is not familiar with thoughts that go beyond the needs and emotions of the body, and so to them the symbology of mysticism is of course a dead language. An artist who endeavors to express a mystical thought or a spiritual idea in a painting, is necessarily appealing to a very limited public; but it may well be that his appeal will stir a desire for knowledge in the minds of some whose intelligence is awake but untrained, and also it may find a response in hearts that yearn for higher things than their education has made them acquainted with. The mystic of today cannot use a system of symbolism that will be intelligible to any large part of the public, and it is probable that he will have to be content to find his work unintelligible to the majority even of educated persons. But as all Nature is symbolic and as all human beings are a part of Nature, all must share to some extent an interior perception of truth, and all must have undeveloped possibilities of understanding even the most profound mysteries: for no mystery is more profound than that of the human heart. So I maintain that symbology is natural to man: and that all forms of natural symbolism may be used and understood to some extent by all people who care to use their own intelligence and to study language. At one time the language of color was studied and used as scientifically as sound is now. There was a color-symbolism as well defined as our system of sound-symbolism, which we call music. The correspondence between the colors of the solar spectrum and the sounds


that are employed by musicians is so strangely close that it is a matter of surprise that there has not been yet developed an art of pure color corresponding to the art of pure sound which we call music. All the materials are at hand, and from time to time inventors have discovered these obvious correspondences and have made instruments such as M. Rimington's color-organ. But the public is not yet educated to appreciate symphonies of pure color, though it can to some extent enjoy symphonies of pure sound: so the advocates of color-music find little encouragement in their efforts to introduce the new (?) art. This ancient science of color symbolism is of course employed intuitively by all artists but instinctively rather than scientifically, and art-work is tested by popular instinct rather than by intelligent appreciation. But the fact that an art of pure sound has achieved recognition in this materialistic age and has made music universally popular should surely imply the possibility of popularizing the corresponding art of pure color. It is no more difficult to establish scales of pure color than it is to do the same for sound. All scales are arbitrary, but they are based on natural facts, and are adapted to the evolution of the particular sense in each nation. It may be that the color-sense of the western races is less highly evolved than their sound-sense, but the foundation for both is present and the eventual recognition of color-music is certain. A writer in a South African paper recently announced the startling discovery of this ancient and obvious correspondence and hinted at the possibility of things long since established as scientific facts. And we shall no doubt have many more discoveries of this kind before the subject receives the attention it deserves. It may be that the chaos of western civilization points to the dawn of a new age, in which the heart of humanity will make itself felt in the life of the nations and will demand a higher expression than any to be found in the increase of wealth or the elaboration of comfort.

In the meantime, writing as an artist who has devoted much time to mystical painting, and also speaking as a student of Theosophy, I would warn those who are interested in art and symbology against all cut-and-dried methods of interpretation. When you hear a person saying that red means this and blue means that, remember that red and blue are relative. There is no such thing as absolute red or blue on the material plane. The colors merge into one another so imperceptibly that any definition is purely arbitrary. So that when you find tables of colors and correspondences, remember that these are merely approximations at best, and that they are only true under certain conditions and within certain limits: and that while all colors are the natural expression of certain qualities in nature, the power to see those colors

is a matter of personal development. Each one of us sees color differently. The differences indeed are so marked that a large number of people are found to be quite unable to distinguish between such strong contrasts as red and green; while in a lesser degree almost all have some peculiarity of vision that makes the finer shades of colors appear to incline for instance more to the red than to the blue; to the orange than to the green, and so on. When we then consider how little we know about the qualities which these colors are said to symbolize, surely we must see the utter folly of declaring dogmatically that such a color means this or that. When a teacher does this it is understood that reference is made to a definite scheme, scale, or system, and outside that school the statements of the teacher must be meaningless. For this reason also students of the ancient sciences were forbidden to talk about these things. But for the general art-lover there is an infallible guide to all such mysteries in his own heart. The colors of nature and art have a meaning for all who can see them, and the interpretation must be personal, for no one can know how another sees color. There are feelings and emotions in each one of us that correspond to all the forms and colors that we are individually capable of perceiving, and it is for each one of us to constantly cultivate our own perceptive faculties, so as to be able to feel the higher emotions that are dormant in our hearts and that may be aroused into activity by contemplation of works of Art.

Let each one cultivate his own taste and beware of pretentious critics who revel in ecstatic adoration of things they do not understand or who speak contemptuously of art which they have heard some one else denounce. Be your own critic, and keep your criticism to yourself. Enjoy to the full what you can appreciate, and do not mind if you find that in a little while you have outgrown that taste. Growth is good, but affectation is not growth. Try to *feel* beauty, and do not talk about your feelings; let your discrimination grow as a plant grows and do not keep pulling it up to show how it is getting on. No one can do your growing for you, nor can you grow for any one else. Appreciation of Art is far less an intellectual than an emotional proposition (using the word 'emotional' in its higher sense), and for that reason an effort to *feel* the meaning of a symbol is more valuable as a step in evolution than the reading of books purporting to reveal these mysteries. The unveiling of the mysteries is accomplished in silence and in meditation, an attitude of mind that may be maintained while fulfilling one's daily routine of duties. It is not a gymnastic exercise and it is not a 'pose.' It is a conscious act of evolution, a condition of human growth.

THE WORLD-MOVING FULCRUM: by Percy Leonard

 CERTAIN sayings there are which print themselves upon the mind, and even though we fail at first to penetrate their inner meaning, yet are we none the less persuaded that they contain a living truth. Belonging to this class is that remark ascribed to Archimedes, that if he had a fulcrum he could move the world.

Upon its face the statement seems to bear no obvious relation to our inner life; yet that it does contain a principle of high importance is evident upon a nearer view. The value of a fulcrum depends upon its providing a point of resistance to oppose a lever, which thus supported is enabled to perform those functions for which it is so justly prized. We may leave it to the text-books to describe the action of the lever in the field of Mechanics and proceed to consider its application to the inner world. It is in its relation to the world of thought in which we chiefly live, that the subject is especially interesting, for in the path of everyone are obstacles to be removed and all have minds to serve as levers to assist them in the work they have in hand. The mind is an admirable lever and moves with great rapidity; it even has an independent action of its own and is in fact so volatile, that when we try to subjugate its oscillations to our will, we find ourselves committed to a strenuous task. So long as the mind remains on its own plane, it can accomplish no real work in the real sense, for work is the overcoming of resistance, and there is no resistance to mere thinking. While acting in its own domain the mind creates ideals of the utmost grandeur without effort, and can rear majestic castles in the air; but when it comes to building dwellings for our common use, they prove to be of the unsubstantial fabric of which dreams are made.

In glorious dreamland one may easily acquire all virtue by a simple act of will, and proceed along the pathway like a royal pageant to the sound of trumpets, on a clear and open road; but we have scarcely entered on our waking life before we fall at the first onset of the enemy. Mere aspirations howsoever beautiful can never help us on our way, just as an obstacle can never be removed by brandishing a lever, no matter how adroitly and gracefully it may be done. The mind must first be energized by will and be opposed by the resistance of desire — that fierce, impetuous soul of the material world — before its proper work can be begun. The strain of handling a lever is only felt when the fulcrum is brought into use, and it is not until we oppose the craving of selfish desire that the resisting power of the lower nature makes itself felt, and thus we stumble on the very fulcrum we require. It is precisely in overcoming this resistance that we set in motion the very

highest forces in Nature, and our erstwhile foe becomes our comrade.

We shall never achieve the betterment of human life by dwelling in the visionary land of dreams; but only by descending to the battleground of common duty and in acquiring mastery over self in the prosaic struggles of our daily life. By cheerfully submitting to our unromantic destiny we liberate the mighty powers of the incarnate soul, and generate those streams of force that strike unseen of men, but powerful as the magic of the gods. A single evil tendency confronted and opposed, does more for suffering fellow-man than the most moving exhortation, which may be nothing after all but the exuberance of a fertile mind that never made a serious effort at self-mastery.

The soul is a warrior: or in other words the function of the Higher Nature is to overcome resistance. This fundamental quality too often finds expression in actual conflicts with one's fellows; for it is an undoubted fact that quarrels are often fomented as a relief from what is often felt to be the tedious monotony of a peaceful existence; but as we advance in interior development, external encounters are avoided because they are recognised as distractions from our real work. And many at this point turn back because they find themselves so intimately blended with the lower side of their natures, that in restraining its propensities they seem to be striking at the very roots of their existence.

The joy of self-conquest is impossible so long as we imagine ourselves to be the animal we seek to dominate, and this is why (as all the mystics teach) a dreary sense of blankness falls upon the mind as we approach that region where the avenues of selfish pleasure are successively closed. But we are not condemned to pass our lives in a dull void of consciousness.

So long as we identify ourselves with the deceptive mask we wear, so long our lives are like a kingdom torn by internecine strife; but as we learn to strike the line that separates the lower from the higher man, the situation undergoes a change, and, though indeed we find ourselves engaged in mortal combat, yet we can gather courage from the thought that all the helpful forces of the Universe are ranged upon our side.

A man who holds down rising anger does far more than simply check an outburst of unruly passion. The force controlled is not merely suppressed, it is transformed and raised, and travels outwards as a subtle radiation of the soul whose influence is unimaginably great. One who attempts to wield the finer forces of his nature can never for a moment be off guard. Desire unceasingly injects a never-ending train of thoughts into the mind which calls for ceaseless vigilance, and in the unremitting strain of such control, the higher influences stream in ceaseless flow,

and like the cheerful beams of the impartial sun, dispel the gloom from sad, discouraged hearts in places far away.

It is surely a matter for wonder that the ancient Theosophical teaching about the pairs of opposites and the necessity of an opposing pole to 'good' has disappeared completely from the Christian scheme, for it is plainly taught by Christ. In his parable of the husbandman whose servants reported tares among the wheat, he represents him as forbidding them to weed out the tares for fear of uprooting the wheat, at the same time, and commanded *that both should be allowed to grow together until the harvest*. If, by a single drastic operation, we could rid ourselves of so-called 'evil,' we should become by that deliverance the most useless creatures upon the face of the earth; for it is only by its antagonism that we generate our force for doing good. A disembodied spirit must enjoy many advantages incompatible with existence in the flesh, and like a distant star may shed a helpful ray upon the more advanced of humankind; but for the lack of a material base its influence upon humanity at large must fail of its full potency. Our bodies, held in such contempt by mystics of a certain school, have well been styled by Katherine Tingley as "Temples of mighty power," for by the very vehemence of their desires they furnish that resistive base from which we operate the forces we employ.

It is only when permitted free expression, that the crude energies of matter can be termed injurious; kept under due control they constitute the never-failing source from which we draw our motive power. The play and interplay of antithetical, opposing forces, are the indispensable conditions for our work by which we obtain the fulcrum for our lever.

A UNIVERSE OF ACTIVE ENERGY: by T. Henry, M. A.



THE progress of thought may be compared with the incoming of the tide on the seashore. The water advances not in one mass and at a uniform rate; a single wave rushes in and marks a line far in advance of the rest, and it is long before another wave reaches the same mark. Thus imperceptibly, amid continual ebbs and flows, the whole body of water advances. And similarly many of the ideas emphasized by H. P. Blavatsky have found their echoes many times since she expressed them; and, as time goes on, the same ideas are expressed again and again, as though the force of the tide were reaching other and yet other relays of the ocean of thought, and so gradually bringing on the whole mass. One of these ideas is that

of the sentience of nature — the universal prevalence of life, even in the so-called inorganic world and in 'dead matter.' The idea is as old as thought itself; but Theosophy is a rehabilitation of ancient truths. This truth had become obscured during the reign of mechanistic theories of the universe. By extending the principles of mechanics into the realm of the imagination, we had created an imaginary universe of dead atoms propelled by forces. The attempt to separate these two constituents entirely from each other resulted in the two *words* (for we can call them nothing else) 'mass' and 'motion.' But recent and more refined researches in physics have tended to show that mass itself is only a form of motion; a conclusion which throws into doubt the validity of the well-known dynamic equation $f=ma$. As some are now expressing it — matter is found to be made up entirely of energy; the atoms are merely centers of energy.

In *Popular Astronomy* is a paper of 'The Nature of Matter,' with the sub-title: 'This is not a Universe of Dead Atoms but of Active Energy'; and concluding:

We have thus, by a course of scientific reasoning, come to the conclusion that this is not a universe of dead atoms propelled by blind force, but a universe of active energy. It seems to the writer that in this conclusion lies the possibility of a definite, thorough, and complete reconciliation of science, theology, and philosophy. . . .

This is certainly better than a universe of dead atoms propelled by blind forces; yet still it is not enough — unless we give to the word 'energy' a very different meaning to that usually assigned by science. A universe of blind irresponsible energy, wholly outside of man himself, would not satisfy the cravings of the human heart for knowledge. The putting of energy instead of atoms might amount merely to the substitution of one abstraction for another. Though physical masses and forces are real enough, so long as we confine our consciousness to the plane of objective perception; yet, when we rise in thought beyond that plane — as we do whenever we try to reason out the *meaning* of these things — then they appear as merely the *attributes* of something else; and this something is beyond the plane of physical objectivity. We may, if we like, accept energy as a primary postulate, contenting ourselves with studying the conditions of its manifestation, but inquiring not into its origin. But, if we do inquire into its origin then we must necessarily go beyond physical conceptions, and regard energy as the physical manifestation of thought and emotion in a living soul.

Science is coming ever nearer to seeing that there is no valid reason for regarding plants and animals as organisms, while denying the same name to minerals. An organism is the physical expression of a soul. For many of the ancient philosophers the word 'atom' meant a soul.

BORO-BODUR, THE GREAT PYRAMID OF JAVA: by C. J. Ryan

THE Dutch weekly, *De Week*, has lately published a striking series of illustrations of one of the greatest wonders of the world, the immense *stūpa* called Boro-bodur (Great Buddha), a well preserved ruin of a so-called Buddhist Temple in the Dutch island of Java. In shape it is a rather flat, square pyramid, each side being 520 feet long at the base. This is rather more than 200 feet the corresponding part of the Great Pyramid of Egypt. Seven square angles, and narrow the eye gradually circular stages and so to the top, which is 118 feet from the general design of the Chalcedonian temple dedicated to these seven deities; but, according to general belief of the archaeologists founded on historical traditions and the sub-carved decorations, it is not nearly so ancient as the Mesopotamian temples.

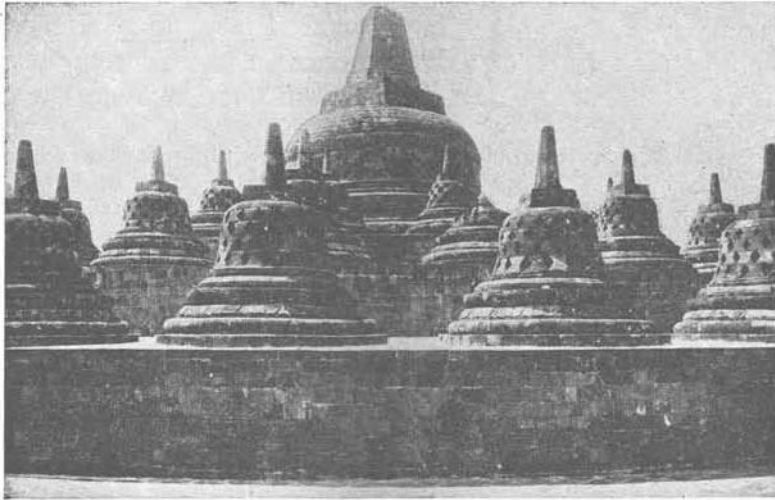


GATE ON THIRD GALLERY

Nothing is actually *known* about the date of Boro-bodur: it is supposed to have been founded early in the seventh century of the Christian Era and completed in the fifteenth. Possibly, future research may prove that these dates are far too recent, for we must always be on guard against the tendency of certain schools unduly to minimize the records of antique writers in regard to time-periods. There are no inscriptions of any kind, but rich and elaborate sculptures in number almost countless, representing incidents in the life of the Buddha, and other religious subjects, battles, sea-fights, processions, chariot races, etc. These are designed with vigor and executed with care and skill. Both in the de-

signing of the building, the seven stages with vertical walls, terraces, lead up to three or four platforms, central cupola which is 118 feet from the ground. The design of the building resembles that of the seven deities dedicated to the sacred place according to the archaeological historians of Java, subjects of the illustrations, it is as ancient as the Star-temple.

tail of some of this decoration, and in the general appearance of the building, striking similarities to many of the teocallis and other structures of Central America can be traced. This is noticeable in the gargoyles, which in their details resemble ancient American work.



STÛPA TERRACES: A FEW OF THE SEVENTY-TWO SHRINES

The exact purpose for which this splendid monument was erected is not known, but there can be little doubt that the chamber under the central dagoba was intended to hold some precious relic. This was ransacked long before the year 1814, when the first careful survey of the ruin was made by order of Sir Stamford Raffles, the scholarly and wise governor of Java during the period of British occupation. Until then Boro-bodur had been utterly neglected for centuries — ever since the great age of Buddhist culture terminated with the invasion of Mohammedanism. It was partly covered by soil, hundreds of beautiful shrines and magnificent carvings were hidden under masses of tropical foliage, and cattle grazed in the sacred enclosures.

The builders do not seem to have cared to use the *vousoir* or radiating principle in their arches; an examination of the plate showing the figure (so-called Buddha) seated in the 'yoga position,' within a shrine will make it clear that the corbelling principle was adopted; in this method the upper part of the opening is not a true arch but is composed of several horizontal stones held in place by the pressure at the sides. This system can only be used for small openings, but its employment does not prove that the architects did not know the principle of the radiating arch: it is a perfectly legitimate construction for openings up to a certain limit of size. There are four hundred and thirty-two of these



GARGOYLE (MAKARA MOTIVE)

It is the pure crystallization of the Buddhistic spirit. . . .

The Boro-bodur is what in Indian art is termed a 'stūpa.' For Buddhists the stūpa is the highest type of a religious building which contains the mortal remains of Buddha or a Buddhist saint, or it may be a memorial of some important event in the life of the great Teacher or of one of his disciples. . . .

On each façade the square terraces are interrupted by two projecting pavilions which, in connexion with the gently rising and sharply outlined cornices, contribute so much to the delightful play of light and shade on the surfaces. . . . The walls are richly decorated with sculptures in high relief, representing incidents in the Buddha's former lives, as well as his last human incarnation. . . .

As we approach the higher circular platforms where the pilgrimage ended with a simple act of devotion, the offering of flowers or perfumes, we notice the broadening ascent of the conception. As we approach the central cupola the architectural idea expands and culminates, so to speak, in the expression of the underlying spiritual motive of the whole building. In the terraces it is the richness and splendor that attracts special attention. Edified by the sacred themes reproduced in the carvings, the devotee would arrive in an elevated frame of mind at the round terraces, the spheres of higher consecration. Here the oppression of the somewhat narrow galleries disappears and the wide vault of heaven can be contemplated. Here the eye can view the immense plain which extends to the distant volcanoes, and here the magnificence leads to a higher plane of severest simplicity. . . . Here we approach the Holy of Holies, the central stūpa, severe in profile, enclosing the invisible, the inaccessible, the highest — the Mystery.

Finally, it should be noted that the Boro-bodur stūpa has nine terraces, of which the three upper ones represent circles, and the others squares.

shrines, a significant number frequently referred to by Madame Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*.

The quotations that follow are freely translated by Professor D. de Lange, International Theosophical Headquarters, Point Loma, California, from the article in *De Week* which accompanies the pictures.

When we think of the innumerable remains of religious edifices of the time when Buddhism was in its culmination in Java we must admit that it was the golden age, a period of prosperity when life was animated by a strong and great faith. This faith led an artistic, energetic and well-balanced nation to erect temples and monasteries whose ruins are a most precious inheritance. Among the ruins those of the Boro-bodur are undoubtedly the most important.



GARGOYLE (KALA MOTIVE)

**THE THREE BASES OF POETRY: A STUDY OF
ENGLISH VERSE: by Kenneth Morris**

PART III — STYLE

CHAPTER IV — SINCE MILTON

MUSIC and vision grew, from cycle to cycle, during the three ages of English poetry; but this thing of Style seems to have a single cycle of its own. It reached its apex in Milton, and has never come to such heights again; perhaps it cannot. I sometimes wonder whether this means that it is the most basic thing of all in poetry; whether one may say that, while the aim of vision is to see as the Soul sees, and the aim of music to hear as the Soul hears, the aim of Style is to be as the Soul is — to be the Soul. Shakespeare and Milton remain the greatest; and their greatness is their Style. It is only in respect to Style that their cycle competes with this that now seems so near its ending. In this one quality it is the greater; yet after ages will judge it to have left the finer poetic treasure. And by how infinitely much! We have criticized and commented life; they revealed it: we have philosophized where they created. The soul rests on the grand basic forms, whether expressed in a little sentence or a great epic or play; it finds in them assurance of the stability of things and the divine architecture of the Universe. Supremacy in Style is the mark of the right Sacred Book: which is packed with sayings that seem spoken out of Infinity. One imagines that Shakespeare and Milton will be in the canon of some future religion; and that the wise then will see the deep symbolism of them more clearly than we do now; as some of us seek to see the symbolism in Vedas and Upanishads, Koran or Bible. Perhaps the true things in all sacred literature are written in much the same way: through the pressure of Divinity upon the brain of the elected writer. Very likely the actual holder of the pen may be writing far greater things than he knows — than his every-day consciousness knows. The passages written with full illumination may be comparatively few. What is a 'blind' to the uninitiated may often be a blind to the mind of the writer as well: the question is not so important, since it is from the all-knowing Soul, always, that all high truth comes. What if its vehicle, in ancient Hindoostan, were a poet instructed from his childhood in the philosophies; while in recent England it was a poet bred in a narrow creed? Only the Soul — not instruction in the philosophies — could give the sacred or poetic element in either case. In the one, the mind would have understood better; and then been at pains to create the necessary veils that should conceal while revealing; in the other, those veils would have fallen into place naturally through the com-

mon workings of the mind. When we speak of the Wise Ones who lived long ago, we should remember that They live now too; that in the last resort it is the Soul who is *the* Wise One, and It exists in all ages. In so far as we partake in the life of that, we partake in the life of the Mighty and Wise. — All this without prejudice to the fact that It and its especial Agents or illuminated vehicles —the Gods and Lords of Wisdom — have their own especial seasons for appearance and their own silences and ages of withdrawal.

But it seems that the Soul of a Race, which is but a facet of the Universal Soul, can, once that it has spoken firmly and established its link with the people, awaken echoes of itself in even a minor and quite casual singer, supposing he is lifted at all above common feeling by any sort of idealism. There was a high something in the England of the Cavaliers and Roundheads, that left its echo of Style in more verse than Milton's. The Elizabethan impulse had nearly gone; it was no longer a great age of poetry; later, with the Restoration, a definite anti-poetic reaction was to set in, with lights — to call them that — of its own. Between *Lycidas* and that reaction came a kind of twilight, the years of the Civil War and the Commonwealth, during which Milton was practically silent in verse. Behind lay the glory of his Elizabethan youth; in front, his evening dragonhood and the flowering of the anti-poets; these years lay between the two ages, and partook of the fruitfulness of neither. It was the Golden Age of prose: the heyday of Fuller, Taylor and Browne, of Cowley and Walton. Of its verse—there are lines in the songs of Lovelace, to show that echoes from the Soul could still occasionally travel down into English metre.

What gives them a real, and therefore a lasting, value is a something of Stylè that lingers in them: a Cavalier quality, drawing, through high ideals of gentlemanhood, even from the Divine in man. It is mixed with other things, sometimes quaint enough; but it is there. Much that was altogether beyond politics lay behind either side in the War; great idealism was not uncommon. Malignants and Roundheads both saw a light; and worshiped, at their best, with some impersonality. For these, Milton in his sonnets testified in a voice to fill the ages; for those, this Colonel Lovelace had something to say which we should, yes, certainly, be the poorer for lacking. The Divine Right of Kings is no doubt a damnable doctrine, when the king in question has neither right nor divinity to show for it; yet whoso believeth with high faith, even in the right of such a king as Charles I, may find in his belief a window through which to look in upon the Divine within himself. So Lovelace took what greatness there was about the losing side, and, setting it in a couple of lyrics, gave us Style in lyricism: songs that ring

with a very real nobility: *To Lucasta, on going to the Wars*, with its

I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not Honour more;

— and *To Althea from Prison*, with its

If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.

There is the right ring in them of a manhood with some semblance of godhood in it; in their way, they too affirm the divinity of man; and — with a *manner*. As for Milton, he was fighting the grand battle — against the ‘Forcers of Conscience,’ not the Royalists — in such prophetic style as this:

Because you have thrown off your Prelate Lord,
And with stiff vows renounced his Liturgy,
To seize the widowed whore Plurality
From those whose sin ye envied, not abhorred,
Dare ye for this adjure the civil sword
To force our consciences that Christ set free,
And ride us with a Classic Hierarchy
Taught ye by mere A. S. and Rutherford?
Men whose life, learning, faith and pure intent
Would have been held in high esteem with Paul,
Must now be named and printed heretics
By shallow Edwards and Scotch What-d’ye-call!
But we do hope to find out all your tricks,
Your plots and packings, worse than those of Trent,
That so the Parliament
May with its wholesome and preventive shears
Clip your phylacteries, though baulk your ears,
And succour our just fears,
When they shall read this clearly in your charge,
New *Presbyter* is but old *Priest* writ large.

— *Style since Milton* the chapter is headed; but it is hard to get away from the man!

But it was *Paradise Lost* that clinched the work of the Elizabethans, and established this connexion between the Soul and the language on what you might call a firm basis; — so firm, that once the age of reaction had shown its first signs of passing, a means was at hand whereby poets of comparatively low calibre might write with some distinction. Gray profited most by it; but then, he had also some inspiration of his own. Men like Young of the *Night Thoughts*, Cowper in his translation of Homer, and later Campbell, were enabled to invest what they had to say with an air of greatness quite beyond its intrinsic value; and the same is true of many and many since. — Which is, indeed, but

repeating what Matthew Arnold has said better already; but it needs saying here, to make the tale complete.

Also it must be noted that Dryden and Pope did their work and have their place — a humble one — in the evolutionary scheme. The Race Soul probably used them; far as they were from being aware of its presence and workings. The Soul spoke in Elizabethan times, and the world caught fire; in the flame, Style was created. Milton felt titanically against a medium of stubborn words: the form he had to play upon was chaos, but he mastered chaos and imposed on it his will; and Style became inherent in the language. So his work leads us into spiritual states of consciousness at once. But the rugged wilds he had annexed for the Gods still needed reducing to order; and form is the basis of order. The Elizabethans had been wont to overleap form constantly, almost unconscious of it, through sheer riot of the imagination; Milton had needed it not, for the furnace of his inspiration had been great and glowing enough to transmute formlessness into molten beauty. Now came Dryden and Pope, knowing nothing else than form, and cultivating nothing else. They laid out Milton's wild highlands in neat parterres; they made Himalaya into macadam; conducted Niagara into pipes and taps. They left this craggy language, potentially so magnificent, a medium usable and orderable by common scribbling humanity; so that you might write it efficiently, even excellently, without being a Hermes-Ariel like Shakespeare or a Prometheus-Samson like Milton. They came in an age when England was asleep, and her life-currents running feebly; and the Race Soul seized upon them as an opportunity to impose correctives, disciplines, which should hardly have been swallowed in a waking or creative age. They made impossible of recurrence, on any large scale, the inveterate extravagance of the Elizabethans, or the creakings we sometimes hear in the working of later Miltonic imagination: — the rebel angels' Krupp factory in heaven, for example; or affable Raphael and the dinner that did not cool.

Gray owed to them the precision of his workmanship; it would have been singularly useless to him, had he not owed something else to Nature, Milton, the Elizabethans, and what there was of poet in himself. That something we find in the *Elegy*, a poem not all mere perfection of manner: the stateliness he used in it did lead him back to some little vision of the Soul. He set out to moralize among the tombs, and came to this rather commonplace conclusion:

The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

— A fine grave, indeed, for the beautiful pomp of his lines to find their end in! But that was not to be; all without his conscious choosing, it

was to lead him to something better: the 'silent dust' and the 'dull cold ear of Death' were not quite to be the be-all and the end-all here.

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

Yes; it must be said that those graves . . . revealed to him something beyond decay. He caught a glimpse of the shining glory of the Soul beneath the common stuff of humanity — just a glimpse, a hint: like a twinkle of white wings passing in the dusk; like a star shooting in the north of heaven when our eyes may be turned to the west or east. But it was a great thing to have seen, a great achievement. For all this world is a graveyard; and one sees daily and everywhere Miltons, Hampdens, Cromwells, entombed, mute and inglorious, mummified, thwarted of their proper glory, within the living flesh. There is not one of us, however fallen, however totally dull, but is in truth hidden bard and hero; nay, but the eyes of the Spirit behold upon the brow of the outcast criminal, the marks of wounding thorns; on the hands of the cutpurse and sneak-thief, also there, the divine Stigmata.

Towards that vision, I think, the Gods were leading Gray; and because They were there and leading him, his poem attains its great excellence of manner. It is enough to place him, though so minor a poet in the totality, among the great Stylists. It was a wonderful thing to happen, in such a barren soulless age; but it accounts for the ring that we still find in his language, and shall continue to find in it. Otherwise it would be inexplicable. Because, for the most part, when he has put on the mantle of the seer, and anointed his eyes for vision, he sees through the commonplace to more commonplaces beyond. His dying bard might well have beheld mysteries on mysteries; but looked for and saw only a trumpety temporary thing like revenge — a revenge whose whole cycle of effects had passed centuries before Gray wrote of him. The poem, one feels, might have achieved agelong importance; it remains an interesting literary curiosity and nothing more. There is an echo of the Grand Manner in the passage that begins

Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,
That hushed the stormy main:

— we are thrilled a little, until suspicion is borne in on us that probably

Cadwallo's tongue could reveal no more than the Bard's own, or Gray's; and that it really does not matter. There is infinitely less in the whole poem, with all its outward perfection, than in the one line Milton gave to the same subject. Yet there is that outward perfection, here as elsewhere, in Gray; and to account for it, Dryden and Milton, and the fact that Gray did once nearly see the Soul.

Style with the other qualities came in again in the nineteenth century. With some it came as the result of direct contact with the Soul; with others, because the Soul's tones had come to be a part of the language, and an easy acquirement or even the natural thing, for verse-makers. Here is an example of the latter class:

On Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow,
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

And so on, and so on; one might quote it all, or none of it. Campbell simply saw the outer battle; it mirrored for him no shadow of the grander battle within. He came nowhere near realities; he never caught a glimpse of the Soul. And yet you cannot read the poem, I think, without feeling that currents from some great source of dignity, deeper than the personality of man, are flowing through it.

Style is the last thing one would have expected from Wordsworth; who less than any of the great poets had that soldierly command over words that seems the very basis of it. But it is there, especially in the sonnets. Four things impinge together on his consciousness: memory of the Master of Style, the image of a star, the sound of the sea, and inklings of the Soul: and how shall he fail to make the grand utterance? It comes to this effect:

Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart;
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea.

And when the fall of Venice rouses sad, proud, luminous moods in him, he writes:

Once did she hold the gorgeous East in fee
And was the safeguard of the West; the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
Venice, the eldest child of Liberty.
She was a maiden city, bright and free:
No guile seduced, no force could violate,
And when she took unto herself a mate,
She must espouse the everlasting Sea.

In both cases we hear ring out the pride of the superhuman in man: a superb word from the Soul is spoken, now on Milton, now on Venice.

And, though philosophizing was so fatal a habit with him — so fatal that he must needs name a *poem*: *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality received in Childhood* — he was yet capable of being mercifully thrown off the track of philosophizing, or of suddenly soaring up into the ether from it, in this:

Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home.

He saw through philosophy to poetry there; the Soul over-rode the thinking mind, and proclaimed out loud its own pride and splendor and beauty.

Byron might have been a great stylist; at his best he attains a large measure of this grand quality. Whatever odd stanzas in *Childe Harold* possess lasting value, owe it to the presence or nearness of Style; he had the instinct for it deep in him, and when he forgot to be bitter, flip-pant or profuse, it would out at the call of reverence or high and serious mood. When it comes, it calls a sudden halt to us; and off go the shoes from our feet, for the place whereon we are standing is no common ground. Such verses are those famous ones on the Ball at Brussels; such that glorious

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean — roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin — his control
Stops with the shore; — upon thy watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknelled, unconfined, and unknown.

There was that which was very great in Byron: a great soul, you may say, that came into a world where it had long since sown misfortunes: a dire crop of them to be reaped in that short life as Byron, the harvesting of which, and perhaps the sowing of more, turned his attention away altogether from his own status as a soul. Let it be said that greatness is itself a quality of the Divine, a trace of its presence; that the soulless are commonplace and vulgar. One finds this poet's personality confronted again and again with that great uncomprehended Augoeides. Again and again he comes into the aroma of the Soul, and cannot guess or tell the cause of the sudden grandeur and reverence he feels; — turns away to flippancy or brilliant bitterness, wounded through and through with the pain of the Great Thing's uncomprehendedness. He reveals his real self, just hindered from mysticism, in the verse before that just quoted — in the hundred and seventy-eighth of

Canto IV of *Childe Harold*, where he speaks of his interviews with Nature,

in which I steal
From all I may be or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal —

— that is to say, the Divinity within and without him. He could hardly have been as bad as many have supposed; his reputation has suffered from a world in arms against him, and from his own haughty personal contempt for that world. This we may say: that the Soul he could never fully reach to in his verse, never quite turned its back on him; he came very near to it, and to expressing it in his life, towards the end. He was a great man working out a very bad Karma. In his most Byronic and tragical conceptions — Manfred, Cain and the rest — there is that titanism which is also an echo of the Divinity in man. The Prometheus was Prometheus Bound; the Christ was Christ on the cross; but they were there. If he never let the light through; if he is one of the four non-mystics among the greater English poets; yet he was not a stranger to the light, as the other three were. We cannot read him, as we can Chaucer, Dryden and Pope, without being reminded of the Soul. He, also, proves the grand doctrine.

Earlier in this essay, reference was made to a parallelism between Keats' *La Belle Dame sans Merci* and Tennyson's *Lady of Shalott*; the time comes now to deal further with this. They are two of the greatest poems of their century, based on an ideal or basic form. Both present a high Soul-symbol in the guise of a medieval tale; and both symbolize the same profound truth. It is, of course, the crumbling away of the spiritual realms or states of consciousness at the entry of passion. The ideal form is there, and in such perfection, with all its lines so clearly and nobly drawn, that one would say that, like *Hamlet* or the great books of *Paradise Lost*, these two ballads must have their place in the Bible of some future race. There is no taint of preaching or philosophizing in either; yet both penetrate to regions that sermons fain would reach, but cannot. This, needless to say, is the true method of Poetry: thus she would teach us. Not often can the poet who has grown too wise in conscious brain-mindly wisdom come to such heights as this. These are the poems of young men, more concerned with their art than their ideas; but the Soul spoke through them and had its way. With a difference.

Keats was the more titanic in power; in him the Daemon spoke loudest; but his poem is marred by a relish for that same passion against which — all unsuspected by him, one must suppose — the symbol of the poem is directed. There are sentimental philandering verses which

one can bowdlerise out quite easily, and leave the poem artistically the better for lacking. Not one word might you so take from *The Lady of Shalott*; which is, *more* Tennyson, word by word and line by line perfect — on its own plane, unsurpassable. He makes his *mise en scène* thus:

On either side the river lie
 Long fields of barley and of rye,
 That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
 And through the field the road runs by
 To many-towered Camelot;
 And up and down the people go,
 Gazing where the lilies blow
 Round an island there below,
 The island of Shalott.

— Three more verses of that Part I follow, all given to such detailed description, faithfully and excellently done; not until the fourth do we get a hint that we are in faery realms:

And by the moon the reaper weary,
 Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
 Listening, whispers, 'Tis the fairy
 Lady of Shalott.'

Then he takes the four verses of Part II to develop the faery quality of it: presenting a bright, glamorous world flashing in silence across the surface of the magic mirror; and to strike, in the first verse, the note of mystery, perhaps of tragedy impending:

There she weaves by night and day
 A magic web with colours gay.
 She has heard a whisper say,
 A curse is on her if she stay
 To look down to Camelot.
 She knows not what the curse may be,
 And so she weaveth steadily,
 And little other care hath she,
 The Lady of Shalott.

It is not until the end of Part II that you have the true atmosphere of the poem set out; and it is impossible to admire enough the careful artistry with which it is done. Now see how Keats made his atmosphere and landscape, and at the same time struck the note of warning:

Ah, what can ail thee, Knight-at-arms,
 Alone and palely loitering?
 The sedge is withered on the lake,
 And no birds sing.

— Two lines, and we know that tragedy is coming. Two more lines, apparently irrelevant, hardly more than a traditional ballad refrain — and the whole thing is done. We are in a mournful, wild region; Autumn

is over us, and the decay of the year. Two flicks of the brush, and the landscape is created; or rather, that is created for which landscape exists: the spiritual value, the inner atmosphere: everything real that the most elaborate landscape could convey.

Then compare Tennyson's detailed picture in Part III: the knight riding between the barley-sheaves; the sun dazzling on his brazen armor; the gemmy bridle, the blazoned baldric, the mighty silver bugle; the helmet and the helmet feather; the broad clear brow glowing in the sunlight, the coal-black curls: Lancelot riding and singing and flashing by the river — a full-length portrait in thirty-six perfect lines: with this: —

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful, a faery's child;
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

— The essence of a portrait in just three details, thrown to the outer eye in the third and fourth lines; and with extraordinary ominous significance, the presentiment of tragedy, in the magical

Full beautiful, a faery's child.

The whole suggestion of a sunlit, undisturbed world such as Tennyson paints detailedly in his Part I, is conveyed in the three words "in the meads." We have to imagine it, true; but Keats has blown our imagination into flame, and can trust it to do what he wants. The scrap of fuel he gives it, is adequate. But to turn to Tennyson again —

Here we see his artist's instinct come to its own:—

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces through the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She looked down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror cracked from side to side;
'The curse is come upon me,' cried
The Lady of Shalott.

— The supreme moment having come, the details are no longer slowly developed, but flash by; they are there, the salient ones: the helmet and the plume, the blooms on the water-lilies: but they are seen as by a flash of lightning or keen emotion. Then, with majestic and most magical movement, the tragedy is precipitated. It is the triumph of Tennyson's method. To this the natural sunny landscape of Part I; the silent, flamey mirror-magic of Part II, and the intense vigor and personality of Part III, all inevitably move. Nothing is left to be painted but that wonderful picture of rain and river and dying song in Part IV:

aftermath, anticlimax, sad, perfect conclusion. It is the Wave-Form again, but carried through a whole poem: slow gathering up of waters; crash of the fall; melancholy withdrawing roar.

And Keats?

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song.

— Sheer and perfect wizardry so far; and in this verse, all that a high critical reticence would have told about the fate-bringing passion. See how consummately Tennyson dealt with it: — in Part II this:

And sometimes through the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two:
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

And at the end of the same Part, just before the entry of Lancelot:

Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed;
'I am half sick of shadows,' said
The Lady of Shalott.

And then, in the verse of tragedy, absolutely not one word of it; — altogether a reticence of the highest possible artistic value.

But Keats is not content with having said, in the fourth verse,

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful, — a faery's child,

and in the fifth,

And nothing else saw all day long,

— which gives us the knight's passion; a matter of enchantment certainly,

For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song;

— he must needs give us also the 'relish sweet,' the zone and the bracelets, the 'sweet moan' and the 'kisses four': things that add nothing of value, and therefore take something away. Well, well; he was only a boy, 'in love with love,' as they say. I think if he had lived, he would have used his scissors to some of this.

As, in truth, we may very easily do ourselves: we may jump three verses, and come at once to this:

And there she lullèd me asleep,
And there I dreamed — Ah! woe betide!
The latest dream I ever dreamed
On the cold hillside.

And now the tragedy is upon us; it comes, not marching, however swift-

ly, but with a spring as it were out of ambush; and ambush not prepared in this world at all, but in perilous fairylands. Death-pale kings and princes appear to the knight in his dream,

Their starved lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gapèd wide,

— to cry to him that La Belle Dame sans Merci has him in thrall; and he awakes to find himself lonely and doomed on the cold hillside. Never was dénouement so magically rendered, so *just* (in the French sense), so mysteriously tragical. It was a titanism of genius that went to the creation of that little poem.

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This lastly* upon Style, from the *Prelude* in Swinburne's *Songs before Sunrise*, a book that is very full of it:

But weak is change, but strengthless time,
To take the light from heaven, or climb
The hills of heaven with wasting feet.
Songs they can stop that earth found meet,
But the stars keep their ageless rhyme;
Flowers they can slay that spring thought sweet,
But the stars keep their spring sublime;
Passions and pleasures can defeat,
Actions and agonies control,
And life and death, *but not the Soul*.

Because man's soul is man's God still,
What wind soever waft his will
Across the waves of day and night
To port or shipwreck, left or right,
By shores and shoals of good and ill;
And still its flame at mainmast height
Through the rent air that foam-flakes fill
Sustains the indomitable light
Whence only man hath strength to steer
Or helm to handle without fear.



MAN, when he reaches his fruition, and civilization is at its height, stands between two fires. Could he but claim his great inheritance, the incumbrance of the mere animal life would fall away from him without difficulty. But he does not do this, and so the races of men flower and then droop and die and decay off the face of the earth, however splendid the bloom may have been. And it is left to the individual to make this great effort; to refuse to be drawn back by his lesser or more material self. Every individual who accomplishes this is a redeemer of his race. — *Light on the Path*

THEORIES OF GRAVITATION: by H. Travers, M. A.

INSUPERABLE difficulties are presented *at the very outset* by mechanistic theories of the universe; so in order to elaborate such theories at all, it is essential to ignore these insuperable difficulties and to proceed as if they did not exist. The result, is not to be wondered at. If matter consists of an assemblage of masses or particles, separated by distances, we can give no mechanical explanation of the means by which these particles act upon each other across the distances. For, in supposing the existence of a medium or fluid interpenetrating the spaces, we should have no alternative but to represent this medium also as being composed of particles separated from each other by spaces. In short, we may postpone the difficulty, but cannot elude it; wherefore it is no use postponing it. And this difficulty is insuperable and arises at the very start. We find it cropping up in the following:

The law of attraction is well known, but no connecting mechanism has been discovered.
(From an article in the *Chemical News*)

No; nor would it be any use if it were discovered; because it is not a mechanism, but something else, that needs to be discovered. If we discovered merely a mechanism, then the old difficulty about attraction would arise again in connexion with that mechanism. We may explain the motion of a child across the nursery floor by saying that he is tied to his mother's apron strings; but if we define an apron string as merely a row of detached particles, then we might as well do without the string altogether; unless we care to amuse ourself by supposing that the particles are tied to each other's apron strings.

The point is — why should we continue to scratch our head over the problem of a connecting mechanism for gravitation, when it is shown at the start that a mechanism is just the very thing which we must not expect to discover, and which (should it be discovered) we should have to reject as entirely useless? Yet people do scratch their head — over reams of paper, and in a style of mathematical typography that is the despair of the compositor; while weird metaphysical speculations occupy themselves in discussing such questions as whether places will stay where they are, or whether it is 'now' on the planet Jupiter at the same time as it is 'now' on this earth.

Shall we explain attraction by resolving a pull into a push? It might be some good, if we knew what a push was. As there is no such thing as contact between atoms, a push must necessarily be exerted across an empty space.

Mechanistic theories are invaluable for many purposes, and have

proved their practical usefulness. But they are useless for the purpose of explaining themselves. A mechanical theory of mechanism is absurd. Attraction is one of the things which we have to *assume* in order to devise a mechanistic explanation of anything; now it is not considered legitimate to deduce one's postulates from one's theorems. Since, therefore, attraction is a postulate, which has to be taken for granted at the outset of any mechanistic theory; then, if we desire to explain attraction, we must do so by some other means than a mechanistic theory. There are only two alternative courses to be pursued: either we may rest content in the thought that a science whose range is not universal must necessarily adopt some irresolvable postulates — in which case we give up trying to explain attraction; or else, if we *must* try to explain attraction, we shall have to begin an inquiry into the nature of sensory perception and the concepts derived therefrom — in which case we transcend the sphere of mechanistic theories and plunge into unaccustomed waters.

Some who speak for science limit their own sphere, and yet aspire to go beyond those limits. They should decide whether to take certain postulates for granted, or whether to plunge bravely into any mysterious realms that may lie beyond the phenomenal universe.


The position of Theosophy in this respect is perfectly candid and unassailable. It is clearly laid down by H. P. Blavatsky in her criticism of the scientific position in the Third Part of Volume I of *The Secret Doctrine*. In brief it is what has just been stated: if people ask questions which at the same time they admit that they cannot answer on their own declared conditions, then they ought to be willing to hear what somebody else may be gracious enough to say in the attempt to answer the questions thus asked. Look here! they say; we have pulled the universe apart and found it to consist of nothing but a very great deal of particles of dirt. We cannot examine the particles, because they are too small; but we assume that they are made up of still smaller particles of dirt; and so *ad infinitum*. Somebody else comes and says: Those particles of dirt are in your eye; I can show you how to get them out, so that you will see what really is in the universe.

If, says H. P. Blavatsky, the inductive method (of reasoning from observation) is to be pursued, it may either be pursued within the limit of observation prescribed by the physical senses — in which case the results obtained will be correspondingly limited; or else it is necessary to use some other kind of senses that will carry our observations farther than the physical senses do. If someone says there are no such subtler senses, then we ask, 'What is the to-do about, anyhow? Why be so

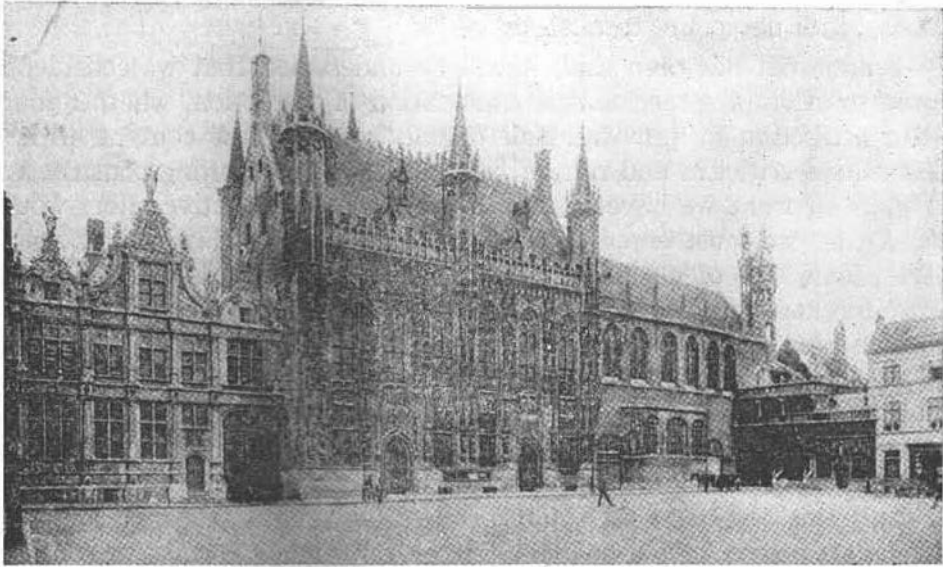
anxious to find out all about things that do not exist? If you are not satisfied to say that physical phenomena have a physical cause, or that they have no cause at all, then you must admit that they have an ultra-physical cause. And so, when we begin to talk about ultra-physical causes, it is not polite to hush us up.'

From what has been said, it will be understood that we consider it futile to attempt a mechanistic explanation of attraction, whether magnetic attraction or gravitational. Shall we then rest content with a destructive criticism and refrain from attempting anything constructive in place of what we have destroyed? Such a constructive effort would mean that we must enter upon a consideration of the nature of sense-perceptions and of our ideas of space and time, position and motion, etc. In short, we arrive at the beginning of the path of self-knowledge and are now studying man himself. As long as the universe is regarded as a vast machine, entirely external to man, we shall be studying a vast illusion in our own imagination, and thus we shall get a false picture of life. We shall be apt to suffer from attempts to apply mechanistic theories to life itself. It would be a bad day for humanity if the secrets of attraction and other such things were discovered prematurely, putting dangerous powers in the hands of desperate people. Science must make the alleviation of human ills its aim or it will defeat its own efforts.

BRUGES: by C. J. Ryan

RUGES, the capital of West Flanders, is one of the picturesque and historically interesting cities of Belgium which have come down to us almost unchanged since the Middle Ages. Bruges, however, has little of the bustling manufacturing life of its sister cities; it is still lying almost asleep under the dust of the centuries. The contrast between this quaint, old-world town and vigorous and energetic Antwerp, Liège, or Brussels — or fashionable, ultra-modern, and frivolous Ostend, only twelve miles away — is striking. Notwithstanding the small size of the country, Belgium, for its size, is more richly stored with artistic and literary remains of the Middle Ages than any other western European land. Even the extraordinary trials and sufferings which it has endured through so many weary centuries of conflict have not been able to devastate it.

The charm of Bruges is very powerful; the city is sometimes called the 'Venice of the North,' both on account of its former commercial supremacy and of its miles of water-ways over which hang the gray



THE 'JUSTICE DE PAIX.' AND THE HOTEL DE VILLE, BRUGES

and crumbling walls of its antique red-tiled houses. The ramifications of the canals extend throughout the city in all directions; they are crossed by more than fifty bridges, from which the name Bruges is derived (*Brugge* in Flemish). In the height of its prosperity, during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, more than one hundred and fifty vessels entered the large basins in a single day; these came from the sea, mainly by way of the port of Zwyn. At that time Bruges had a population of more than 200,000, and factories and chartered companies from seventeen kingdoms had establishments there. It held a practical monopoly of the wool trade with England, and it was the northern center to which the Lombards and Venetians brought rich cargoes from Italy and the Orient and returned with the products of northern Europe. The gradual silting up of the harbor of Zwyn, which was complete by 1490, was the beginning of the end of the great prosperity of Bruges. It was finally ruined by a combination of political and religious disasters. In 1488 the citizens imprisoned the Archduke Maximilian of Austria for violating some of their privileges, and heavy vengeance was taken by the House of Hapsburg which had then come into the possession of the country. Most of the trade was transferred to Antwerp. The religious persecutions of the Duke of Alva at the end of the sixteenth century completed

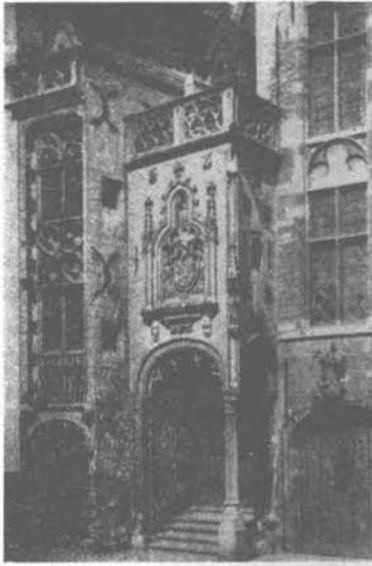
the downfall of Bruges, and the majority of the inhabitants left alive fled to England. Of late years, and particularly since the opening of the new and important canal leading to Zeebrugge, the city has been



THE BELFRY FROM THE GREEN QUAY, BRUGES

slowly regaining some of its former prosperity. Lace-making occupies six thousand persons. The population had reached 54,000 before the war, an increase of 10,000 in the last ten years, but the city is still far too large for its inhabitants, and, except in the center, the streets present a deserted appearance. Rodenbach, the Belgian novelist, calls it a Dead City. Bruges has suffered from many sieges, but it has not been seriously damaged in the present war—at least up to the time of writing—although probably it has suffered many minor injuries. The destruction of the famous Belfry would be almost as great a misfortune for the world of art as the loss of the Town Hall of Ypres has been.

The main impression of Bruges is one of loveliness, with its red roofs, tree-bordered canals, and numerous steeples. Many of the old houses are Spanish in design, having been built during the Spanish occupation in the sixteenth century; they present a strong contrast to the quaint gabled dwellings characteristic of the Low Countries. Belgium is justly proud of its magnificent bell-towers which rise boldly as symbols of liberty and independence above the municipal and other public buildings of its cities. The famous belfry on the Cloth Hall of Bruges in the great square is the glory of the city; its chimes are the finest in Belgium, though the ancient hymn tunes were recently replaced by modern airs.



ENTRANCE TO THE LIBRARY
BRUGES

The lower part was built in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, but the graceful octagon is fifteenth century work.

Bruges is noted as the spot where a regular commercial Insurance Company was established by Robert of Bethune, Count of Flanders, in the thirteenth century. This is the first of which anything definite is known. Marine and other systems of insurance existed among the Anglo-Saxons and even the ancient Romans, but little information has come down to us about them. In 1430, Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, founded the renowned Order of the Golden Fleece out of compliment to the staple industry of Bruges.

Intimately associated with Bruges is the glory of the great painter Memling, who carried its fame far and wide at the moment when its commercial reputation was beginning to decline. Many of his best pictures, including the panels of the Shrine of St. Ursula, the masterpiece of his later years, are still in perfect condition in the Hospital of St. John (1480). The Shrine is one of the most interesting monuments of medieval art in Flanders, and the panel-pictures are renowned not only for their delicacy and marvelous detail, but because of their wonderful variety of landscape and costume. The Hospital of St. John remains in practically the same condition as it was when Memling worked in it, and the paintings are in perfect harmony with the surroundings.

In Bruges, as in the other cities of Belgium, the use of dogs as beasts of burden is common. The milk-wagons are generally drawn by dogs and the drivers are women. The law demands that the animals shall be treated with humanity. The outfit is regularly inspected to see that the cans are clean, the dogs comfortable in their harness, and that they have bowls for water and carpets to lie on when tired. Unsuccessful efforts have been made to abolish dog labor, but, if this were done, probably most of the dogs would go too, for the thrifty Belgian would not be able to keep many dogs unless they were of practical use.

The history of Bruges goes back to very early days. There was certainly a city of some importance in the seventh century A. D. Until 1180, Bruges was the recognised capital of West Flanders and the seat of the Counts of Flanders, who were always proclaimed there. Even after that date, when Ghent took its place, Bruges remained unsurpassed



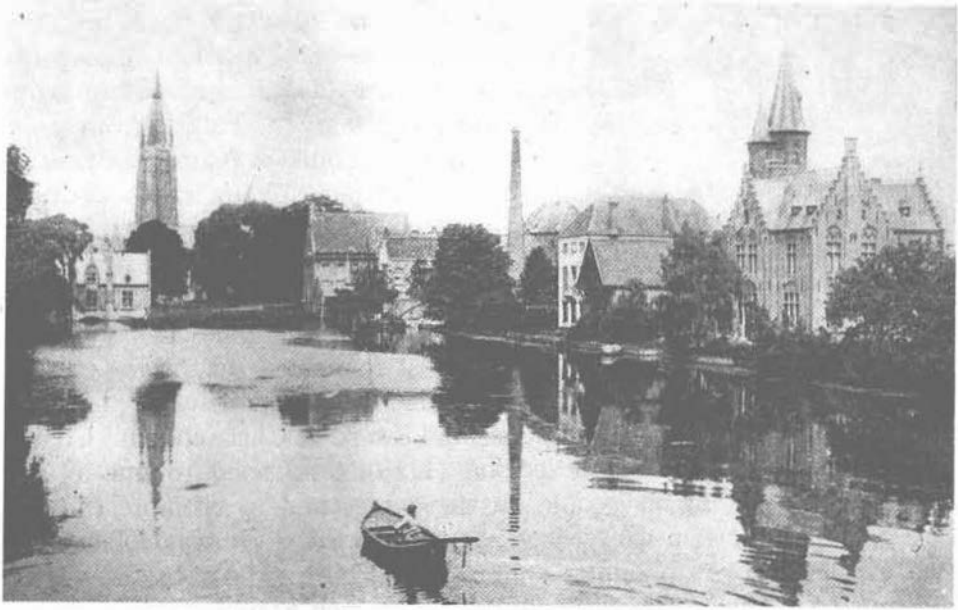
RUF DE L'ÂNE AVEUGLE

in wealth and power until the silting up of the Zwyn.

The city of Bruges is, of course, intimately associated with the history of the County of Flanders, whose pages are filled with romance and stirring adventures. The first ruler of Flanders whose name is recorded, Baldwin, called *Bras-de-fer*, successfully defended it against the ravages of the Northmen in the ninth century. He was the ancestor of a powerful line of Counts who increased the size and power of their territory by conquest and marriage. Robert II, Count of Flanders (1093), acquired great renown by his daring exploits in the First Crusade: he was called the Lance and Sword of Christendom. Charles le Bon (1119), who tried to put an end

to the oppression of his people by the nobles and to promote the welfare of his subjects in every way, was murdered. He was followed by two excellent rulers, Counts Thierry and Philip of Alsace: the latter did much to develop the municipalities for which Flanders was becoming famous. Philip was so highly respected and sagacious that he was entrusted with the regency of France during the minority of his godson Philip Augustus. Count Baldwin IX (1195) stands out prominently for a short time as one of the leaders of the Fifth Crusade and as the first Emperor of the short-lived Latin Empire in Constantinople which was established after the taking of the city by the Crusaders in 1204. Following him as rulers of Flanders came his nieces Johanna and Margaret who conducted the affairs of the state with prudence, courage, and great firmness. Soon after the death of Margaret troubles and complications arose through the jealous rivalry of England and France. For a while Flanders actually became a dependency of France, but the influence of the English kings and the great interests of the wool trade with England soon upset this condition. The mass of the townsmen, now well-organized into trade guilds — weavers, fullers, dyers, and so forth — had become conscious of their strength, and they rose against the patricians with their exclusive privileges. The patricians and the French power which supported them were overthrown at the notable battle of Courtrai in 1302. A long war followed this victory, and Flanders, though it lost territory to France, regained its independence. Bruges prospered greatly as the center for the English shipping trade:

English merchants bought largely of the products of the Flemish looms, and Flanders imported vast quantities of wool from England. By the treaty of peace with France in 1320, when the Walloon territory was



'LOVE LAKE,' BRUGES

ceded to that country, France thereby lost touch with Flanders. The trade turned more and more to England, and the democracies of the great cities, Bruges, Ghent, and Antwerp, rapidly increased in power. The Count of Flanders, Louis de Nevers, however, remained faithful to the French king as his feudal lord and defied the English. In the troubles that followed Bruges was dismantled and disarmed. Soon afterwards the ancient dynasty of the Counts of Flanders died out in the direct lines and the state passed by inheritance to the House of Burgundy, and then, by the marriage of Mary of Burgundy with Maximilian of Austria, to the Hapsburgs. A state, the direct ancestor of the modern kingdoms of Belgium and Holland, gradually appeared upon the map of Europe, and throughout the terrible religious wars of the sixteenth century, the dismemberment by France, and other disasters which would seem to be fatal to any people, the Belgians retained their individuality, their industry, and their art. But the greatness of Bruges was gone.

THE ANCIENT AND MODERN SCIENCES OF THE RADIOACTIVE TRANSFORMATIONS OF NATURE

by W. A. Dunn

A VINDICATION OF THE TEACHINGS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY

THE evolution of a new phase of Art, Science, or Philosophy, is always an event of great importance to human progress. Familiar instances of this may be seen in the unprecedented development of Music as an independent Art, especially during the last half century; the new impetus given to scientific research since the discovery of the Röntgen X-rays; and the triple radioactivity proceeding from the earth itself, (which radiation is an entirely new property of matter hitherto unknown to modern science); and last, but not least, the reappearance in the world of thought of the ancient Wisdom-Religion, 'Theosophy,' announcing itself as the mother of all religions, philosophies, and sciences.

A characteristic which is common to these advances in knowledge, is that of having grown out of preceding conditions in a natural and orderly manner. For instance, scientific knowledge of last century had attained a state of relative maturity, materialism having reached its limits. The chemical elements had been classified according to their relative atomic weights and chemical properties, with such marvelous precision as to enable the discoverer of the periodic table of the elements to describe two elements then unknown, but discovered later.

This ripeness of knowledge seemed to embrace the entire material universe, for even the atmospheric elements in the sun and stars had been diagnosed by means of spectrum analysis.

Many writers were already engaged in summing up the laws of nature upon a mechanical basis, when an utterly new fact burst upon the scientific horizon, viz: that of a universal radioactivity pertaining to the earth itself which had not been even guessed at by scientists of the last century.

Although in a class by itself, in fact a completely *new* form of knowledge to the modern world, radioactivity does not nullify nor displace previously known facts of nature, but supplements them in such a manner as to compel an entirely new *interpretation* of evolutionary processes in man and in nature. In order to indicate the stupendous change that has come over scientific thought, let us go back to the discovery of the element helium.

Some thirty years ago Sir Norman Lockyer made the discovery of enormous quantities of a previously unknown element in the atmosphere of the sun. He gave the name of helium to this new gas, which means 'the sun-element.' Twenty years after its discovery on the sun,

Sir William Ramsay identified it as a constituent of certain minerals on the earth. The next step in this drama of 'discovery' was that described in 1909 by Professor Joly of Dublin University in the following terms:

The presence of helium in rocks and minerals of *every* description has lately been established. This substance is known to be a product of radioactive change. The presence of helium everywhere in the rocks . . . is, therefore, independent proof not only of the wide-spread distribution of the radioactive elements, but of their ceaseless evolution of energy.

This statement indicates the important nature of the stupendous fact which now confronts the world of science; *viz.* Radioactivity of the common earth beneath our feet, which activity is of such a nature as to cast all previous knowledge of nature into a secondary position.

Professor Joly states:

Nothing can better illustrate the eagerness with which new openings to knowledge are pursued in our time than the history of that branch of science which is devoted to radioactivity. First definitely opened out in 1898 by Mme. and M. Curie, when polonium and radium were discovered, today we are in possession of established views in contradiction to the cherished tenets of centuries. It is true that the time-honored view as to the unalterable stability of the atom fails only in a sense, and not owing to any interference on our part; nevertheless it is now one of the most assured facts of science that the atoms of certain elements change in their atomic weight, radiating a portion of their mass and giving up a part of their internal energy in the process. Such, along with a multitude of related facts, fundamentally altering and enlarging our views of matter, has been the harvest reaped from the one discovery, and gathered in one short decade.

The mineral which was first discovered to be radioactive was the metal uranium, obtained from pitchblende. Among its uses in the industrial arts, was that of coloring glass a peculiar yellow, having curious optical characteristics, and its excellence for porcelain painting was also well known. It unites with oxygen gas in three proportions, and under certain chemical conditions is precipitated into fine yellow crystals in four-sided right prisms with rectangular bases. These crystals when exposed to a red heat are reduced to the protoxide of uranium in the state of a lustrous dark green powder.

Now this metal uranium, *when placed upon a photographic plate, and sheltered from any exposure to light*, was found to emit rays *spontaneously* and imprint a picture upon the plate. Unquestionable proof has been gathered that this radiating power is *constant and unremitting* for unknown millions of years, at a constant temperature in *excess* of the surrounding atmosphere, and entirely independent of sunlight. Moreover, any substance containing uranium gave off the rays, altogether indifferent to surrounding conditions.

A recent writer states of the noted French scientist who made this first photograph:

As Becquerel stood in his laboratory that night, with this thought in his mind and the plate

in his hand, he appears sharply silhouetted against the background of the ages; he is comparable with that Theophrastus who, two thousand years ago rubbed a piece of amber on his coat-sleeve and noticed that it attracted bits of paper, unknowing that this bit of amber was equal to the lamp of Aladdin, or . . . to the first of all men (who) noticed the attractive power of the lodestone. New properties of matter are not so common that their significance can be exaggerated.

This new property of matter was called *radioactivity*, and as such it takes its place beside magnetism, electricity, light, and heat.

In order to appreciate this great discovery and what it means for the future, some notice should be taken of the extraordinary genius of the men and women at work in this field of research -- and the frank admission from many of them that the old Alchemists may not have followed a 'will-o'-the-wisp.' In a recent number of the *Scientific American*, Dr. Saul Dushman, one of the foremost scientists of this country, remarked:

Considering the relationships exhibited by the different radio-active elements, one realizes that the dream of the alchemists may not have been as fatuous as has appeared until recently. The concept of an absolutely stable atom must be discarded once for all, and its place is taken by this miniature solar system, as it were, consisting of a central nucleus and one or more rings of electrons. But the nucleus itself is apparently the *seat* of immense forces, and in spite of its exceedingly infinitesimal dimensions, it contains both alpha particles and electrons. [Positive and negative origins of electricity.]

Once in a while the nucleus of one of the atoms will spontaneously disintegrate and expel an alpha or beta particle. A new element has been born. What causes these transformations? Can they be controlled? These are questions which only the future can answer. But if we had it in our power to remove two alpha particles from the atom of bismuth or any of its isotopes, *not only would the dream of the alchemists be realized* [italics ours] but man would be in possession of such intensely powerful sources of energy that all our coal mines, water-powers, and explosives would become insignificant by comparison.

Being accustomed to regard such utterances as imaginative speculation, we are likely to accept them with the same caution as the writings of those who exercise their imaginations to excess, without taking the trouble to acquire facts which demand logical and uncompromising thought. But these new expressions should not be considered as in that category. Cool-headed scientists, whose minds have been trained to exact methods of observation, are here presenting vistas of possible future knowledge that outrun fiction itself. The world which laughed at John Worrell Keely of Philadelphia, who claimed half a century ago to have discovered means to release the inter-atomic forces of nature through the correct use of *sound*, is giving place to a race of scientists working in the same interatomic field, through other avenues of approach, yet uttering conclusions, based upon indisputable facts, which not only include but reach beyond those arrived at by Keely.

This newly-born science of radio-activity is far removed from resemblance to a passing novelty. It has come to stay with the same *certainty* as have such established sciences as Electricity, or Astronomy.

As already pointed out, radioactivity is a new and distinct *property* of matter unlike all properties previously known to science, and is *not* speculation yet to be applied and proved. It means that all our previous theories of inert or dead matter have been shattered to fragments. The substances beneath our feet, the air which we breathe, the mountains, rocks, and oceans, in short all physical matter which had been regarded as inanimate and dead, has suddenly revealed the presence of a triple radiating energy which permeates every unit cell of the globe and gives rise to ten or more orders of emanation, which are subject to definite periods of transmutation.

These emanations could be shown to support the Theosophical teachings relating to the emanations of the unseen *Intelligences* of Nature, which teachings, it is needless to point out, were based upon *interior* resources possessed by the ancient Sages; as compared with the *exterior* resources with which modern investigators approach this unseen life of humanity.

Shall it be said that radioactive substances can be gathered everywhere from the common atmosphere which we breathe by freely exposing a negatively charged electric wire; and that purified human hearts and brains, raised to the *higher potential* of spiritually exercised thought and feeling are not equally capable of accumulating these radioactive forces, as the unacknowledged *causes* of the mental 'emanations' called 'states of consciousness?'

Why, for instance, do thinking minds naturally attract and absorb, and give creative form to the dynamic elements of certain uplifting *energies*, which they introduce into the life of the world? The answer seems to be that the living spirit of an individual Soul is of a certain grade of *potential thought* and vitality called 'temperament,' which attracts from the radioactive energies of natural existence just those emanations which his temperamental tone of thought gives him command over.

And it would appear that, as a suspended wire has to be electrified to a *highly potential state before* it will gather to itself the radiations with which the atmosphere is charged, so the *thinking principle* of man must pass from a low 'potential' of applied thought to that of a *higher 'potential'* which will introduce a living content into the mental imagery of outer sense perception.

But these remarks are given in anticipation, in order to suggest that familiar habits of commonplace thought might outweigh the significance of radioactivity as convincing evidence of the *reality* upon which Theosophical teachings are based. Try as we will, it is difficult to convert the mind from its pleasing habit of accepting vague and

far removed. ideals as ends in themselves; and make it familiar with a range of energies that are needed to transmute such ideals into the actualities of which they had been but illusive shadows — in the same sense as a practising musician acquires physical and technical command of musical tones, in order to associate his ideal aspirations with fitting and tangible means of expression.

In view of the common tendency of our minds to be easily impressed with the mere *novelty* of a great discovery, and then quickly revert to habitual thought without imbibing the deep meanings which the new facts present, the writer would emphasize the idea that we have to our hand, in this newly discovered property of matter called 'Radioactivity,' a body of proved and established facts, that when studied and compared with the Wisdom-Religion of the Ancient Mysteries will not only vindicate the teachings given to the world by H. P. Blavatsky twenty years previous to their discovery by science, but will also give tangible proof that every particle of *physical nature* is endowed with a living presence of surpassing glory.

Moreover, attention should also be given to the various degrees of *acquired* thinking capacity, from which perception itself proceeds and attracts the desired mental imagery thought draws upon for its activity. This seems to take the form of purified thought and feeling (in the case of sincere truth-seekers), so raised and intensified as to attract the energies which correspond to ideas and intentions, just as a *charged* wire of high electrical potential will attract the radiant substances from the common atmosphere.

In attempting to draw a comparison between modern scientific discoveries and ancient spiritual teachings, it is well to bear in mind that the usual distinction made between spirit and matter is merely relative and not real. A single fact that may be interpreted from various points of view, remains constant *in itself*. We can, therefore, logically assume that the radioactivity of the earth, now being investigated by scientific experts *objectively*, is precisely that mode of natural energy in which the awakened Soul has *its* being, and in which it exercises its *interior* powers of creative thought. And as musical genius recognises in the phenomena of sound that have been fully investigated and defined by science, the very same forces that musical composers have had command over *interiorly*, since music had birth, so the advance of scientific thought is slowly but surely advancing to a point of *identity* with the spiritually creative Intelligences known to, and taught by ancient Sages. In short, that the ancients '*composed*' interiorly what the moderns merely *define* exteriorly.

From this viewpoint, therefore, we can associate the modern defini-

tion of the radioactivity of nature with the *spiritual achievements of man's interior nature*, in the same sense as the elements of sound are the same for the scientific experts who investigate its objective properties, as for the artists who construct its subjective properties into musical compositions, under the direction of their creative imaginations.

(*To be continued*)

THEOSOPHY'S APPEAL: by Geoffrey Shurlock



AT the back of the mind of everyone who approaches the study of Theosophy, either through genuine interest or mere curiosity, there must be some such question as this: "What has this philosophy to offer me? In all this whirl of new ideas that has swept upon us in the last fifty years, what message does it bring to me, that entitles it to a hearing?"

To judge by questions that are sometimes asked, hesitancy in taking up this question seems to arise often from misunderstanding. Some think that such a study is of value only to minds interested in certain lines of metaphysics; that it cannot be brought down to earth, so to speak. Nothing could be further from the truth; Theosophy is not so much a body of doctrines that must be accepted, as a life that must be lived; and it is this, above all, that entitles it to a hearing in these days when preaching without even pretending to practise is altogether too widespread.

Theosophists have been told that the most necessary work for their Society to do is to spread the teaching of the essential divinity of man as the basis of a universal brotherhood, and the two other teachings of Reincarnation, and of Karma. There is nothing in this message which a child could not grasp; hence it is that speakers from this platform dwell so insistently on these truths, simple and yet universal in their application and appeal, which, when they become ingrained in man's being, influence his out-look in the most extraordinary degree. Once a man really believes that he will be born again and again and again, he can look on this life with proper perspective: neither desiring to shuffle it off as a curse, nor esteeming it his one and only chance to devote himself to pleasure, in view of a most uncertain future. He looks on it as a day's travel in the great pilgrimage, crowded with opportunities and experiences, and understands that it draws its value from the glorious whole, of which it is a part. Nor is his future any

longer uncertain, since he is building it in the present, and its meanness or its beauty lies in his hands.

So when a man comes to apply to his life such a truth as Karma, the law of cause and effect, he is only accepting a law which he never dreamed of questioning in the every-day workings of nature, but which for ages we seem to have been trying to ignore when it came to be applied to our moral responsibility. We have tried to believe that we could do as we pleased, and then, hiding behind another's sacrifice, escape the effects we had set in motion. Such a belief roots firmly in the black soil of selfishness which is the most complete expression of man's lower nature; small wonder, then, that it dies hard. But, still worse, it has been given out as a religious teaching — this idea which outrages utterly the sense of justice and fair play which we deem indispensable to a fine character.

If, then, those who feel attracted to this philosophy, go no further into it than to make these simple truths a part of their life, they will have done themselves a very great service: they will have brought into play a balancing power, comforting and encouraging, that will enable them to look on life much more calmly and intelligently. Is there any one who doubts the need of such beliefs today? — and as great the need, just so wide will be Theosophy's appeal.

There are, to be sure, elements in our natures to which these teachings make no appeal at all, but rather a challenge: elements that are ever trying to compromise between right and wrong. But for all who seek a broader outlook on life, an understanding of its seeming contradictions and injustice; who, while conscious of their shortcomings, get no comfort from being told they are worms of the dust, but would rather believe they have been born for a definite purpose, and would like to know something more about their duty on this earth — for all these, this philosophy has a very clear and unmistakable message.

Nor is there need for anyone to feel overawed by the all-embracing nature of this Science of Life. In this connexion Mr. Judge, the second Leader of the Theosophical Movement, uses this striking simile:

Theosophy is that ocean of knowledge which spreads from shore to shore of the evolution of sentient beings: unfathomable in its deepest parts, it gives the greatest minds their fullest scope, yet shallow enough at its shores, it will not overwhelm the understanding of a child.

No one, then, need venture out beyond his depth; there is no call for him to attempt the impossible, to sound the whole ocean in one short life, since we are to make repeated voyages on its waters, life after life, always with something new and very wonderful to discover. On the contrary, let each take from them according to his capacity: they are all the same Waters of Life, drinking of which we shall thirst no more.

THE SILVER STAR: by Stanley Fitzpatrick

I

IN a cold northern land, on a wild March morning, a little child was born.

Although so late in the season the most terrible storm of the winter was raging. All night the snow had fallen heavily and great drifts were piled high against the trees, rocks, and obstructions of every kind. Bitter winds swept over the earth, whirling the snow in blinding eddies, shrieking wildly about the dwelling, and wailing despairingly among the leafless branches of the trees.

The house where the child was born was a poor log hut standing within the borders of a great forest far from any other human habitation. The parents were unlearned and poor, and there were many other children to play about the door and crowd around the narrow hearth.

No warm welcome or tender greeting awaited the little stranger. Instead of smiling proudly the father shook his head and sat, gloomily silent, in the chimney corner; while the poor mother turned her face to the wall and wept.

Nor were the troop of brothers and sisters better pleased. The smaller ones eyed it with disfavor, fearing it might claim more attention than themselves. The older ones said: "Ah, here is now another troublesome baby for us to tend and lug about with us wherever we go."

It was a troublesome baby. It almost seemed as though the little one must be conscious of the unkindly state of feeling which existed toward it, for from the moment it first opened its great, pathetic, dark eyes on the dreary, snow-covered world it had wept and moaned almost incessantly. The poor child must have been suffering in some way but no one ever seemed to think of that.

The mother, always tired and sadly overworked, felt the care of it to be another heavy burden, and often losing all patience with it, became as cross and fretful as the wailing child. Then she spoke harshly, declaring she wished it had never been born; that it cost her more time and trouble than all the others had done. The father also complained that he never came near the house without hearing its crying.

Children are ever quick at imitating their elders and adopting their opinions and expressions. Consequently the newcomer was disliked, neglected, and ill-treated on all sides. Then there was another cause for dissatisfaction. This baby did not in the least resemble any of the others. All these children had in babyhood been fair, flaxen-haired, blue-eyed, chubby things. But this baby was a puny, brown little creature whose thin little face was mostly taken up by a pair of great, dark eyes. It was declared by the entire family that it was not in the

least like any of its race, and therefore had no right to its looks, ill as they were, as it certainly had not inherited them from any of its ancestors.

Then, too, not one of the others had ever been born with the slightest blemish or birthmark of any kind; and this one had a mark — an undeniable mark — of a dark, red color — just a small blotch in the center of the forehead.

Poor little babe! One might think all these misfortunes were enough to be fastened upon one weak, puny creature at its very entrance into a cold, inhospitable world, and that they would be pretty certain to insure for it a life of pain and continuous unhappiness. But more was to follow; for when the old grandam, who was a woman of sharp and bitter nature, albeit considered a wise woman in her way, came to visit them, she poured the last drop into the already overflowing cup.

When the child was placed on her knees it gazed fixedly at her for a few moments, as though with its deep, solemn eyes it would read her very soul. Then suddenly it broke into a more shrill and piercing scream than it had ever uttered before. The old woman sprang up more nimbly than she had moved for years and flung the babe into its wooden cradle; nor would she ever touch it again. She vehemently declared that it had none of her blood in it and could not be her daughter's child; that it was some wicked changeling that had been put upon her. The ugly mark upon it she affirmed was sufficient proof that it belonged to the Evil One. For her part she would none of it. Being self-willed and impatient of contradiction she would never retract her foolish speech.

The children, who always accepted the words of the grandmother as absolute truth, never forgot these unkind and hasty words. The mother ought to have known better; but being a weak, ignorant creature, full of superstition and prejudice, she never contradicted her mother.

When the child was a few months old a wise and holy man who was returning from a pilgrimage, came one evening to the lonely cabin and craved shelter for the night. He was an aged man of most peaceful and venerable aspect, clad in a loose, grey garment, and he carried the long staff of the wandering pilgrim. His flowing hair and beard were snowy white; and the glance of his blue eyes, though kindly, was keen.

A couch was prepared for the stranger and he was invited to partake of the evening meal. It was observed that he took particular notice of the infant in its cradle. It also looked steadily at him, and (a thing they all wondered at) it was perfectly quiet during the time he remained.

In the morning as he was preparing to depart he asked the mother if her babe had been christened. She replied that it had not, adding that it might be months before the pastor came that way; and also they would not be able to carry it to any church as all were leagues away.

Upon this the old pilgrim replied that he would willingly baptize it. Accordingly a basin of water was brought and the family called together. No one had even thought of a name for the child. The children had constantly called it "one with a mark" or "the dark one," not only on account of its complexion, but because of the grandam's words. After the holy man had taken the child in his arms he bent his head reverently and looked fixedly upon the mark on its forehead. Then sprinkling it lightly with water he gave to it the name of Trywith, without even inquiring of the parents what they would have it called.

During the whole time of the ceremony the child had remained quiet, only regarding the old pilgrim attentively, as though he comprehended perfectly all that was happening. Then, after the servant of the Master had kissed him exactly on the mark, and placed a piece of silver in his tiny hand for a christening present, he laid the infant gently in his cradle and went on his way.

The family were impressed with this ceremony; and the children looked with much wonder and admiration at the bright, beautiful silver piece. They felt envious, too, for none of them had ever possessed more than a copper penny. For some days they remembered how tenderly the reverend old man had held the little one and none of them called it 'the dark one' for nearly a week. But the babe again grew ill and fretful and they soon fell back into the old ways.

While the parents and older children were at work the others were obliged to take care of the baby; and meager enough was the care the poor little creature often received. They teased and worried it and mocked at its crying. They called it "Blacky," and the child of "the dark woman," and said it was an ugly, brown thing, with the mark of the Evil One on its forehead. They often cried out that it was not one of them, but a wicked little changeling who would always be a trouble and burden to everyone and would come to no good. Often the child was slapped and pinched, dragged about by one arm and left lying on the cold ground while they were all at play. Sometimes he was tumbled out of his cradle and trampled over while they were fighting, and not infrequently his cup of porridge, or of black bread and milk, was eaten by some one else. Yet in spite of all these disadvantages the child lived and grew, and by the time he could walk another baby lay in the wooden cradle; and in a year or two more still another and then another had come. The peasant was no richer — if anything poorer — than when Trywith was born. Yet somehow no one seemed to think them so much in the way nor begrudge them a share of the coarse food and scanty clothing. But then neither of them was an ugly, dark, little thing with a red birthmark, and thought by the wise old grandam to be a change-

ling. No indeed; for they were just like all the others — fair, chubby, round-eyed things — and anyone could tell at a glance that they belonged to the family and had a perfect right to be there.

As the years went by, times grew harder and harder in the log cabin in the border of the great forest. Although the peasant and his wife toiled early and late and the children that were old enough did all they could to help them, it was often almost more than their combined efforts could do, to keep the wolf from the door.

The small piece of cleared land was wet and poor and it was indeed difficult to make it produce sufficient during the short summer to provide for the long cold winter, the little flock of sheep and goats did not always thrive, nor could they always be protected from wolves and other wild beasts. Then one of the two cows died, which was indeed a serious loss to such a family.

Strange as it may seem that the lad should be connected with any calamity that befell, it had grown into a custom to do so; for the entire family, led on by the grandam, had fallen into the habit of reckoning the time when misfortunes began to fall so heavily upon them from the year of Trywith's birth. It was ever remembered that during that terrible storm two pigs were frozen to death in the snow, and several fowls died.

The mother, in her moments of anger and ill temper, which were not infrequent, declared that a curse had come with him and that since his birth no peace nor prosperity had been known; and if the unlucky little fellow chanced to be in her way at the time, she usually bestowed upon him a slap or rude push. The others followed her example, and few days passed in which he was not shoved about, cuffed, or beaten by some one. Nor did a day pass when his heart was not sorely wounded by scornful looks and harsh words and by the bitter taunts concerning his dark skin, his big eyes, and the ugly red birthmark. By this means, life was made a burden terrible for a child to bear. Though the boy usually bore these things in silence, there were times when he turned upon his tormenters in a tempest of feeling, before which they shrank, for the moment awed and even terrified. But they soon rallied, for they were many and he was but one. These sudden outbreaks of temper confirmed them all in the belief of the entire evil of his nature. Thus in the midst of a large family the boy grew up solitary and apart. If he ventured timidly to join in any sport, some rude joke or taunt would send him away to brood alone in the deep recesses of the forest. At the table it was the same, until at last it became his custom to take his basin of porridge, or cup of milk and barley bread, and retire into the farthest corner where he might eat alone and in peace.

But with all this the child had one joy unknown to all the others;

nor could they have comprehended it. Poor, forlorn, and unloved, he was the possessor of one treasure. This was the silver piece given to him by the holy man who had named him. He knew all about it, for though always kept as it were outside the family circle and familiar family talk, he could not be hindered from hearing their conversation. Thus he had often heard the story repeated and almost invariably coupled with regrets that it had not been one of the others to whom the silver had been given. Nevertheless he rejoiced greatly in the knowledge that it was indeed his own. That any one could deprive him of this gift was an idea that had never occurred to him.

The coin was kept in the till of the large family chest, which was never locked, the key having been lost. It was easy for him when alone in the house to raise the lid and look in at his treasure. But soon this was not enough; so when the family were all in the garden or fields he would steal in, and taking the piece of silver, carry it out into the forest where he could gaze upon it to his heart's content. He never imagined there could be any wrong in this; for was it not his own — his very own? Nevertheless he feared that it would not be permitted if the grandam knew it; and also it might be hidden away from him altogether.

After securing his beloved silver piece it was his wont to steal away to a hidden retreat of his own, deep in the forest. This was a large stone under a great oak tree that stood on the bank of a little stream that murmured softly over its pebbly bed, as it wound among mossy stones and drooping ferns. In this lovely spot he feared no intrusion. Here he had wept many and bitter tears; and here the most peaceful and pleasant hours of his life had been spent. Here he often sat gazing upon his one earthly treasure until the sorrows and unkindness which had robbed him of all childish interests and joys were obliterated from his mind. The intrinsic value of the silver was something of which he had never thought; but the beauty of the coined metal made him rejoice over its purity and brightness. Fresh from the mint when it came to him it had not become in the least worn or tarnished. To his unaccustomed eyes, familiar only with objects coarse and unlovely, this simple coin appeared to be of the most exquisite and beautiful workmanship. The child was never weary of gazing upon it. The evenly milled edges, the figures and emblems which it bore, were a source of never-failing delight and wonder. But after a time there came to be another thing about it which was more wonderful than all the rest, and which soon came to occupy his attention almost exclusively. On one side had been left in the center a smooth, open space; and as he was looking at it one day he suddenly became aware of a tiny point of clear, white light. While he gazed, in breathless awe and wonder, it slowly expanded, dim and

wavering at first, until it finally grew into the likeness of a faintly shining, tremulous star.

The boy could scarcely credit the evidence of his senses. He closed his eyes and rubbed them vigorously. He shifted the coin from one hand to the other and turned it over several times. But when he looked at it again the same wonder was repeated. After this the star appeared constantly to him, though to no one else was it ever visible.

Another thing he soon observed that when his mind was in a peaceful frame, when he was free from all bitter and vengeful thoughts, the silver star was at its brightest. But when his heart was full of discord and discontent, or burning with anger, it grew fainter and dimmer, until he could scarcely distinguish the most indistinct outline nor any ray.

Still it seemed to strengthen and comfort him even to hold the coin tightly clasped in his hand, and his tears were less burning and bitter as, with his dark little face pressed to the cold hard rock, he sobbed out his loneliness, his grief, and passion.

Then, by and by, another change came and he noticed that when the star was at its brightest, and he sat quietly gazing at it, strange, beautiful pictures began to form on it and even faces, which though fleeting and indistinct, he thought must be like those of angels.

These things filled the mind of the lonely child with many new and wonderful thoughts; and it seemed sometimes as though a voice was whispering in his ears. And yet it was not that — but more like something which spoke silently to his heart and soul; for no tones were audible to the outward senses. But for this secret companionship lonely and wretched indeed would have been the life of the unloved child. These things sank deeply into the heart of the boy and as time went by his manner and conduct became more gentle and forbearing and the fierce gusts of temper ceased. But even this change only incited his tormentors.

“Aha!” they said, “he now stands in fear of us, and we will see that he is kept humble.”

“Did I not tell you so!” said the grandam who now lived with her daughter. “See how severity has improved his wicked temper. You were too easy with him; such as he must be crushed and kept under. Ah yes! I know how to deal with him.”

And so he was taunted, abused, and neglected in every way; but often he scarcely heeded these things, being so deeply absorbed in his own thoughts. It required less and less effort to be patient and submissive when he remembered that which was hidden from all but himself — his beautiful silver star and its silent message of consolation.

(To be concluded)