

# THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

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*"That which is brilliant, smaller than small, that on which the worlds are founded and their inhabitants, that is the indestructible Brahman, that is the breath, speech, mind; that is the true, that is the immortal. That is to be hit. Hit it, O friend!"* 2

*"Having taken the Upanishad as the bow, as the great weapon, let him place on it the arrow, sharpened by devotion! Then, having drawn it with a thought directed to that which is, hit the mark, O friend, viz., that which is the Indestructible. Om is the bow, the Self is the arrow, Brahman is called its aim. It is to be hit by a man who is not thoughtless; and then, as the arrow (becomes one with the target), he will become one with Brahman."* 4

— *Mundaka-Upanishad*, ii. Translation by Max Müller

## THEOSOPHICAL KEYNOTES

 *N the BHAGAVAD-GÎTÂ, an ancient Book of Devotion, which is most highly regarded by Theosophists, is a chapter entitled 'Devotion through Discrimination between the Godlike and the Demoniactal Qualities in Man.' The chapter opens with the following words:*

*"Fearlessness, sincerity, assiduity in devotion, generosity, self-restraint, piety, and alms-giving; study, mortification, and rectitude; harmlessness, veracity, and freedom from anger; resignation, equanimity, and not speaking of the faults of others; universal compassion, modesty, and mildness; patience, power, fortitude, and purity; discretion, dignity, unrevengfulness, and freedom from conceit — these are the marks of him whose virtues are of a godlike character, O son of Bhârata. Those who are born with demoniactal dispositions are marked by hypocrisy, pride, anger, presumption, harshness of speech, and ignorance; . . . they know not the nature of action nor of cessation from action, they know not purity nor right behavior, they possess no truthfulness. They deny that the universe has any truth in it, saying it is not governed by law, declaring that it hath no Spirit; they say creatures are produced alone through the union of the sexes, and that all is for enjoyment only. Maintaining this view, their souls being ruined, their minds contracted, with natures perverted, enemies of the world, they are born to destroy. They indulge insatiable desires, are full of hypocrisy, fast-fixt in false beliefs through their delusions."*

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

*Do we not see at this time humanity divided in just the way that this old devotional book presents it? There are those who have the qualities of integrity and fearlessness, which represent the godlike qualities, constantly living in them and cultivating them. And there are those of an opposite nature. These divisions of thought and feeling and action exist all along the line of life — we find them in families, in communities, in systems, in politics, and in nations; and it is the lower qualities, opposed to the godlike, belonging to the lower nature, the mortal side, that are constantly interfering with the progress of the higher nature of man. Surely we must realize that just so long as these differences exist, there cannot be a true conception of peace,—lasting Peace. We may have our declaration of peace, and an international peace worked out on merely the intellectual plane by some of the brightest minds of our time — representatives of the different nations; but there is an underlying godlike quality in human nature, on another plane than the intellect, which must not only be recognised, but lived in the heart, if we are to have a continuous peace, an Eternal Peace.*

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*We know, if we think at all, that each one of us, in our noblest, most unselfish efforts, is seeking for the simple truths of life which will carry us along lines of self-improvement, progress, and happiness; but how can we expect to see the world advance in the true sense, in the real eternal sense, until we have cultivated that discrimination which can distinguish between Truth and its opposite? If we will but consider well, we shall find that self-imposed stumbling-blocks exist in our own natures, and thus we are hindered.*

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*We have arrived at a point, now, just at the ending of the world's war, where many new problems are confronting us — problems that we have never thought of before, which we have not anticipated, but which we must necessarily meet in the coming years. They are problems of a very serious nature — not along material lines, for I do not think there is any question as to our material progress, whether as a country, or as a people, or as a race. There is no question about this, because the human mind is so set on material gain and benefit, that no urge is needed to push it any further towards success.*

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*Thinking of our soldiers, that great multitude of men, returning to their homes, we are forced to recognise that something new is happening because of the new questions which they are bringing back with them. There is an aggregation*

## THEOSOPHICAL KEYNOTES

*of thought and feeling on their part, both here and in other countries, that is forcing an issue on new lines, and will force larger issues in the years to come. Can you not conceive that those men on the battle-fronts and in the camps, under the pressure of conditions which were forced upon them, have been questioning the meaning of life as never before? Each one had his own way of thinking according to mental development and past environment; but those millions of men in their own individual way have been asking questions in the silence which, if written on the record of time and passed down to posterity, would be an inspiration to all future seekers after the inner meaning of things — no matter how much despair or how many doubts there may be. Thus we are challenged.*

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*Their questions are about life, death, and their meaning. Who and where is God? These are the questions that have been in their minds, and we must remember that in those processes of thought, and of suffering too, they have been gradually sloughing off many old and useless ideas. Life for them has become so much more interesting and intense, so much more wonderful, and in place of thinking along the old lines of dogmatism, they are questioning what is Truth, and a very large number of them are silently rebelling against the conventionalities and creeds that have encumbered the teachings of religion. More than that: there is a spirit of determination and will, that has arisen among them, which is unusual and can be turned to great good for our country and all countries if they can but find the answer as to the meaning of life and follow the path of their highest duty.*

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*In these questions which they are asking us, there will be some big riddles for us and the whole world to solve, unless we make preparation to meet them, unless we begin right now, before the crises come which are coming as sure as you live, and which may ultimately lead to revolution — unless, indeed, we can do better things than we have been doing in the past. We need to see expressed in human life, as an absolute necessity in the economy of things, a higher sense of Justice; but we cannot attain it until we find the power to interpret life in its deeper and more profound meaning — not as the brain-mind of man ordinarily interprets, but from that inner, higher state of consciousness which is part of the divine side of nature and belongs to all men. All possess it but there are so few living examples, there is so little inspiration, so little strength to continue. Justice is written in the most exquisite and beautiful language in Nature and in all the great literatures of the world; our greatest minds play upon it with their marvelous oratory; but there is something yet to be done, something we*

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

*must do ourselves, and do quickly, in order to reach a truer and nobler conception of Justice. If we do this, we shall then begin to accentuate the Divine Spirit in our natures — the immortal side, the Christos Spirit which the Nazarene, and other great Teachers who preceded him, had attained through the wonderful experiences of their many lives and the knowledge gained in many schools of thought in life after life through self-mastery.*

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*This is what is needed; it is to dig deeper down into the recesses of human consciousness. If one will follow this line of thought, it will be seen (and some day inevitably, after we are gone, it will come out in the history of these times) that some of the most promising minds in the world today, who have been seeking to benefit mankind, have abandoned their efforts just at the point—if the soldiers will allow me the phrase—of going ‘over the top,’ when victory was just within their grasp. Why? The brain-mind so often exhausts itself in research and vain endeavor and loses its way because it depends entirely on intellectual effort. To gain the victory, to find the treasures of the soul, there must be behind and above the brain-mind, guiding it and inspiring it, that power of discrimination which Krishna speaks of in my quotation from the BHAGAVAD-GÎTÂ, that quality of discernment which can distinguish between the true and the false, the real and the counterfeit, and between all the varying tendencies of human nature, so that in all human actions there will be such conservation of energy, such clearness of vision, that it will be absolutely impossible for anyone conscientiously to step out as a reformer and teacher until he has set his own spiritual and mental house in order.*

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*It is this we must do; and we cannot run out on a line of thought in seeking to reach the meaning of those divine attributes of the soul, and the divine laws that exist for the upliftment and protection of all life, without seriously reflecting; and when we do reflect, we begin to find our better Selves, our nobler Selves, our Higher Natures. Then comes that quality of discrimination which must be ours, and which is ever within our reach.*

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*I am certain that very splendid work is being done across the water in the efforts of representatives of different nations to establish a just and lasting peace, but if each man who is taking part in those deliberations had had the diviner qualities so understandingly accentuated in his life all along the years from*

## THEOSOPHICAL KEYNOTES

*childhood to manhood, so that his own life were a higher expression of Justice — can you not see what an inspiration, what flashes of Light and Wisdom and Justice would illumine their counsels? Yet, even as it is, it is wonderful to think what they may do; what opportunities are theirs; but how much more wonderful in fifty years from now will be the solution of the world's problems, in the hands of those who will have studied the spiritual laws of life, who will find themselves in the Light, and can remove the obstructions from their path by rare discrimination and spiritual knowledge. Think of a Peace Conference composed of such — a body of Peace-Makers gathered here in our great country or across the water, representing the different nations, mentally and spiritually; interpreting the law, not according to policy, but according to the highest conceptions of Justice.*

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*We shall reach that point of understanding where Peace will be promised for all time; for Theosophy is pushing its way into the thought of the World. The Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society is in the truest sense a body of workers for the benefit of Humanity, and I declare to you that the soldiers and sailors throughout the world, and many others in the great multitude — as a great aggregation, a great fraternity, so to speak,— are planting the seeds of Theosophy in their hearts and in their lives. Why and how? Because they are doing their own thinking, they have outgrown creeds and dogmas, they are pushing on into the arena of life with soul-determination. They know that there is something better yet for all Humanity, and each is sowing the seeds of Theosophy, the seeds of Wisdom, in the World's Garden of Life. The Divine Principle of Life is even now surging in their hearts and seeking to illuminate their minds, and even before they are able possibly to express their interpretation of Divine Justice, and enact the New Laws which we and others will demand, they will realize that the Kingdom of Heaven lies within, and that they, as human beings, have been placed upon this beautiful earth of ours for a divine purpose, for the adjusting of their lives and of the life of Humanity, and for an expression of Infinite Justice in all that they do. How very easily then shall we be able to discriminate between those of the higher order, who have the godlike qualities, and those who live only for pleasure, lust, and self-gratification, thinking material gain to be everything and that there is no truth in the Universe!*

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*It is because the spiritual processes of unfoldment in man have seemed to move so slowly, that people have turned away from their efforts on the line of*

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

*spiritual research and discovery of their real selves. They go just so far and then they falter, because in the limitation of their minds they expect results at a certain time; they must have their rewards, as they take their dessert at dinner — they must have it — if they did not, they would have no peace of mind. But the real seeker for Truth, the one who starts out on the path of investigation for spiritual knowledge and spiritual attainment, goes boldly and trustingly forward, with a courage that is superb. He is indifferent to results, he forgets himself in the service of others, he begins to nurse in his own nature the gentle, generous, and earnest spirit of Justice, he respects the Higher Law; he believes in Eternal Truth; he knows that he is divine, and he treads gently and carefully, lest he shall place one stumbling-block along the Path for those who follow after.*

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*This is the Theosophical message of the New Time. The hearts of men must be awakened not only to a sense of Justice to themselves, but a sense of Justice to all peoples and to all races. Once this is realized through conscientious effort in thought and act, we can promise ourselves Eternal Peace. We shall love not only this nation or that nation, but all nations and all people, because through the growing seeds and processes of the Theosophical teachings of Brotherhood we shall know immediately that all men are our brothers; that there is no separateness in true Brotherhood; that the actions which we rebel against in our brothers, and which we oppose, can in the future be treated so carefully, so conscientiously, and so divinely, that we shall have the power to discriminate, and we shall not condemn the man, the soul, but only the action; and through our sense of Justice, we shall correct injustice and be merciful, and thus recognise our duties to our fellow-men.*

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*The beginning must be made in our own homes, in the seeding-time of the small beginnings of family disturbances, the little disharmonies out of which grow disunion and disintegration — then is the time, not to wish to show oneself superior to others in arguments and in rights but to get back to the central source of things, to the idea of mutual helpfulness and mutual responsibility and the meaning of true Justice. Then we shall know how to interpret the saying of Jesus: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” We may read many books and study them from the ordinary orthodox standpoint, but we shall never get anywhere so long as we depend only upon our intellects. We eat, sleep, suffer and die in our intellects, and we keep the chambers of our souls closed; so there is not that wonderful outgoing of spirit that should be found*

## THEOSOPHICAL KEYNOTES

*in every man and woman. Jesus had it, and so too the other great teachers of the ancients. They had that Spirit of Service and Helpfulness and Compassion, and evolved their own characters through the processes of the Spirit, Mind and Soul working together. They did not subordinate their spiritual rights and privileges to material ends; neither did they neglect the material things that should go for building up the body and sustaining it as a tenement, a house in which the soul should live, nor did they so live in the lower self that they separated themselves from their duties to their fellow-men.*

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*The line that divides the real from the unreal, the true from the false, is so subtle that one cannot see it. It is so difficult to find; but the moment that one desires a book of revelation and earnestly seeks to study the meaning of life, he will find in the teachings of Theosophy, this injunction placed above all others: "Man, know thyself!" Man is the mystery of mysteries, the book of revelation! Each one of you is potentially a divine representative of the godlike qualities to which I have referred. The only reason why these divine qualities have not been more manifest down the ages is because the great majority of men did then, and still do, rely on their intellects alone, and thus foster a colossal egotism that stands between them and their higher spiritual interests. We shall find it is the rarest thing in the world that a great intellect, though possessing great scholarship, but an intellect merely, with the spiritual side undeveloped and unrecognised, ever lived to fulfil the mission of even his one life. Study the history of our own writers, teachers, musicians; poets, inventors, and statesmen, and you will find that,— oh! so many — just when it seems they are about to see the Light, falter, and fail to reach the heights, because they have been straining the intellect, living in the material and intellectual sides of their natures and subordinating the sustaining spiritual power indeed, ignoring it.*

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*One of the great needs of this New Time is to look out upon the great world as it is; not to be blinded, not to follow every idea and suggestion of every man who has a big name and speaks and writes for his own fame and for your entertainment, or to impress you with his erudition. But to get down into the recesses of man's nature, to find within the strength of the higher mentality, which so many have not yet found, nor will the mentality of man ever be fully developed until he has that enlightenment which comes from spiritual, soul knowledge.*

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## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

*Everyone has these possibilities, but it is so difficult to hold these ideas so firmly in the mind that they will stay and become an abiding power in the life, because of the material things and the worldly ideas which clog the minds of men and absorb their energy. They become bowed down and bent with the cares of existence, and our young men are old before they have passed their youth, and so too are our young women. They are stunted in their intellect and in their heart-life, and more than that, physically. We should have giants of men, representing the physical forces of life; but we have deteriorated as a race and as a people, because all along the line, for centuries and centuries, religion, which should be the embodiment of spiritual Truth, has been presented with so many obscurations. The universal sublime truths of spiritual life, so simple, so divinely helpful, have been hedged around with so many forms and ceremonies and so much reasoning and argument and blind faith that the seeds of Truth and its divine qualities have been obscured. And though this has been continuing for ages, we must not blame anyone, but we must blame ourselves hereafter if we let these things continue. There is no limit to the powers of the soul; but we cannot have that expression of its power that we are yearning for until every thought, every act of our lives, has a touch of the Real Life.*

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*Picture to yourselves a man of the world today — a lawyer for instance. He goes to his office, he stands before the world as an eminent representative of his profession. He has a family, he loves it, he goes to church, he gives money to charitable purposes, he has his banquets, he becomes a great official of the state. But under the pressure of all these things his spiritual nature does not grow. It is only certain aspects of his nature that he is cultivating — the mental and material aspects; he caters to them and to them only. He is a Democrat or a Republican just according to his policy of life. Everybody says he is splendid, they seek his society, they visit his home, they are anxious to have him as a friend, but he goes through life blindfolded, as it were. Why? Because he is ignorant of the hidden resources of the spiritual side of his nature, and has nothing to fall back on. He is flattered by the attention and the adulation of the people, but he has no desire to grow as a man should grow — in spiritual manhood. He has just attained his ambition when he throws off his mortal life. He receives great honors, a great funeral, he is carried in the church and called one of the great representatives of the age. But that is all; there is nothing real, nothing helpful, for the spiritual motive was not there. But the man who, with soul-purpose inspiring every act, steps forth in life no matter how humble his lot, who does his duty as a man conscious of his divine nature, who perhaps can*



## THEOSOPHICAL KEYNOTES

*give no more than five cents to help another, does a thousand times more than the one who, self-deluded, lives for fame, ostentation and self-interest, though he gives thousands under the form of the mere ordinary material value.*

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*There are so many problems that we must consider. But we are so isolated, we have so separated ourselves from our brothers. We have our homes, and our families, and our personal interests — and we pretend to talk of the heart-ache of the world. There are so many divisions, there is so much competition. That is one of the dangerous factors in human life — one of the great hindrances to true progress; while it raises one man, it sinks many. One of the beautiful things about Theosophy is that it does not encourage competition. At the International Theosophical Headquarters at Point Loma, where so much work is being done, where there is a body of people living unselfishly and unsalaried for the benefit of Humanity, there is no competition — competition has been shut out: instead there is co-operation, mutual helpfulness, united service and true brotherly love.*

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*I could go on pointing out many things which are indorsed as necessary and even helpful to Humanity, which nevertheless are just simply destroying it. We are surrounded by these obscurations of the meaning and purposes of life. If we desire to get the real message of this New Time, if we wish to go forward into the future, happier than we have been in the past; if our soldiers and sailors of whatever land are to return home with a new hope, they must rely on the god-like qualities — the divine side of their natures. Everything else is impermanent, it comes and it goes. But each and all can find new hope and support through trust in the Immortal Self within. Others will seek to know what it is; they will question. It is a divine urge, a divine message, a divine power which every true man and woman carries in the silence of his inner nature. It must manifest now before it is too late. Christ possessed it. You remember the unfortunate woman who touched his garments asking for help; and that he suddenly turned and said: "What is this that hath gone out from me?" — it was Divine Compassion born of soul-energy and sympathy.*

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*I am heart-sick at times when I think of the conditions that exist in the world, and of the soldiers and sailors who are returning home. They are a splendid*

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

*lot of fellows and are doing magnificently. They have all been born differently, some are supersensitive, some have no homes to go to, some have lost all that is dear to them. To many the conditions of the world present a discouraging picture. But let me say this to those who read my words, and may they reach others. There is no call for discouragement, if each one will believe that now, after the pressure of the ending of this terrible war, in this After-War Time, he is called upon to take a stand and rise above the present situation. In the war-time he was challenged for discipline — to train, to march, to go forth to kill. Now he is called upon to train his soul, mind and character, to purify his life, and to go forth to defend the Truth, to build up the human family, to reconstruct, to give the message of good-will in all its deepest and truest sense, to those who need it.*

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*Let us all implant this message in our hearts and minds, shut the door on the past, on our trials and tribulations. Let us learn to love with the ardor of the soul, learn to serve in the Spirit of Justice, so that in the community in which each one lives, not only our homes and our friends, but all, shall receive a new touch of spiritual life, not alone by what we profess, but by our manifesting the godlike qualities of our natures.*

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*This is my message of love to you all: Add to your lives a new trust and a great hope and seek to serve in a new way, that the light of a new joy shall touch the hearts of all people and dry the tears of the sad and the sorrowing.*

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*“This mind of mine went formerly wandering about as it liked, as it listed, as it pleased; but I shall now hold it in thoroughly, as the rider who holds the hook holds in the furious elephant.”* (326)

*“Be not thoughtless, watch your thoughts! Draw yourself out of the evil way. . . .”* (327)

*“Pleasant is virtue lasting to old age, pleasant is a faith firmly rooted; pleasant is attainment of intelligence, pleasant is avoiding of sins.”* (333)

—‘The Dhammapada’; Translation by Max Müller

## THE DESERTED GARDEN

(From the Chinese of Ku Chih)

Kenneth Morris

A CROW or a couple of crows  
Lazily crossing the sky —  
None else now comes by.  
There are folk up there, I suppose,  
In the hillside farms — but anigh,  
Only a couple of crows  
Drifting over the sky.  
But the pear still dons bloom-snows,  
Lonely and proud and shy;  
And to heed, there's never an eye, —  
Only a couple of crows  
Lazily crossing the sky —  
None else now comes by.

## MORNING IN THE ORCHARD

Kenneth Morris

THE orchard twigs are filled with the winging  
Of pale green flame fairy races,  
And the green light of the young leaves springing.  
The small birds in the leafy places  
Fill the morn with a twitter of singing  
And flitter of wings through the green-flame spaces.  
Turning infinite wistful eyes on  
This bright quietude, Something's peering  
O'er the forgetmenot mountain horizon —  
There's some sun-winged Mystery nearing. . . .  
Oh, on the day's blue ramparts brightening,  
Plumed and beautiful hosts are thronging,  
With long spears of pale blue lightning,  
And with eyes of spirits filled with longing. . . .  
Day hath no ears to hear their story;  
She drifts away from the wonder wholly;  
There where the mountain-blue grows hoary,  
Fades the Seraph singing slowly. . . .  
Yet in the young leaves lingers glory,  
And the birds sing, *Holy, holy, holy!*

*International Theosophical Headquarters,  
Point Loma, California*

SYMBOLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS  
SENT TO  
THE INTERNATIONAL THEOSOPHICAL PEACE CONGRESS  
VISINGSÖ, SWEDEN  
(June 23-29, 1913)  
FROM THE  
INTERNATIONAL THEOSOPHICAL HEADQUARTERS  
POINT LOMA, CALIFORNIA

The frontispiece to this issue of THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH and the following four illustrations are reproductions of illuminated pronouncements sent to the International Theosophical Peace Congress held in 1913 at Visingsö, Sweden. Others will be reproduced in forthcoming issues.

On March 3, 1913, Katherine Tingley founded the Parliament of Peace and Universal Brotherhood, and announced that an International Theosophical Peace Congress would be held at Visingsö, Lake Vettern, Sweden, during the Midsummer Festival of that year. On the same date the first meeting of the General Committee appointed by Katherine Tingley was held in the Peace Temple at the International Theosophical Headquarters, Point Loma, California.

On April 27th a preliminary inaugural meeting was held in the Greek Theater at the International Theosophical Headquarters, attended by several hundred members of the Scandinavian Society of San Diego, California.

The formal inauguration of the Peace Congress took place in the Rotunda of the Râja-Yoga Academy, Point Loma, on the evening of May 3rd, and was continued on the following day in the Greek Theater, on which occasion were present the members of the California Press Association in connexion with its annual convention, which was then being held in San Diego.

A public inaugural meeting was held in Isis Theater, San Diego, on the evening of May 4th, and on the following evening the delegates from the International Theosophical Headquarters left Point Loma for Visingsö.

The International Theosophical Peace Congress, convoked and directed by Katherine Tingley, was held during the week of the Midsummer Festival, June 22-29, with delegates from most of the countries of Europe as well as from the U. S. A. Accompanying Madame Tingley from the International Theosophical Headquarters were official representatives of the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society, and of the Men's and Women's International Theosophical Leagues; also twenty-four students of the Râja-Yoga College and Academy, who rendered orchestral and choral music during the Congress, as well as giving concerts in each of the various cities visited during the tour.

At the conclusion of the International Theosophical Peace Congress at Visingsö, Madame Tingley, who is a member of the Dutch Peace League, attended the Twentieth World Peace Congress at the Hague, and the Râja-Yoga students who accompanied her were invited to sing at the conclusion of the first public session of the Congress.

## ALTRUISM AND SELF-DEVELOPMENT

R. LANESDALE

**I**T is abundantly evident that the predominant interest in ordinary human life is self. It is also clear that self-mastery is a duty. But it is not so easy to agree as to the meaning of the word 'self' nor to formulate a system of self-control that shall be at all generally acceptable.

Perhaps it is natural that the narrowest conception of self is also the most widespread. So too it is not to be wondered at if self-control should be most generally regarded as a means of acquiring power to gratify the larger aspirations of the personal self.

Thus duty is easily adapted to self-interest; and we become familiar with the respectable combination of morality and self-interest, which appears so repugnant to the idealist. And this combination of self-control with self-interest is not limited to the vulgar and respectable hypocrite; it is to be found in the ranks of the religionists and of the philosophers, and its danger was pointed out by the Founder of the modern Theosophical Movement (Madame Blavatsky) in her translation of extracts from the *Book of the Golden Precepts*, under the heading of 'The Two Paths.'

At first sight it seems easy to distinguish between selfishness and altruism, but a little study of human nature will serve to show how easy it is to be self-deluded on this point, and how difficult it is to arrive at a clear conception of the meaning of the word self, whose interpretation is so marvelously various. Even among those who recognise their duty to Humanity as paramount there may exist the widest divergence of opinion as to the value of altruism in daily life.

One class of minds argues that, it being man's duty to serve Humanity, it is the first duty of the individual to qualify himself for this great service by a careful devotion to his own evolution, training, and development, during which his mind should be free from all considerations of altruism as something at present beyond his understanding.

A mind differently constituted will see in this nothing more than self-delusion born of selfish ambition to rise to a consciousness of power to serve: an involved form of selfishness invested in the robe of holy service.

To an aspirant of that kind the impetuous reformer, who rushes unprepared into the arena to try his strength, is but a vain and foolish hindrance to the cause of human progress.

But Theosophy suggests a consideration that would seem to explain

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

both views of duty and of self-development. The solution seems to lie in the distinction between the real individual self, and the temporary personality through which the real self acts during its incarnation here on earth. The real individual self is said to be like a ray from the Central Divine Self, or Universal Consciousness in manifestation: whereas the personality is but a reflexion from this higher self seen in the mirror of the mind, which thus appears separate from all other reflexions of the same ray.

The necessity for self-study was recognised long ago, and was expressed in the well-known formula "Man know thyself." But the purpose of this self-study was to free the mind from the illusion of separateness, and not to increase pride by added power or to intensify self-righteousness. Some sages have declared that the delusion of separateness, which is the root of selfishness, is not to be conquered in this way, for the delusion lends itself to the practices of the ascetic and grows stronger with his growth. Therefore the disciple is recommended to adopt from the start the path of service altruistically conceived and carried out to the best of his ability, for they say the power to serve comes with service. The beginner who is fired with the ideal of self-sacrifice may appear ridiculous to the critical observer, who sees the vanity of the neophyte as well as the futility of his service, and who may pityingly regret the wasting of so much good energy as he sees displayed in the accomplishment of some imaginary reform.

The accomplished reform may prove worthless as far as any benefit to the world at large is concerned: the work of a novice is not generally profitable to anyone but to the pupil himself. But each such experience is valuable as a step in education which will eventually open the understanding of the learner to the needs of Humanity and to his own individual ignorance. Then he may begin to qualify himself to enter in earnest upon the path, upon which he may have believed himself to be already far advanced. But something more has been accomplished besides the opening of the understanding of the young reformer. If indeed he was fired with a generous motive, when he at first pledged himself grandiloquently to the Service of Humanity, a link was made between the outer world of personality in which his lower self, his brain-mind operated, and the impersonal world of Spirit, where his true self abides; and such a link is an accomplishment of real service to all that lives; for it is from such links that the chain of evolution is forged, though they remain invisible and unrecorded in the world of mere mentality.

So too, it seems to me, that groups of people, working together altruistically for some object which they conceive to be desirable for the progress of the world, may be mistaken as to the value of their objective, may be ill-advised in the manner of their activity, may be even self-

## ALTRUISM AND SELF-DEVELOPMENT

deluded as to the sincerity of their own individual devotion, yet may collectively evolve a new entity that shall have more purity of purpose than any separate individuals in the group may have; and it appears to me conceivable that this new and invisible entity may act, upon the plane of pure purposes, in the direction of the aspiration of the group rather than in the accomplishment of the intellectually specified purpose of the associated individuals. For the power and influence of a group united by an ideal is more than, and is different from, the sum of the activities of the associated individuals. From their unselfish ideals some new thing may be born which may be entirely unknown to any of them personally, and it may accomplish good work when the original group shall have dissolved, or shall have been dispersed as an ignominious failure.

Again it is evident that a man may unselfishly devote himself to self-development without losing sight of his ideal. That is conceivable; but the path is bordered by delusive side-tracks where the sweet fruits of self-gratulation grow in profusion.

I remember a young man who, being asked to contribute to a fund for some work of practical benevolence, excused himself saying that all his funds were invested in great commercial enterprises promising him such high profits that he would in a little while be able to contribute a sum that would be worth having; all his investments, he said, were made with that sole purpose. In the meantime he needed all he had, and more, to make the sum which he regarded as his goal. Years passed and the young man, now grown wealthy, still looks forward to a future when he will be able to do something really great for humanity.

It has been said that high ideals are like water that, if left unchanged in a tank, will breed unpleasant creatures, and may serve to spread disease. Running streams have power to purify themselves as they go, for they become aerated as they fall from rock to pool and swirl in the foaming rapids.

Practical altruism may be like the rapids where the stream runs shallow and noisy over the thankless stones, but also where the water gains new vitality from the air that permeates it and seems alone occupied in forming bubbles on the surface, that burst and vanish, as burst the bubbles of so many altruistic enterprises.

So the stream flows from the clouds to the ocean, and many strange creatures owe their lives to the purity of its waters. In the still pool too there are creatures that owe their existence to the water. Some of them are considered pestilent. For drinking purposes the brook that "babbles as it flows" is best, for there the creatures cannot thrive.

## WORDS OF THE WISE: The Power of Thought

H. T. EDGE, M. A.

“Man is a thinker, and by his thoughts he makes the causes for woe or bliss.”

—William Q. Judge



WORDS that can help us in our path of life may be called words of wisdom; they require no better credentials. And one who, like William Q. Judge, has left us so many of these helpful words, is entitled to be regarded as a teacher.

Man is apt to be regarded as only a higher animal; therefore it is well to remind ourselves that he is *essentially* a thinker, and, as such, on quite a different plane from any animal. His thoughts are creative, and bespeak the presence in him of a power that did not come from the animal world. Thoughts are far more powerful and far-reaching in their effects than actions; they are the parents of actions. Yet how little attention, comparatively, we pay to the regulation of our thoughts! Let us, who are seeking for knowledge, reflect on this vital truth; the great truths are always simple, and it is rather from want of will than from lack of knowledge that we fail to follow them. Let us govern our thoughts if we would attain self-mastery.

The control of thoughts is a task well within the power of all, and at no time is opportunity lacking. Far more than in the outside world of objects does man dwell in a world of thoughts; and in this latter world he is a creator. For the most part, however, he maintains a negative attitude and fails to exert his power, allowing the thought-currents to drift in and out of his mind. Usually he finds no better reason for thinking than that some thought has drifted casually, he knows not nor cares whence, into his mind. Thus he resembles a sea-anemone on a rock, taking in everything that floats his way, and spitting it out again, after extracting from it anything that he considers as pabulum. Yet is not man able, if he will, to shut his mind against thoughts and admit only such as he desires? Again, is he not master of the thoughts he sends out, able to send them out colored and fraught with the potentiality of good or evil, to influence other minds accordingly? Man is truly a magician. Why then does he so often fail? Because he is overcome by the attraction and repulsion of desires.

He must be firmly established in a motive strong enough to overcome those desires, and then he will be able to choose among the thoughts that occupy the field of his mind. For thoughts coalesce with desire and thus acquire an attractive and binding power over the uncertain and



## WORDS OF THE WISE

uncontrolled nature of man; and therefore a strong will is needed to resist this force.

It is said truly that every man has peopled his thought-world with numerous denizens, the progeny of his own thoughts and desires; for thought and desire constitute a creative pair, thus generating beings which hover around their source and seek nourishment therefrom. This is the secret of habit and of character. By the time a man has reached maturity he has built himself into a perfect domain of thoughts, ideas, habits, and prejudices, as familiar and apparently indispensable as his furniture and worldly goods. And all this he mistakes for his real 'self,' and wonders whether he can convey the entire structure across the gulf of death into immortality. But the real Self must be as independent of all these created belongings as a man is independent of his clothes.

It is easy, from what has been said, to see how a man creates his own destiny. True, he is not (at his present normal stage of development) *conscious* of the whole process. The results of his thoughts are often so far removed from the originating thoughts themselves that he does not perceive the connexion. This lack of perception may be due to his want of practice in studying such questions, or it may be that the harvest he reaps was sown in a former incarnation. Nevertheless the law holds good; and, by accepting it as a working hypothesis, we shall put ourselves in the way of verifying it by our observations and experience. Theosophists, who have thus accepted the law of Karma, have already found countless proofs of its working; for their attention has been directed to the observation of things which they had never thought of noticing before.

Our mental condition determines the structure of our body, which is continually changed and maintained by the processes of nutrition; and our thoughts impose laws upon the living atoms that are carried in the blood-stream and built into the tissues. The observations of physiological and anatomical science carry us back through the nerves to certain centers in the brain, spinal marrow, and ganglia; but beyond that the region of speculation is reached; for those sciences do not recognise the *linga-sarira*, or invisible plastic body that mediates between mind and matter. It is this plastic body that is affected by the thoughts and emotions, and which again affects the physical body. Thus man, by governing his thoughts and emotions, governs his body; but, if he is weak, the reverse process may prevail, and his body may govern his will by the same connecting links as those whereby his will ought to govern his body. As a rule, both processes go on at the same time, producing continual conflict and vacillation. It will be readily understood that this is a subject on which a great deal might be said under opportune circumstances. What has been said will suggest lines of thought.

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

A large part of our lot in life is determined by circumstances which are usually classed as 'casual,' for want of a better name, though the rare amounts to nothing as an explanation. Theosophists, however, believe that even these events come under the universal reign of law and order, and that an expert could trace their connexion with the original causes that led up to them. These original causes would then be found to be in our own conduct at some previous time, either in this life or a foregoing one. Such events as accidents, bereavements, or losses, together with the corresponding forms of good fortune, must be connected by a chain of cause and effect to their initial causes — some act or group of acts of our own in the past. We may not be able to discern this connexion, but that is no reason for thinking that it does not exist; in fact, the known limitation of our powers of observation makes it certain that there must be very many things in life which we do not know and cannot trace out. We have to take our choice whether we will believe in a universe governed by law or a universe governed by chance. Theosophists believe that man himself sows the seeds, not only of his character, but also of his destiny. To study the laws by which our thoughts are connected with our destiny is a problem which will gradually become unraveled as our knowledge expands; and meanwhile faith assures us that our destiny is determined by wisdom. Life is in the interests of the Soul, the real man, not in those of the ever-changing desires and ambitions. Man, by reason of his dual nature, frustrates his own desires, for he wills good and evil at the same time.

There are various advertising schools of thought-culture, mental culture, and so forth, which hold out wonderful promises to those who will buy their books or take their courses; but it should be noticed that the appeal made in their case is to self-interest. They promise ease, self-satisfaction, or even worldly advantage of some sort, such as beauty, attractiveness, and the power of getting rich. This puts these cults into quite a different class from Theosophy, which is a movement for rendering service to humanity, and can have no object in promoting personal ends or such things as give one man power over another. A Theosophist will seek to rule his thoughts because that is a means to his end, his end being to make himself serviceable in the cause of Theosophy, which is the cause of humanity. If any other motive were present in his mind, the effect would be to increase the power of his personal self, which is his greatest obstacle. The attempt to utilize subtle forces for the increasing of his personal power or mere comfort, would be regarded by him as most injurious both to himself and his work. His conception of thought-control consists in expelling from the mind such intrusive forces as anger, lust, envy, pride, and the like; but he has the advantage of a clearer

## WORDS OF THE WISE

understanding of the question, because the Theosophical teachings elucidate it so much.

Man is a thinker, living in a world of mind; even his view of the outside world is colored by his mind. His happiness depends on the state of his mind and thoughts. His destiny is made by his thoughts. Through his thoughts he influences others, either directly or through acts and words, which are the offspring of thoughts. The path to liberation and knowledge lies in conquest of the mind, so that its waters may become clear and smooth and be able to reflect the light from above.

### REVENGE

R. MACHELL

“If every man got his deserts who should escape whipping?”



SO says an old proverb, wisely sardonic, and with a kindly skepticism that disarms the austere spirit of virtuous indignation.

The desire to administer punishment is a weakness to which human nature is very prone, and which is usually defended with extreme warmth by those who are most addicted to this form of self-indulgence.

‘Virtuous indignation’ is indeed a most seductive vice. It flatters the vanity while gratifying the spirit of revenge, that hides so frequently behind the loud demand for justice.

Bacon begins his essay on ‘Revenge’ by saying that it is a sort of wild justice, the which the more man’s nature runneth to, the more should society put a check upon. The prudence of this opinion is practically recognised to a considerable degree by most systems of justice. But, while it is commonly considered politic that the State should relieve the individual of his right to revenge himself, it is rarely questioned that vengeance is a right.

In the Bible, Jehovah, the god of the Jews, says “Vengeance is mine.” And all through the Jewish scriptures, as well as in the Greek Tragedies, revenge is treated as a divine attribute claimed by man on the ground of his being an agent of some Deity.

History seems to show that piety and impiety alternate in the minds of men from age to age. At one time a man perpetrates the most cruel deeds at the instigation of some God, and claims the protection of the deity in the accomplishment of his holy crime, as well as divine approbation when the blood of his victim is poured out. When the gods are

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

forgotten, as happens from age to age, then men claim the right to avenge the wrongs done to them as their own prerogative, and even preach vengeance as a duty. In all of which one may trace the underlying instinct of "a sort of wild justice," as Bacon calls it.

But history also records teachings of Justice and Love, that illuminate the world with a fitful radiance, as if indeed the pure light of the Spiritual Sun would with difficulty pierce the clouds of brutal violence and black hate that make the earth dark with their shadows. But the light soon dies out, overpowered by the darkness of man's passion and ignorance; for, according to the ancient Hindû teaching, the world is in its dark age, and has been in it since the beginning of our historic period. This 'Kali-Yuga' doctrine may well be quoted to explain the bloody record of the so-called Christian era, which shows so little trace of the prevalence or power of the gospel of Love and Mercy in the conduct of the nations calling themselves Christian.

But when one reads the tragedies of Sophocles and Aeschylus, one comes to wonder if the sense of the ridiculous was entirely obliterated in the Greek mind by an overwhelming sense of awe, or whether emotion made them blind to the incongruities of this "wild justice" that we call revenge.

A man is killed; his death must be revenged; when this is done the doer claims the approval of his god as well as of his family. But his deed in turn cries out for vengeance and the call comes to a new avenger with all the divine authority of a heaven-sent mission; and a new crime is added to the list, calling in its turn for punishment, and so on until the race or family of one or other of the divinely-inspired judiciaries is exterminated, or at least banished from the earth to carry on their heavenly schemes of blood and violence in another world.

If the vendetta is frankly recognised as a means of gratifying a natural passion, an insatiable craving for blood, then it becomes horribly intelligible. But when it is passed off as justice, it becomes ridiculous.

The object of the administration of justice is to establish balance, to restore harmony, to readjust disturbances in social order, to put an end to discord, and to establish peace. Does revenge do this? No! Vengeance is not justice; it is the repetition of a wrong; it is the perpetuation of an evil; it is an aggravation of discord; it is a means of disseminating hate, and of multiplying the original offense.

The difference between revenge and justice is radical. The one seeks to perpetuate discord, the other to establish harmony. The one is an expression of the lower nature, the other is essentially superior, a faculty of the higher nature, and a reflexion on earth of Divine Law. This higher law is entirely impersonal; revenge is a purely personal instinct of re-

## REVENGE

taliation, that seeks to repay an injury with something added to the score, which is thus augmented by each such settlement. Man may persuade himself that his anger is holy wrath, which sounds good, or it may be the milder form of virtuous indignation; but these terms are only camouflage. Anger is necessarily personal and naturally one-sided. Whereas Justice is impersonal and impartial.

But there is more in it than that. Justice is not merely concerned with striking a balance between conflicting claims, and so terminating a dispute. It is a reflexion in the human mind of a Universal Principle of Harmony, which is perhaps the prime factor in evolution. It is therefore not merely negatively impersonal but it is positively universal. So that behind the mere administration of the law in human affairs there is an unseen and often unrecognised influence that tends to the establishment of practical co-operation between the more or less discordant elements of society. It would seem that this truth was felt by those who spoke of "tempering Justice with Mercy"; a phrase that seems to admit the crudity and imperfection of Justice, as generally administered.

But abstract Justice is the same as Mercy (true Mercy): for "There is no religion higher than Truth" and there is no mercy that transcends pure Justice: which is the 'fitness of things,' the perfect balance.

It looks as if human justice had been, from away back, but little better than controlled revenge; and, as such, it needed to be tempered with mercy to bring it within speaking distance of Justice, Divine or Universal.

The dark age of vengeance and retribution is passed; or it is passing from the field of action in which the higher races of mankind are working out their evolution; and if there are nations who are still under the shadow of an outworn superstition, it is not necessary for the leaders of humanity to shut their eyes to the dawning of the new day in imitation of the blindness of their neighbors. We are entitled to the benefits of the wisdom we have gained in the long course of evolution. Let us go forward into the new day and leave the old superstitions of the past for those who are left behind. We are the pioneers. It is for us to open the New Way, that they may find a path ready when their time shall come.

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"THE contaminating effect of deeds often lies less in the commission than in the consequent adjustment of our desires — the enlistment of our self-interest on the side of falsity; as, on the other hand, the purifying influence of public confession springs from the fact that by it the hope in lies is for ever swept away, and the soul recovers the noble attitude of simplicity."—*George Eliot*

## THEOSOPHY AS A POTENT FACTOR IN THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE NATIONS

E. A. NERESHEIMER

**I**N these times of turbulence and rapid changes, affecting nearly one half of the earth, it is difficult to discern in what body of people the inner spiritual impulse will compel an utter parting from the old forms of soulless politics, and replace them by rules, less mechanicalistically cruel, and by some that are more human. It is being widely recognised that something new is in the air which must come to the surface and work some marked benefit to the people in a practical way on a large scale.

Among the many attempts and suggestions for amelioration which have thus far come forward, there is not one that goes to the root, because none of the influential bodies politic is yet in a position to declare itself released from the bondage of the time-worn habit of trading for gain and clinging to possessions. As long as no higher motive prompts an action, little real progress is to be expected. And, how could there be such a higher incentive without knowledge of the broad purposes of Nature in whose bosom alone lie enfolded the object of Existence and the Destiny of Humanity?

The leaven of Theosophy has sufficiently penetrated human consciousness the world over to warrant the assumption that the minds of the masses at least have received a new light as to higher possibilities which are in store for the race. Theosophy teaches that man is a spiritual being; that his successive physical incarnations are only a transitory pilgrimage wherein to obtain experience in all forms of matter, its laws and conditions. All Nations have special characteristics, which must be lived through in order to know them. Incarnation in one Nation merely affords opportunity for experiences of a particular kind. The law of progress demands incarnation in all of those nations through which diversified individual Knowledge can be obtained. Knowledge is the aim and end of Existence. At present there is no collective impulse in any one Nation which would furnish opportunity for more than very meager side-lights on the great subject of Universal Coherence and its bearing on practical life.

It has been unequivocally declared by prominent public men that Theosophy is the most serious movement of the age. What else could be more potent than the universal keynote which Theosophy gives, concerning those truths which are so eagerly sought by every aspiring soul

## THEOSOPHY AS A POTENT FACTOR

and which are so indispensable to man's welfare? How can the great problems of today be solved without this light, when not one in a thousand has the slightest idea of what is man's place in the great economy of Nature? With this fundamental keynote the wisdom of the ages is unlocked, confidence inspired in the purpose and justification of existence, and individual problems as well as the problems of society may be solved.

Unenlightened leaders of politics, religion, and science may attempt reconstruction of nations. Will these attempts, produced by incomplete knowledge, reach to the root of things and result in more than mere modifications of old forms? Never! Comprehensive judgment on such grave matters cannot be formed unless one knows the intimate relations which exist between human affairs and the affairs of the grand scheme of Cosmos. A further essential requisite in support of such judgment is the impregnable moral conduct of an individual so sitting in judgment. Knowledge of the vital questions concerning man's spiritual antecedents and ultimate destiny is the first qualification required of one essaying to reshape human concerns in any form. Well may we pause in our estimate of well-advertised leaders.

Theosophy has supplied this knowledge these many decades throughout the world, and has left its indelible mark on the masses, whether they are aware of it or not. Worldly officialdom has severely scorned the existence of Theosophy, mostly on account of the deadly disease of conservatism, indolence, and fear. Its acceptance would have necessitated reconstruction of the latter, compelling a recognition of the bearing of the principle of *Human Solidarity* in the consideration of all national and international questions. This must be the guiding motive of action in the future. It is the one great Truth which is in harmony with Nature's own plan of unfoldment of Humanity.

Though the principle of human Brotherhood has been declared by every reformer, poet, and teacher since time immemorial, it has pleased every political organization as well as the religious bodies merely to tolerate that most important of Truths, and at the same time to refrain from putting it into practice. However, in spite of neglect and even opposition, an incontrovertible fact such as this, *all the world, in order to continue to exist*, must eventually adopt! And a civilization which adopts it not, when certain conditions of the evolutionary cycle, like the present, demand it,—is doomed to fall back from the strenuously-attained heights of doubtful glory, to become again extinct, as did the Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and untold other civilizations all down the ages.

The wave of the cycle passes on and Nature laughs in her sleeve.

## HOW WE MAKE OUR DESTINY

H. TRAVERS, M. A.

"From birth to death every man is weaving destiny around himself, as a spider does his web."—*H. P. Blavatsky*

**M**AN sows causes, of which he cannot trace the effects; and reaps effects, of which he cannot trace the causes. Has it never occurred to him that these two problems, if put together, might solve each other?

What doctrine could be more just, and at the same time more scientific, than the doctrine that we reap what we have sown, and that what we sow we shall also reap? That the doctrine is true within certain limits, we all recognise: we can trace many illnesses to wrong living; success can be traced to perseverance; failure, to negligence; good treatment engenders love; bad treatment, hatred. In other cases we fail to discern such a connexion. Yet Theosophy declares the law to be universal, and states that our inability to trace the connexion in these cases is due merely to our imperfect acquaintance with the laws of nature.

We have learnt to a considerable extent not to abuse the rules of health. The Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius sent his legions to Mesopotamia, where they caught the plague; and coming back, they spread it all over the Roman empire, so that it half-depopulated Italy; and then they went north to fight the barbarians and bred more plague in the crowded camps. This was thought to be a visitation from the gods, for the rules of infection and quarantine were not known. We know better now, but yet how terribly we abuse the laws of thought! In that matter we allow almost complete promiscuity and recklessness. A man with the plague must not go about among us, but we do not inquire into a man's mental state; and yet mentally he may be a regular plague center, poisoning the mental and moral atmosphere, and spreading infection wherever he goes.

Thoughts are most powerful influences, as we know, whatever scientific view we may hold about them. We are sufficiently familiar with the effects which our own thoughts produce on ourselves, exciting various moods, such as joy and sorrow, love and anger, nervousness, etc.; and ultimately hardening into the chains of habit. So here we have a fact to go upon. Does this fact engage the attention of science? Science is concerned with "matter — that which can be handled and weighed,"



## HOW WE MAKE OUR DESTINY

but has not found out how to handle and weigh thoughts; so that our fact is not a scientific fact in the ordinary sense. None the less, we cannot afford to ignore the laws of nature, whether they deal with things that can be handled and weighed or not. By ignoring them, we assume the attitude of driftwood; and then, if we complain of being victims of a blind fate or an inscrutable law, our complaint is not very reasonable.

The control of thoughts is really the key to the whole problem of life; as for acts, they spring from thoughts.

Destiny is a mysterious word, intended to denote the fortune that is awaiting a man; and the presumption is that such fortune exists beforehand, ready-made for the man to incur. A prophet or fortune-teller is one who tries to read this destiny before it has been unrolled. If the destiny does really thus exist, so that it can be read, it is evident that it must exist in some other kind of space than that with which science is familiar, and that it must belong to some other kind of existence than the ordinary material substances studied by science. From the quotation at the head of this article it would seem that destiny is a mass of thought-energy, which has been created and stored up by the man himself at various times in the past. To understand this fully, it is needful to take into account reincarnation, because much of the destiny which we incur was certainly not created in this life. This must therefore have been created in former lives.

People are apt to shy at the doctrine of rebirth, but only because it is strange to them. It is not more mysterious than many things to which we are accustomed. We cannot trace the processes by which a plant produces its seed, and the seed germinates and reproduces a plant like the original. Yet we are obliged to accept this as a fact. When a child is born, a human soul is incarnated; and besides the qualities which it takes up from the parental soil, it brings other qualities with it from its own past. If this were not so, the human race would either stagnate and repeat itself perpetually like the animals, or else die out altogether. But humanity is continually developing and growing, and geniuses appear and originate new ideas. Thus man is not merely the offspring of his parents, but also the offspring of his own past lives; and the incarnated man is the resultant of two lines of ancestry. From this it arises that our future will be determined by our present conduct; and all the more so because the incarnating soul receives its earthly parentage in accordance with the fate which it has spun for itself. Thus, if I am born with a weak body, it is because I have incurred that fate by my own past conduct; and the parent from whom I derived that weak body is only a link in the chain—only the physical means by which my destiny is accomplished. A knowledge of the teachings of Theosophy is required

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

in order to complete the scientific ideas of heredity and make them comprehensible.

It is a great satisfaction to know that we have our fate in our own hands. Thus we escape from the attitude of helplessness which is fostered by wrong beliefs of various sorts. Let us contrast this right knowledge with some of these wrong beliefs. At certain times in history the decay of knowledge had degraded the ancient symbols of mystic knowledge into mere popular superstitions, and we find people believing half-heartedly in a multitude of gods, to whom they offered propitiatory sacrifices on the off-chance of averting evil and securing favor. Thus, instead of relying on the merit of their own right motives and good deeds, they yielded to their weaknesses and hoped to atone for them and square accounts by external observances of piety. But in the same ages there were philosophers of various schools, who spurned these popular superstitions and sought to guide their lives by moral principle. These Stoics and others were much nearer the truth therefore, but the age was against them, and their teachings often fell on stony ground. It would seem as if Christianity sprang from a revival of the ancient Wisdom, under the guidance of some great Teacher, of whom we know but little; but that the movement miscarried owing to disputes among its apostles, and so degenerated into sectarianism. Yet in spite of these quarrels, that movement had enough life in it to supplant the decaying polytheism. But its decay can be seen by contrasting the sayings of the founder with some of the dogmatic beliefs that have become popular in later times. The founder teaches reliance on our own divinity, saying that the kingdom of heaven is within; but the dogmas encourage men to believe that they can be justified by faith alone. Thus many devout people take a pride in emphasizing the helplessness of human nature and the supposed need of a vicarious salvation. The doctrine that a man is justified (made right and whole) by his own thoughts and works is the true one; and though an enlightened faith is a link, faith alone cannot save him; it must be realized in conduct. Again, the materialistic and skeptical attitude encourages man to regard himself as lying helpless in the hands of vast powers of nature; and though it may give him considerable vanity in regard to his material abilities, it leaves him ignorant and helpless as concerns the laws of his spiritual nature.

Contrasted with all this is the teaching that man is the maker of his own destiny; not a new doctrine, but an ancient one revived. Only we must be careful not to place our reliance on the mere personality, for that is a little thing; but must endeavor to find the real Self within, whence proceeds right knowledge and the voice of conscience inspiring to unselfish duty. Man was endowed with a spark of the divine spirit

## HOW WE MAKE OUR DESTINY

and given freedom, that he might become self-reliant; and his failure to make use of his privileges is the real sin. And this sin brings its own requital by tossing the man upon the seas of circumstance until at last he is driven to take the right attitude and to invoke the divine power with which he is endowed.

A man's thoughts and acts gradually build up his character; and his character determines his destiny. Though we may not be able to realize this fully in the imperfect state of our knowledge, yet we can verify it to a considerable extent. Men choose their calling largely in accordance with their character; whether to be doctor, soldier, student, etc. Their circle of acquaintance is similarly influenced, and so with many other circumstances of their life. But whereas character and destiny are usually distinguished from each other, a broader generalization might include them both under one head — that of belongings: they are both belongings of the man; he creates them both, spinning them around him, as a spider does its web.

We are pilgrims traveling through life, and each one of us finds himself stationed at a certain spot, which he has reached by his previous traveling. We were not put there by an arbitrary deity, nor dropped there by a blind working of nature, *but we traveled there by our own footsteps*. To look back and survey those footsteps would be like tracing our past Karma; and our future itinerary depends partly on our past wanderings and partly on our present and future choice. Thus we obtain some light on that most profound or transparent problem of freewill and necessity, with which people are so fond of puzzling themselves.

We scarcely realize the extent to which we are influenced by our own thoughts: we truly build around ourselves a house full of furniture. A man absorbed in his business creates a secondary personality, which may gradually absorb his life, so that he becomes slave to the ideas he has created. There are cases where such a man has created for himself a second personality, wholly different in character from his ordinary self, and occasioning the most remarkable inconsistency in his nature. But, apart from extreme cases, everyone will be able to recognise, in his own character, the existence of what might be called false personalities, little selves, which obtrude themselves upon us and give rise to certain moods or conduct. These are the offspring of our own thoughts; and they are elements in the making of destiny.

Any moment can be made a starting-point; so, with these ideas in mind, we can begin at once to mold our future destiny. But in this case it behooves us to consider well of what kind that destiny should be. The greatest bondage which a human being can create for himself is that of selfishness — in any of its numerous forms. Therefore let not

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

merely selfish ambition, desire of possession, or any other idea of selfish gratification, enter into our plans. There are, it is to be feared, people who, knowing something about the power of thought, seek deliberately or perhaps in misguided ignorance to use it for self-gratification, either open or disguised. There are people who profess to teach you for money how to do this. What kind of destiny are these people spinning for themselves? They do not realize how they are embittering their own future. For some day — it may be in this life, it may be in another — the soul will find itself prisoner in a nature whose instincts are selfish, and there will be a bitter struggle, a starving of the heart. Let us be most careful not to abuse the power of thought; if it is powerful for good, it is powerful for evil too. But with a good aspiration to begin with, we may start on the right path.

A great deal is to be done by simply giving up creating bad currents of thought. The bare knowledge of the above laws will help us to do this; for so many thoughts are indulged just because people see no reason for checking the indulgence; whereas now they have a motive. It is evident that our thoughts acquire a power of their own, which reacts upon our will and forces us to harbor ideas which we know to be useless or even irrational. Thus the force which we have put into those thoughts is returned upon us, and here we have an illustration of the way in which the law of Karma works. On rising in the morning, we are apt to have an experience which is analogous to a reincarnation: our newly-awakened mind is met by a swarm of thoughts, left over from the previous day; they have been lying latent during the night, and spring to life as though quickened by the sun. If we are careless, we permit these thoughts to engross us, and thus we not only waste our vitality on them but give them still more strength to oppress us. It is taught that the incarnating soul similarly encounters a brood of old deposits from the past, which hatch like eggs in the growing personality.

It is most unphilosophical to say that the human will is inextricably involved in a chain of causes and effects, and consequently man has no freedom of choice. Actual experience contradicts this sophism. William III of England, though an invalid and sufferer, was a man of such indomitable spirit that he went on toiling and achieving until the very moment of his death; whereas many another man so circumstanced would have remained an invalid and nothing else. William therefore had a will which was independent of those obstacles; and its power was derived from unselfish devotion to a cause. The more we raise our mind, the nearer we approach the center of our being, the higher do we lift ourselves from the lower forces, and the further do we get away from the vibrations. We must distinguish between the personal will and the spirit-

## THE CREST-WAVE OF EVOLUTION

ual will: the former is pulled hither and thither by desires; the latter, while willingly obeying right laws, is independent of desires. But however great a tangle we may get into by argument about the freedom of the will, the practical problem remains clear; we solve the dilemma by acting.


We cannot for ever remain satisfied with a life of careless drifting, such as so many people are content to lead. Human nature is always growing, and some of us will have reached a point in our evolution where we have the chance to graduate into a deeper and ampler life — a life more serious and purposeful. We can grow up, leave our childhood behind, and assume a sense of responsibility for our actions. The quotation says that from birth *to death* man weaves the web of destiny; hence no age is without its responsibility and its opportunities for action.

## THE CREST-WAVE OF EVOLUTION

KENNETH MORRIS

*A Course of Lectures in History, Given to the Graduates' Class in the  
Râja-Yoga College, Point Loma, in the College-Year 1918-1919*

### I — INTRODUCTORY

HESE lectures will not be concerned with history as a record of wars and political changes; they will have little to tell of battles, murders, and sudden deaths. Instead, we shall try to discover and throw light on the cyclic movements of the Human Spirit. Back of all phenomena, or the outward show of things, there is always a noumenon in the unseen. Behind the phenomena of human history, the noumenon is the Human Spirit, moving in accordance with its own necessities and cyclic laws. We may, if we go to it intelligently, gain some inkling of knowledge as to what those laws are; and I think that would be, in its way, a real wisdom, and worth getting. But for the most part historical study seeks knowledge only; and how ill it attains its aim, is shown by the falseness of what passes for history. In most textbooks you shall find, probably, a round dozen of lies on as many pages. And these in themselves are fruitful seeds of evil; they by no means end with the telling, but go on producing harvests of wrong life; which indeed is only the Lie incarnate on the plane of action. The *Eternal Right Thing* is what is called in Sanskrit SAT, the True; its opposite is the Lie, in one fashion or another, always; and what we have to do, our mission and *raison d'être* as students of Theosophy, is

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

to put down the Lie at every turn, and chase it, as far as we may, out of the field of life.

For example, there is the Superior-Race Lie; I do not know where it shall not be found. Races *A*, *B*, *C*, and *D* go on preaching it for centuries; each with an eye to its sublime self. In all countries, perhaps, history is taught with that lie for mental background. Then we wonder that there are wars. But Theosophy is called on to provide a true mental background for historical study; and it alone can do so. It is the mission of Point Loma, among many other things, to float a true philosophy of history on to the currents of world-thought; and for this end it is our business to be thinkers, using the divine Manasic light within us to some purpose. H. P. Blavatsky supplied something much greater than a dogma: she — like Plato — gave the world a method and a spur to thought: pointed for it a direction, which following, it might solve all problems and heal the wounds of the ages.

A false and foolish notion in the western world has been, tacitly to accept the Greeks and Hebrews of old for the two fountains of all culture since; the one in secular matters, the other in religion and morality. Of the Hebrews nothing need be said here; but that true religion and morality have their source in the ever-living Human Spirit, not in any sect, creed, race, age, or bible. I doubt there has been any new discovery in ethics since man was man; or rather, all discoveries have been made by individuals for themselves; and each, having discovered anything, has found that that same principle was discovered a thousand times before, and written a thousand times. There is no platitude so platitudinous, but it remains to burst upon the perceptions of all who have not yet perceived it, as a new and burning truth; and on the other hand, there is no startling command to purity or compassion, that has not been given out by Teachers since the world began. — As for Greece, there was a brilliant flaming up of the Spirit there in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries B. C.; and its intensity, like the lights of an approaching automobile, rather obscures what lies beyond. It is the first of which we have much knowledge; so we think it was the first of all. But in fact civilization has been traveling its cyclic path all the time, all these millions of years; and there have been hundreds of ancient great empires and cultural epochs even in Europe of which we know nothing.

I had intended to begin with Greece; but these unexplored eras of old Europe are too attractive, and this first lecture must go to them, or some of them. Not to the antecedents of Greece, in Crete and elsewhere; but to the undiscovered North; and in particular to the Celtic peoples; who may serve us as an example by means of which light may be thrown on the question of racial growth, and on the racial cycles generally.

## THE CREST-WAVE OF EVOLUTION

The Celtic Empire of old Europe affects us like some mysterious undiscovered planet. We know it was there by its effects on other peoples. Also, like many other forgotten histories, it has left indications of its achievement in a certain spirit, an uplift, the breath of an old traditional grandeur that has come down. But to give any historical account of it — to get a telescope that will reach and reveal it — we have not to come to that point yet.

Still, it may be allowed us to experiment with all sorts of glasses. To penetrate that gloom of ancient Europe may be quite beyond us; but guessing is permitted. Now the true art of guessing lies in an intuition for guiding indications. There is something in us that knows things directly; and it may deign at times to give hints, to direct the researches, to flash some little light on that part of us which works and is conscious in this world, and which we call our brain-minds. So although most or all of what I am going to say would be called by the scientific strictly empirical, fantastic and foolish, yet I shall venture; aware that their Aristotelio-Baconian method quite breaks down when it comes to such a search into the unknown; and that this guessing, guided by what seems to be a law, would not, perhaps, have been sneered at by Plato.

Guided by what seems to be a law; — guided, at any rate, by the knowledge that there are laws; that “God geometrizes,” as Plato says: that that which is within flows outward upon a design; that life precipitates itself through human affairs as it does through the forms of the crystals; that there is nothing more haphazard about the sequence of empires and civilizations, than there is about the unfolding of the petals of a flower. In both cases it is the eternal rhythm, the Poetry of the Infinite, that manifests; our business is to listen so carefully as to hear, and apprehend the fact that what we hear is a poetry, a vast music, not a chaotic cacophony: catch the rhythms — perceive that there is a design — even if it takes us long to discover what the design may be.

You know Plato’s idea that the world is a dodecahedron or twelve-sided figure. Now in Plato’s day, much that every schoolboy knows now, was esoteric — known only to the initiated. So I think Plato would have known well enough that this physical earth is round; and that what he meant when he spoke of the dodecahedron, was something else. This, for example: that on the plane of causes — this outer plane being that of effects — there are twelve (geographical) centers, aspects, foci, facets, or what you like to call them: twelve *laya centers*, as I think the Secret Doctrine would say: through which the forces from within play on the world without. You have read, too, in *The Secret Doctrine*, Professor Crookes’s theory, endorsed by H. P. Blavatsky, as to how the chemical elements were deposited by a spiral evolutive force, a creative impulse

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

working outward in the form of a caduceus or lemniscate, or figure of '8'. Now suppose we should discover that just as that force deposited in space, in its spiral down-working, what Crookes calls the seeds of potassium, beryllium, boron, and the rest — so such another creative force, at work on the planes of geographical space and time, rouses up or deposits in these, according to a definite pattern, this nation and that in its turn, this great age of culture after that one; and that there is nothing haphazard about the configuration of continents and islands, national boundaries, or racial migrations?

H. P. Blavatsky tells us that the whole past history of the race is known to the Guardians of the Secret Wisdom; that it is all recorded, nothing lost; down to the story of every tribe since the Lords of Mind incarnated. And that these records are in the form of a few symbols; but symbols which, to those who can interpret or disintegrate them, can yield the whole story. What if the amount and burden of history, which seems so vast to us who know so very little of it, were in reality, if we could know it all, a thing that would put but slight tax on the memory; a thing we might carry with us in a few slight formulae, a few simple symbols? I believe that it is so; and that we may make a beginning, and go some little way towards guessing what these formulae are.

As thus: A given race flowered and passed; it had so many centuries of history before its flowering; it died, and left something behind. Greece, for example. We may know very little — you and I may know very little — of the details of Greek history. We cannot, perhaps, remember the date of Aegospotami, or what happened at Plataea; we may have the vaguest notion of the import of Aeschylus, or Sophocles, or Plato. But still there is a certain color in our conscious perceptions which comes from Greece: the 'glory that was Greece' means something, is a certain light within the consciousness, to everyone of us. The Greeks added something to the wealth of the human spirit, which we all may share in, and do. An atmosphere is left, which surrounds and adheres to the many tangible memorials; just as an atmosphere is left by the glories of the Cinquecento in Italy, with *its* many tangible memorials.

But indeed, we may go further, and say that an atmosphere is left, and that we can feel it, by many ages and cultures which have left no tangible memorials at all; or but few and uninterpretable ones, like the Celtic. And that each has developed some mood, some indefinable inward color — which we perceive and inherit. Each different: you cannot mistake the Chinese or the Celtic color for the Greek; though it might be hard to define your perception of either, or of their difference. It would be hard to say, for instance, that this one was crimson, the other blue; not quite so hard to say that this one affects us as crimson does, that



## THE CREST-WAVE OF EVOLUTION

other, as blue does. And yet we can see, I think, that by chasing our impressions to their source, there might be some way of presenting them in symbolic form. There might be some way of reducing what we feel from the Greeks, or Chinese, or Celts, into a word, a sentence; of writing it down even in a single hieroglyph, of which the elements would be such as should convey to something in us behind the intellect just the indefinable feeling either of these peoples give us.

In the Chinese writing, with all its difficulty, there is something superior to our alphabets: an element that appeals to the soul directly, or to the imagination directly, I think. Suppose you found a Chinese ideogram — of course there is no such a one — to express the forgotten Celtic culture; and it proved, on analysis, to be composed of the signs for twilight, wind, and pinetrees; or wind, night, and wild waters; with certain other elements which not the brain-mind, but the creative soul, would have to supply. In such a symbol there would be an appeal to the imagination — that great Wizard within us — to rise up and supply us with quantities of knowledge left unsaid. Indeed, I am but trying to illustrate an idea, possibilities. . . . I think there is a power within the human soul to trace back all growths, the most profuse and complex, to the simple seed from which they sprung; or, just as a single rose or pansy bloom is the resultant, the expression, of the interaction and interplay of innumerable forces — so the innumerable forces whose interaction makes the history of one race, one culture, could find their ultimate expression in a symbol as simple as a pansy or rose bloom — color, form, and fragrance. So each national great age would be a flower evolved in the Garden of the Eternal; and once evolved, once bloomed, it should never pass away; the actual blossom withers and falls; but the color, the form, the fragrance,— these remain in the world of causes. And just as you might press a flower in an album, or make a painting of it, and preserve its scent by chemical distillation or what not — and thereby preserve the whole story of all the forces that went to the production of that bloom — and they are, I suppose, in number beyond human computation — so you might express the history of a race in a symbol as simple as a bloom. . . . And that there is a power, an unfolding faculty, in the soul, which, seeing such a symbol, could unravel from it, by meditation, the whole achievement of the race; its whole history, down to details; yes, even down to the lives of every soul that incarnated in it: their personal lives, with all successes, failures, attempts, everything.

Because, for example, the light which comes down to us as that of ancient Greece is the resultant, the remainder of all the forces in all the lives of all individual Greeks, as these were played on by the conditions of place and time. Time:— at such and such a period, the Mood of the

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

Oversoul is such and such. Place:— the temporal mood of the Oversoul, playing through that particular facet of the dodecahedron, which is Greece. The combinations and interplay of these two, plus the energies for good or evil of the souls there incarnate, give as their resultant the whole life of the race. There is perhaps a high Algebra of the Soul by which, if we understood its laws, we could revive the history of any past epoch, discover its thought and modes of living, as we discover the value of the unknown factor in an equation. Pythagoras must have his pupils understand music and geometry; and by music he intended, all the arts, every department of life that came under the sway of the Nine Muses. Why? — Because, as he taught, God is Poet and Geometer. Chaos is only on the outer rim of existence; as you get nearer the heart of things, order and rhythm, geometry and poetry, are more and more found. Chaos is only in our own chaotic minds and perceptions; train these aright, and you shall hear the music of the spheres, perceive the reign of everlasting Law. These impulses from the Oversoul, that create the great epochs, raising one race after another, have perfect rhythm and rhyme. God sits harping in the Cycle of Infinity, and human history is the far faint echo of the tune he plays. Why can we not listen, till we hear and apprehend the tune? Or history is the sound heard from far, of the marching hosts of angels and archangels; the cyclic tread of their battalions; the thrill and rumble and splendor of their drums and fifes:— why should we not listen till the whole order of their cohorts and squadrons is revealed? — I mean to suggest that there are laws, undiscovered, but discoverable — discoverable from the fragments of history we possess — by knowing which we might gain knowledge, even without further material discoveries, of the lost history of man. Without moving from Point Loma, or digging up anything more important than hard-pan, we may yet make the most important finds, and throw floods of light on the whole dark problem of the past. H. P. Blavatsky gave us the clues; we owe it to her to use them.

Now I want to suggest a few ideas along these lines that may throw light on ancient Europe; of which orthodox history tells us of nothing but the few centuries of Greece and Rome. As if the people of three thousand years hence should know, of the history of Christendom, only that of Italy from Garibaldi onward, and that of Greece beginning, say, at the Second Balkan War. That is the position we are in with regard to old Europe. Very likely Spain, France, Britain, Germany and Scandinavia played as great parts in the millennia B. C., as they have done in the times we know about. All analogy from the other seats of civilization is for it; all racial memories and traditions — tradition is racial memory — are for it; and I venture to say, all reason and common sense are for it too.

## THE CREST-WAVE OF EVOLUTION

Now I have to remind you of certain conclusions worked out in an article 'Cyclic Law in History,' which appeared some time back in THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH: — that there are, for example, three great centers of historical activity in the Old World: China with her surroundings; West Asia with Egypt; Europe. Perhaps these are major facets of the Dodecahedron. Perhaps again, were the facts in our knowledge not so desperately incomplete, we should find, as in the notes and colors, a set of octaves: that each of these centers was a complete octave, and each phase or nation a note. Do you see where this leads? Supposing the note *China* is struck in the Far Eastern Octave; would there not be a vibration of some corresponding note in the octave Europe? Supposing the Octave *West Asia* were under the fingers of the Great Player, would not the corresponding note in Europe vibrate?

Now let us look at history. Right on the eastern rim of the Old World is the Chino-Japanese field of civilization. It has been, until lately, under pralaya, in a night or inactive period of its existence, for something over six centuries: a beautiful pralaya in the case of Japan; a rather ugly one, recently, in the case of China. Right on the western rim of the Old World are the remnants of the once great Celtic peoples. Europe at large has been very much in manvantara, a day or waking period, for a little over six hundred years. Yet of the four racial roots or stocks of Europe, the Greco-Latin, Teutonic, Slavic, and Celtic, the last-named alone has been under pralaya, sound asleep, during the whole of this time. Let me interject here the warning that it is no complete scheme that is to be offered; only a few facts that suggest that such a scheme may exist, could we find it. Before Europe awoke to her present cycle of civilization and progress, before the last quarter of the thirteenth century, the Chinese had been in manvantara, very much awake, for about fifteen hundred years. When they went to sleep, the Celts did also.

I pass by with a mere nod of recognition the two dragons, the one on the Chinese, the other on the Welsh flag; just saying that national symbols are not chosen haphazard, but are an expression of inner things; and proceed to give you the dates of all the important events in Chinese and Celtic, chiefly Welsh, history during the last two thousand years. In 1911 the Chinese threw off the Manchu yoke and established a native republic. In 1910 the British Government first recognised Wales as a separate nationality, when the heir to the throne was invested as Prince of Wales at Carnarvon. Within a few years a bill was passed giving Home Rule to Ireland; and national parliaments at Dublin and at Cardiff are said to be among the likelihoods of the near future. The eighteenth century, for manvantara, was a singularly dead time in Europe; but in China, for pralaya, it was a singularly living time, being filled with

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

the glorious reigns of the Manchu emperors Kanghi and Kien Lung. In Wales it saw the religious revival which put a stop to the utter Anglicization of the country, saved the language from rapid extinction, and awakened for the first time for centuries a sort of national consciousness. Going back, the first great emperor we come to in China before the Manchu conquest, was Ming Yunglo, conqueror of half Asia. His contemporary in Wales was Owen Glyndwr, who succeeded in holding the country against the English for a number of years; there had been no Welsh history between Glyndwr and the religious revival. In 1260 or thereabouts the Mongols completed the conquest of China, and dealt her then flourishing civilization a blow from which it never really recovered. About twenty years later the English completed the conquest of Wales, and dealt her highly promising literary culture a blow from which it is only now perhaps beginning to recover. In the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries the great Sung artists of China were painting infinity on their square feet of silk: painting Natural Magic as it has never been painted or revealed since. In those same centuries the Welsh bards were writing the Natural Magic of the Mabinogion, one of the chief European repositories of Natural Magic; and filling a remarkable poetical literature with the same quality: — and that before the rest of Europe had, for the most part, awakened to the spiritual impulses that lead to civilization. In the seventh and eighth centuries, when continental Europe was in the dead vast and middle of pralaya, Chinese poetry, under Tang Hsuan-tsung and his great predecessors, was in its Golden Age — a Golden Age comparable to that of Pericles in Athens. In the seventh and eighth centuries, Ireland was sending out scholars and thinkers as missionaries to all parts of benighted Europe: Ireland in her golden age, the one highly cultured country in Christendom, was producing a glorious prose and poetry in the many universities that starved that then by no means disthressful island. In 420, China, after a couple of centuries of anarchy, began to re-establish her civilization on the banks of the Yangtse. In 410, the Britons finally threw off the Roman yoke, and the first age of Welsh poetry, the epoch of Arthur and Taliesin, which has been the light of romantic Europe ever since, began.

Does it not seem as if that great Far Eastern note could not be struck without this little far western note vibrating in sympathy? Very faintly; not in a manner to be heard clearly by the world; because in historical times the Celtic note has been as it were far up on the keyboard, and never directly under the Master-Musician's fingers. — And when you add to it all that this Celtic note has come in the minds of literary critics rather to stand as the synonym for Natural Magic — you all know what is meant by that term; — and that now, as we are discovering the old

## THE CREST-WAVE OF EVOLUTION

Chinese poetry and painting, we are finding that Natural Magic is really far more Chinese than Celtic — that where we Celts have vibrated to it minorly, the great Chinese gave it out fully and grandly — does it not add to the piquancy of the ‘coincidence’?

Now there is no particular reason for doubting the figures of Chinese chronology as far back as 2350 B. C. Our Western authorities do doubt all before about 750; but it is hard to see why, except that ‘it is their nature to.’ The Chinese give the year 2356 as the date of the accession of the Emperor Yao, first of the three canonized rulers who have been the patriarchs, saints, sages, and examples for all ages since. In that decade a manvantara of the race would seem to have begun, which lasted through the dynasties of Hia and Shang, and halfway through the Chow, ending about 850. During this period, then, I think presently we shall come to place the chief activities and civilization of the Celts. From 850 to 240 — all these figures are of course approximations — there was pralaya in China; on the other side of the world, it was the period of Celtic eruptions — and probably, disruption. While Tsin Shi Hwangti, from 246 to 213, was establishing the modern Chinese Empire, the Gauls made their last incursion into Italy. The culmination of the age Shi Hwangti inaugurated came in the reign of Han Wuti, traditionally the most glorious in the Chinese annals. It lasted from 140 to 86 B. C.; nor was there any decline under his successor, who reigned until 63. In the middle of that time — the last decade of the second century — the Cimbri, allied with the Teutones, made their incursion down into Spain. Opinion is divided as to whether this people was Celtic or Teutonic; but probably the old view is the true one, that the word is akin to Cimmerii, Crimea, and Cymry, and that they were Welshmen in their day. When Caesar was in Gaul, the people he conquered had much to say about their last great king, Diviciacos, whose dominions included Gaul and Britain; they looked back to his reign as a period of great splendor and national strength. He lived, they said, about a hundred years before Caesar’s coming — or was contemporary with Han Wuti.

But the empire of the Celtic kings was already far fallen, before it was confined to Gaul, Britain, and perhaps Ireland. When first we see this people they were winning a name for fickleness of purpose: making conquests and throwing them away; which things are the marks of a race declining from a high eminence it had won of old through hard work and sound policy. We shall come to see that personal or outward characteristics can never be posited as inherent in any race. Such things belong to ages and stages in the race’s growth. Whatever you can say of Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans, now, has been totally untrue of them at some other period. We think of the Italians as passionate, subtle of intellect,

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

above all things artistic and beauty-loving. Now look at them as they were three centuries B. C.: plodding, self-contained and self-mastered, square-dealing and unsubtle, above all things contemning beauty, wholly inartistic. But a race may retain the same traits for a very long time, if it remains in a back-water, and is unaffected by the currents of evolution.

So we may safely say of the Celts that the fickleness for which they were famed in Roman times was not a racial, but a temporal or epochal defect. They were not fickle when they held out (in Wales) for eight centuries against the barbarian onslaughts which brought the rest of the Roman Empire down in two or three; or when they resisted for two hundred years those Normans who had conquered the Anglo-Saxons in a decade. This very quality, in old Welsh literature, is more than once given as a characteristic of extreme age; "I am old, bent double; I am fickle rash," says Llywarch Hên. I think that gives the clew to the whole position. The race was at the end of its manvantaric period; the Race Soul had lost control of the forces that bound its organism together; centrifugism had taken the place of the centripetal impulse that marks the cycles of youth and growth. It had eaten into individual character; whence the tendency to fly off at tangents. We see the same thing in any decadent people; by which I mean, any people at the end of one of its manvantaras, and on the verge of a pralaya. And remember that a pralaya, like a night's rest or the Devachanic sleep between two lives, is simply a means for restoring strength and youth.

How great the Celtic nations had been in their day, and what settled and civilized centuries lay behind them, one may gather from two not much noticed facts. First: Caesar, conqueror of the Roman world and of Pompey, the greatest Roman general of the day, landed twice in Britain, and spent a few weeks there without accomplishing anything in particular. But it was the central seat and last stronghold of the Celts; and his greatest triumph was accorded him for this feat; and he was prouder of it than of anything else he ever did. He set it above his victories over Pompey. Second: the Gauls, in the first century B. C., were able to put in the field against him three million men: not so far short of the number France has been able to put in the field in the recent war. Napoleon could hardly, I suppose, have raised such an army — in France. Caesar is said to have killed some five million Gauls before he conquered them. By ordinary computations, that would argue a population of some thirty millions in the Gaulish half of the kingdom of Diviciacos a century after the latter's death; and even if that computation is too high, it leaves the fact irrefutable that there was a very large population; and a large population means always a long and settled civilization.

Diviciacos ruled only Gaul and Britain; possibly Ireland as well;

## THE CREST-WAVE OF EVOLUTION

he may have been a Gaul, a Briton, or an Irishman; very likely there was not much difference in those days. It will be said I am leaving out of account much that recent scholarship has divulged; I certainly am leaving out of account a great many of the theories of recent scholarship, which for the most part make confusion worse confounded. But we know that the lands held by the Celts — let us boldly say, with many of the most learned, the Celtic Empire — was vastly larger in its prime than the British Isles and France. Its eastern outpost was Galatia in Asia Minor. You may have read in *The Outlook* some months ago an article by a learned Serbian, in which he claims that the Jugo-Slavs of the Balkans, his countrymen, are about half Celtic: the product of the fusion of Slavic in-comers, perhaps conquerors, with an original Celtic population. Bohemia was once the land of the Celtic Boii; and we may take it as an axiom, that no conquest, no racial incursion, ever succeeds in wiping out the conquered people; unless there is such wide disparity, racial and cultural, as existed, for example, between the white settlers in America and the Indians. There are forces in human nature itself which make this absolute. The conquerors may quite silence the conquered; may treat them with infinite cruelty; may blot out all their records and destroy the memory of their race; but the blood of the conquered will go on flowing through all the generations of the children of the conquerors, and even, it seems probable, tend ever more and more to be the prevalent element.

The Celts, then, at one time or another, have held the following lands: Britain and Ireland, of course; Gaul and Spain; Switzerland, and Italy north of the Po; Germany, except perhaps some parts of Prussia; Denmark probably, which as you know was called the Cimbric Chersonese; the Austrian Empire, with the Balkan Peninsula north of Macedonia, Epirus and Thrace, and much of southern Russia and the lands bordering the Black Sea. Further back, it seems probable that they and the Italic peoples were one race; whose name survives in that of the province of Liguria, and in the Welsh name for England, which is Lloegr. So that in the reign of Diviciacos their empire had already shrunk to the merest fragment of its former self. It had broken and shrunk before we get the first historical glimpses of them; before they sacked Delphi in 279 B. C.; before their ambassadors made a treaty with Alexander; and replied to his question as to what they feared: "Nothing, except that the skies should fall." Before they sacked Rome in 390. All these historic eruptions were the mere sporadic outbursts of a race long past its prime and querulous with old age, I think. Two thousand years of severe pralaya, almost complete extinction, utter insignificance and terrible karma awaited them; and we only see them, pardon the expression, kicking

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

up their heels in a final plunge as a preparation for that long silence.

Some time back I discussed these historical questions, particularly the correspondence between Celtic and Chinese dates, with Dr. Sirén and Professor Fernholm; and they pointed out to me a similar correspondence between the dates of Scandinavian and West Asian history. I can remember but one example now: Gustavus Vasa, father of modern Sweden, founder of the present monarchy, came to the throne in 1523 and died in 1560. The last great epoch of the West Asian Cycle coincides, in the west, with the reign of Suleyman the Magnificent in Turkey, from 1520 to 1566. At its eastern extremity, Babar founded the Mogul Empire in India in 1526; he reigned until 1556. On the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, the Moguls ceased to be a great power; the Battle of Pultowa, in 1709, put an end to Sweden's military greatness.

It is interesting to compare the earliest Celtic literature we have, with the earliest literature of the race which was to be the main instrument of Celtic bad karma in historical times — the Teutons. Here, as usual, common impressions are false. It is the latter, the Teutonic, that is in the minor key, and full of wistful sadness. There is an earnestness about it: a recognition of, and rather mournful acquiescence in, the mightiness of Fate, which is imagined almost always adverse. I quote these lines from William Morris, who, a Celt himself by mere blood and race, lived in and interpreted the old Teutonic spirit as no other English writer has attempted to do, much less succeeded in doing: he is the one Teuton of English literature. He speaks of the "haunting melancholy" of the northern races — the "Thought of the Otherwhere" that

"Waileth weirdly along through all music and song  
From a Teuton's voice or string: . . ."

— Withal it was a brave melancholy that possessed them; they were equal to great deeds, and not easily to be discouraged; they could make merry, too; but in the midst of their merriment, they could not forget grim and hostile Fate:—

"There dwelt men merry-hearted and in hope exceeding great,  
Met the good days and the evil as they went the ways of fate."

It is a literature that reveals the heart of a people who had suffered long, and learnt from their suffering the lessons of patience, humility, continuity of effort: those qualities which enabled them, in their coming manvantaric period, to dominate large portions of the world.

But when we turn to the Celtic remains, the picture we find is altogether different. Their literature tells of a people, in the Biblical phrase, "with a proud look and a high stomach." It is full of flashing colors, gaiety, titanic pride. There was no grayness, no mournful twilight hue on the horizon of their mind; their 'Other-World' was only more



## THE CREST-WAVE OF EVOLUTION

dawn-lit, more noon-illuminated, than this one; Ireland of the living was sun-bright and sparkling and glorious; but the 'Great Plain' of the dead was far more sun-bright and sparkling than Ireland. It is the literature of a people accustomed to victory and predominance. When they began to meet defeat they by no means acquiesced in it. They regarded adverse fate, not with reverence, but with contempt. They saw in sorrow no friend and instructress of the human soul; were at pains to learn no lesson from her; instead, they pitted what was their pride, but what they would have called the glory of their own souls, against her; they made no terms, asked no truce; but went on believing the human — or perhaps I should say the Celtic — soul more glorious than fate, stronger to endure and defy than she to humiliate and torment. In many senses it was a fatal attitude, and they reaped the misery of it; but they gained some wealth for the human spirit from it too. The aged Oisín has returned from Fairyland to find the old glorious order in Ireland fallen and passed during the three centuries of his absence. High Paganism has gone, and a religion meek, inglorious, and Unceltic has taken its place. Patrick, holding converse with him, would convert him to submission thereto: tells him the gods are conquered and dead, and that the omnipotent God of the Christians reigns alone now. — "I would thy God were set on yonder hill to fight with my son Oscar!" replies Oisín. Patrick paints for him the hell to which he is destined unless he accepts Christianity; and Oisín answers:

"Put the staff in my hands! for I go to the Fenians, thou cleric, to chant  
The warsongs that roused them of old; they will rise, making clouds with  
their breath,  
Innumerable, singing, exultant; and hell underneath them shall pant,  
And demons be broken in pieces, and trampled beneath them in death."

— "No," says Patrick; "none war on the masters of hell, who could break up the world in their rage"; and bids him weep and kneel in prayer for his lost soul. But that will not do for the old Celtic warrior bard; no tame heaven for him. He will go to hell; he will not surrender the pride and glory of his soul to the mere meanness of fate. He will

"Go to Caolte and Conan, and Bran, Sgeolan, Lomair  
And dwell in the house of the Fenians, be they in flames or at feast."

So with Llywarch Hên, Prince of Cumberland, in his old age and desolation. His kingdom has been conquered; he is in exile in Wales; his four and twenty sons, "wearers of golden torques, proud rulers of princes," have been slain; he is considerably over a hundred years old, and homeless, and sick; but no whit of his pride is gone. He has learnt no lesson from life except this one: that fate and Karma and sorrow are not so proud, not so skilful to persecute, as the human soul is capable

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

of bitter resentful endurance. He is titanically angry with destiny; but never meek or acquiescent.

Then if you look at their laws of war, you come to know very well how this people came to be almost blotted out. If they had had a true spiritual purpose, instead of mere personal pride, I should say the world would be Celtic-speaking and Celtic-governed now. Yet still their reliance was all on what we must call spiritual qualities. The first notice we get in classical literature of Celts and Teutons — I think from Strabo — is this: "The Celts fight for glory, the Teutons for plunder." Instead of plunder, let us say material advantage; they knew why they were fighting, and went to get it. But the Celtic military laws — Don Quixote in a fit of extravagance framed them! There must be no defensive armor; the warrior must go bare-breasted into battle. There are a thousand things he must fear more than defeat or death — all that would make the glory of his soul seem less to him. He must make fighting his business; because in his folly it seemed to him that in it he could best nourish that glory; not for what material ends he could gain. Pitted against a people with a definite policy, he was bound to lose in the long run. But still he endowed the human spirit with a certain wealth; still his folly had been a true spiritual wisdom at one time. The French at Fontenoy, who cried to their English enemies, when both were about to open fire: "*Après vous, messieurs!*" were simply practising the principles of their Gaulish forefathers; the thrill of honor, of '*pundonor*' as the Spaniard says, was much more in their eyes than the chance of victory.

Now, in what condition does a race gain such qualities? Not in sorrow; not in defeat, political dependence or humiliation. The virtues which these teach are of an opposite kind; they are what we may call the plebeian virtues which lead to success. But the others, the old Celtic qualities, are essentially patrician. You find them in the Turks; accustomed to sway subject races, and utterly ruthless in their dealings with them; but famed as clean and chivalrous fighters in a war with foreign peoples. See how the Samurai, the patricians of never yet defeated Japan, developed them. They are the qualities the Law teaches us through centuries of domination and aristocratic life. They are developed in a race accustomed to rule other races; a race that does not engage in commerce; in an aristocratic race, or in an aristocratic caste within a race. Here is the point: the Law designs periods of ascendancy for each people in its turn, that it may acquire these qualities; and it appoints for each people in its turn periods of subordination, poverty and sorrow, that it may develop the opposite qualities of patience, humility, and orderly effort.

Would it not appear then, that in those first centuries B. C. when

## THE CREST-WAVE OF EVOLUTION

Celts and Teutons were emerging into historical notice, the Teutons were coming out of a long period of subordination, in which they had learnt strength — the Celts out of a long period of ascendancy, in which they had learnt — other things? The Teuton, fresh from his pralayaic sleep, was unconquerable by Rome. The Celt, old, and intoxicated with the triumphs of a long *manvantara*, could not repel Roman persistence and order. Rome, too, was rising, or in her prime; had patience, and followed her material plans every inch of the way to success. Where she conquered, she imposed her rule. But whatever material plan were set before the Celt, some spiritual red-herring, some notion in his mind, was sure to sidetrack him before he had come half way to its accomplishment. He had had enough of empire-building; and thirsted only after dreams. Brennus turned from a burnt Rome, his pride satisfied. Vercingetorix, decked in all his gold, rode seven times — was it seven times? — round the camp of Caesar; defeat had come to him; death was coming; but he would bathe his soul in a little pomp and glory first. Whether you threw your sword in the scales, or surrendered to infamous Caesar, the main thing was that you should kindle the pride in your eye, and puff up the highness of your stomach. . . . So the practical Roman despised him, and presently conquered him.

Here is another curious fact: the greater number, if not all, of the words in the Teutonic languages denoting social order and the machinery of government, are of Celtic derivation. Words such as *Reich* and *Amt*, to give two examples I happen to remember out of a list quoted by Mr. T. W. Rolleston in one of his books.

And now I think we have material before us wherewith to reconstruct a sketch or plan of ancient European history. Let me remind you again that our object is simply the discovery of Laws. That, in the eyes of the Law, there are no most favored nations. That there are no such things as permanent racial characteristics; but that each race adopts the characteristics appropriate to its stage of growth.

It is a case of the pendulum swing, of ebb and flow. For two thousand years the Teutons have been pressing on and dominating the Celts. They started at the beginning of that time with the plebeian qualities — and have evolved, generally speaking, a large measure of the patrician qualities. The Celts, meanwhile, have been pushed to the extremities of the world; their history has been a long record of disasters. But in the preceding period the case was just the reverse. Then the Celts held the empire. They ruled over large Teutonic populations. Holding all the machinery of government in their hands, they imposed on the languages of their Teuton subjects the words concerned with that

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

machinery; just as in Welsh now our words of that kind are mostly straight from the English. It does not follow that there was any sudden rising of Teutons against dominant Celts; more probably the former grew gradually stronger as the latter grew gradually weaker, until the forces were equalized. We find the Cimbri and Teutones allied on equal terms against Rome. According to an old Welsh history, the *Brut Tyssilio*, there were Anglo-Saxons in Britain before Caesar's invasion; invited there by the Celts, and living in peace under the Celtic kings. To quote the *Brut Tyssilio* a short time ago would have been to ensure being scoffed at on all sides; but recently Professor Flinders Petrie has vindicated it as against both the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and Caesar himself. English — Teutonic — was first spoken in Britain, probably, some two or three centuries B. C.; and it survived there, probably, in remote places, through the whole of the Roman occupation; then, under the influence of the rising star of the Teutons, and reinforced by new incursions from the Continent, finally extinguished the Latin of the Roman province, and drove Celtic into the west.

But go back from those first centuries B. C., and you come at last to a time when the Celtic star was right at the zenith, the Teutonic very low. Free Teutons you should hardly have found except in Scandinavia; probably only in southern Sweden; for further north, and in most of Norway, you soon came to ice and the Lapps and *terra incognita*. And even Sweden may have been under Celtic influence — for the Celtic words survive there — but hardly so as to affect racial individuality; just as Wales and Ireland are under English rule now, yet retain their Celtic individuality.

And then go back a few more thousand years again, and you would probably find the case again reversed; and Teutons lording it over Celts, and our present conditions restored. It is by suffering these poles of experience, now pride and domination, now humiliation and adversity, that the races of mankind learn. Europe is not a new sort of continent. Man, says one of the Teachers, has been much what he is any time these million years. History has been much what it is now, ebbing and flowing. Knowledge, geographical and other, has receded, and again expanded. Europe has been the seat of empires and civilizations, all Europe, probably, for not so far short of a million years; there has been plenty of time for it to multiply terrible karma — which takes the occasion to expend itself sometimes — as now. I mistrust the theory of recent Aryan in-pourings from Asia. The Huns came in when the Chinese drove them; and the Turks and Mongols have come in since; but there is nothing to show that the Slavs, for example, when they first appear in history, had come in from beyond the Urals and the Caspian. Slavs and Greco-Latins, Teutons

## THE CREST-WAVE OF EVOLUTION

and Celts, I think they were probably in Europe any time these many hundreds of thousands of years.

Or rather, I think there were Europeans — Indo-Europeans, Aryans, call them what you will — where they are now at any time during such a period. Because race is a thing that will not bear close investigation. It is a phase; an illusion; a temporary appearance taken on by sections of humanity. There is nothing in it to fight about or get the least hot over. It is a camouflage; there you have the very word for it. What we call Celts and Teutons are simply portions of the one race, humanity, camouflaged up upon their different patterns. So far as blood and ultimate physical heredity are concerned, I doubt there is sixpennyworth of difference between any two of the lot. “Oi mesilf,” said Mr. Dooley, speaking as a good American citizen, “am the thruet and purest Anglo-Saxon that iver came out of Anglo-Saxony.” We call ourselves Anglo-Saxons because we speak English (a language more than half Latin); when in reality we are probably Jews, Turks, infidels or heretics, if all were known. What is a Spaniard? A Latin, you answer pat. Yes; he speaks a Latin-derived language; and has certain qualities of temperament which seem to mark him as more akin to the French and Italians, than to those whom we, just as wisely, dub ‘Teutonic’ or ‘Slavic.’ But in fact he may have in his veins not a drop of blood that is not Celtic, or not a drop that is not Teutonic, or Moorish, or Roman, or Phoenician, or Iberian, or God knows what.

Suppose you have four laya centers in Europe; four foci through which psychic impulses from the Oversoul pour through into this world. A Mediterranean point, perhaps in Italy; a Teutonic point in Sweden; a Celtic point in Wales-Ireland (formerly a single island, before England rose out of the sea); and a Slavic point, probably in Russia. The moment comes for such and such a ‘race’ to expand: the Mediterranean, for example. The Italian laya center, Rome, quickens into life. Rome conquers Italy, Gaul, Spain, Britain, the East; becomes *Caput Mundi*. Countries that shortly before were Celtic in blood, become, through no material change in that blood, Latin: by language, and, as we say, by race. The moment comes for a Teutonic expansion. The laya center in Sweden quickens; there is a Swedish (or Gothic) invasion of Celtic lands south of the Baltic; the continental Teutons presently are freed. It is the expansion of a spirit, of a psychic something. People that were before Celts (just as Mr. Dooley is an Anglo-Saxon) become somehow Teutons. The language expands, and carries a tradition with it. Head measurements show that neither Southern Germany nor England differs very much towards Teutonicism from the Mediterranean type; yet the one is thoroughly Teutonic, the other Anglo-Saxon. Sometimes the blood

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

may be changed materially; often, I suppose, it is changed to some extent; but the main change takes place in the language and tradition; sometimes in tradition alone. There was a minor Celtic quickening in the twelfth century A. D.; then Wales was in a fervor of national life. She had not the resources, or perhaps the will, for outside conquest. But her Arthurian legend went forth, and drove Beowulf and Child Horn out of the memory of the English, Charlemagne out of the memory of the French; invaded Germany, Italy, even Spain; absolutely installed Welsh King Arthur as the national hero of the people his people were fighting; and infused chivalry with a certain uplift and mysticism throughout western Europe. Or again, in the Cinquecento and earlier, the Italian center quickened; and learning and culture flowed up from Italy through France and England; and these countries, with Spain, become the leaders in power and civilization.

England, since that Teutonic expansion which made her English was spent, has grown less and less Teutonic, more and more Latin; the Italian impulse of the Renaissance drove her far along that path. In the middle of the eleventh century, her language was purely Teutonic; you could count on the fingers of your hand the words derived from Latin or Celtic. And now? Sixty per cent. of all English words are Latin. At the beginning of the fifth century, after nearly three hundred years of Roman occupation, one can hardly doubt that Latin was the language of what is now England. Celtic, even then I imagine, was mainly to be heard among the mountains. See how that situation is slowly coming back. And the tendency is all in the same direction. You have taken, indeed, a good few words from Dutch; and some two dozen from German, in all these centuries; but a Latin word has only to knock, to be admitted and made welcome. Teachers of composition must sweat blood and tears for it, alas, to get their pupils to write English and shun Latin. In a thousand years' time, will English be as much a Latin language as French is? Quite likely. The Saxon words grow obsolete; French ones come pouring in. And Americans are even more prone to Latinisms than Englishmen are: they 'locate' at such and such a place, where an Englishman would just go and live there.

Before Latin, Celtic was the language of Britain. Finally, says W. Q. Judge, Sanskrit will become the universal language. That would mean simply that the Fifth Root Race will swing back slowly through all the linguistic changes that it has known in the past, till it reaches its primitive language condition. Then the descendants of Latins, Slavs, Celts, and Teutons will proudly boast their unadulterated Aryan-Sanskrit heredity, and exult over their racial superiority to those barbarous Teutons, Celts, Slavs, and Latins of old, of whom their histories will lie profusely.

## CAER NEFEN HIR

CENYDD MORUS

*"I have been with thee in Caer Brythwch and Brythach and Ferthach, and in Caer Nefen Hir; Nine Supreme Sovereigns, handsome men, saw we there."*—Culhwch and Olwen

THEY came to the great spaces of the sea;  
And many times the dark blue roof of night  
Paled into silver-rimmed and sapphire light,  
And many times eve flickered fitfully  
About the sea-brim circle, dying away  
In silver, cream and gray; and many times  
They heard the wandering jargon the waves croon  
Break to a murmur of speech, a flutter of tune,  
And under the moon strange voices, wizard rhymes.  
And once from out the rubiate setting sun  
Running came one, the tossing of whose hair  
Strewed the sea-floor with pale and delicate dews,  
Cowslip and primrose hues, and foxglove hues,  
Silverly rippling on the waters there.  
And there were often wailings in the air,  
And sudden rushings by, and flurryings  
Of unseen fleet harp-strings. . . . .

Sometimes the sun would don him dragon pinions,  
And ramp and glory through his blue dominions  
With sudden flashings of long neck and tail,  
And body lithe gleaming in golden mail  
To north and south of heaven, and east and west;  
And once toward evening he lit down on the crest  
Of a huge caer that towered into the sky  
Far, far and far, with flamey ramparts high  
Whereover presently star peered and star.  
And all night long they made toward that great hold;  
And saw it flame at dawn still far and far,  
And glimmer in dim ruby, amber, gold,  
Pinnacled manifold  
And silverly into the midmost bloom  
And beauty of blue heaven; and when night came,  
Still far off through the dark they saw it loom  
And burgeon in faint flame.  
And on the seventh dawn, they came before  
Its diamond-studded door, wherever beat

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

Immediately the sleet,  
And boomed the thunder of billows, evermore.  
Seven times they raised up shoutings sevenfold;  
Then back before their prow the granite rolled,  
And lo, a vast, world-olden, sea-floored hall  
Filled with the everlasting croon and call  
And wash of muted waves; and in the gloom  
The murmur of far winds, and far wave-boom  
In antres of the Sea-gods, far, unknown. . . . .

Then spake the Porter: "Year on endless year,  
Nine Supreme Sovereigns bide in Nefen hir,  
Wielding the powers of many a mystic throne  
In regions man-unknown, and might to enthrall  
Wind and wave and the elemental kin.  
And who comes living here, must meet them all  
Leaning over the chessboard; and save he win,  
He shall not pass, nor win to the Fortunate Isles."

—"I would meet strength with strength, and wiles  
with wiles,

And come to those bright Isles, and dwell therein."

—"Thou shalt need both, and to be void of fear;  
For all the dragon pathways of the sea  
Between those Green Spots and the Isle of Hu  
Lead certainly here-through, confluent here;  
And here the Nine Song-birds of Faërie  
Wait the wan coracles that the spirits steer;  
And none may travel whither fare the slain  
Westward the wizard main,  
Save one of those nine birds of Nefen hir  
Guide him."

Through that immense sea-caer they passed,  
Creeping the wave-dark floor, and came at last  
Before a mountain, and thereon a throne  
Where one sat motionless, gigantic, lone —  
Gigantic, without motion, passionless, crowned  
And torqued and girdled round  
With sovereign emblems; in his mighty hand  
A great king's wand, ensouled  
With mystic paramour of some secret land  
Only the Gods know, only They behold. . . . .

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## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

### ASTRONOMICAL NOTES

C. J. RYAN

#### PART I

OW that the two largest and most efficient telescopes yet made are getting into working order it is possible that new light will be thrown upon some of the unsolved or disputed problems of astronomy. The great telescope at the Mount Wilson Solar Observatory, Southern California, with its reflecting mirror of eight feet four inches diameter and tube forty-three feet long, is now complete and in use; it is expected to reveal a hundred million faint stars never before seen, and to show minute detail on the Moon which may serve to clear up many disputes about the condition of its surface. This great instrument is two feet larger in diameter than any of its predecessors. Lord Rosse's well-known telescope at Parsonstown, Ireland, till now the largest in the world, was six feet across. It was very inconveniently mounted and its mirror was inferior in definition, but on account of its great light-grasping power it revealed objects previously unseen because of their faintness, such as the mysterious spiral nebulae. It never fulfilled the hopes of its makers, and it is now dismantled; the six-foot mirror has lately been given to the South Kensington Museum, London.

The other giant telescope recently installed is that of the Dominion Astronomical Observatory, Victoria, Canada. It is not so powerful as

## ASTRONOMICAL NOTES

the one at Mount Wilson, being six feet in diameter, the same size as Lord Rosse's, but is far superior in every way to his instrument. The tube is thirty-one feet long, and, despite its immense weight, can be easily moved to any desired position by electric motors. Both these new instruments are triumphs of optical and engineering skill.

Among the unanswered problems which face us in the Solar System, some of the most puzzling are presented by our nearest neighbor, the familiar Moon. Although it is comparatively so close that objects only a few hundred feet long can be distinguished in large telescopes, astronomers are divided in opinion about the origin of the strange features we can see so clearly, and still more about the conditions now prevailing upon the surface. One theory of the origin of the weird holes called craters and the immense circular walled-plains is that internal fires broke through the crust in a manner somewhat similar to the volcanic eruptions on the Earth: this is entirely discredited by another school which holds that the Moon when plastic had been bombarded by gigantic projectiles — meteoric stones or perhaps small planets — and that the pitted surface of large parts of the Moon is the result. It has also been seriously suggested that the strange appearances we see may be explained by the action of cold, and that the Moon is covered with masses of ice and snow.

The meteorite theory of the lunar surface implies a temporary shower of large projectiles at some remote date, but there are also curious problems in connexion with the ordinary fall of meteorites upon the Moon, for it is supposed that the Moon is bombarded by these masses of iron and stone similarly to the Earth. Professor Shaler of Harvard once pointed out difficulties which have not been answered. How can it be that if a terrific hail of meteorites have been bombarding the Moon for ages we see no evidences of them in the shape of smoothed surfaces of mountains and a uniformly dark color covering every level plain? The elevated masses are bold and sharp, and the great plains are diversified by brilliant white streaks and patches of color and intersected by unfilled cracks and chasms. Although the Moon's surface is smaller than the Earth's the incessant bombardment of rocky meteorites ought to be far greater, for our companion planet is unprotected by the dense atmosphere which preserves everything on Earth from the quick destruction that would be caused by the smashing down of the millions of meteorites which are supposed to fall daily. There is no known reason why the Moon should escape the ceaseless battering of the celestial missiles; and yet, why are not the cracks and craters filled, and how is it that the white and colored marks on the level surfaces are vividly clear?

Does something prevent the fall of meteorites upon the Moon, or is

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

there something wrong about our theory of meteor falls? Some think the latter.

The general opinion about lunar conditions is that there is no appreciable atmosphere, no moisture, mist, or ice, and no vegetation or other form of life on the Moon. Professor Pickering has very different ideas, the result, he says, of extremely careful scrutiny of certain lunar mountains under all conditions of illumination. He claims that there is even photographic proof of his contention that the Moon has a very rare atmosphere, perhaps of carbon dioxid, and that certain changes in color during the lunar day are not to be explained except by the formation or melting of frost or the growth of vegetation. Among observations which seem to confirm his opinion he tells of one made during a total eclipse of the Moon; as the Earth's shadow was passing over the face of the Moon he noticed, and carefully measured, an increase in the bright area round the crater Linné. This took place, of course, during the hour or so when that part of the Moon was cut off from the light and heat of the Sun, and Professor Pickering reasons that it was a deposit of hoar frost forming visibly to the eye. He has also made elaborate observations of changes of color on Pico, an isolated mountain of great steepness, which apparently support his theory of falling and melting snows. The subject is very obscure, and it brings up the possibility of the existence of a lunar atmosphere. One difficulty in accepting this is the Kinetic Theory of Gases. Is the Moon's force of gravitation enough to prevent the molecules of an atmosphere such as ours flying off into outer space, or could some heavy gas like carbon dioxid be retained in craters or low-lying places? If the Kinetic Theory can be established so as to show the impossibility of the Moon retaining any kind of vapor owing to its small gravitational power, how are we to understand the haziness said to be seen round some of the Minor Planets, tiny worlds so small that a hundred would hardly make one Moon, or how can we explain the cohesion of the extremely attenuated substance of comets? In those cases gravitation must be extremely feeble.

Leaving many other unanswered lunar problems, and passing on to Mercury, we find that, excepting its movements, little more is known about the nearest planet to the Sun than its size, density, and distance. Has it any atmosphere? What is the length of its day? What is its real shape? The observations of the latest Transit of Mercury across the Sun's disk on November 7, 1914, were very confusing. From a large number of observations reported to an astronomical journal the following curious results are extracted. Seven observers with fair-sized instruments (including M. Jonckheere with the great Lille 28-inch telescope) noticed

## ASTRONOMICAL NOTES

that the planet was not round, and most of them said it seemed longer from north to south than from east to west, a statement that has been made in accounts of previous transits, extraordinary though it seems. Three observers saw the planet perfectly round. Ten reports were in favor of an atmosphere of some kind; one observer with a 12-inch telescope claimed that the atmosphere was chiefly confined to the "lower latitudes" of Mercury. Four reports as to atmosphere were in the negative. A white spot has long been suspected upon the dark side of the planet when in transit; in 1914 seven observers were certain of seeing it and three were doubtful. One said it was not in the center, an observation which agrees with several made on previous occasions; this seems to refute the suggestion that it was an optical illusion, but no one has offered any probable explanation of its existence. The evidence about Mercury in general is so conflicting that any positive statements should be taken with great caution.

Venus is not much better understood than Mercury. For instance, the length of its day is a subject of bitter controversy. From a study of the faint spots occasionally seen on its bright side many keen observers are certain that its day is about twenty-three and a half hours; others say it always turns the same face to the Sun! We cannot detect polar caps, and do not know at what angle the planet is inclined. It appears to be covered with dense clouds and there is little evidence of a thin atmosphere extending beyond the cloud-layer. There is also a 'dry' theory of Venus; *i. e.*, that it is perfectly arid and is subject to tremendous winds which carry volumes of dust and hide the general contour of the surface. This is highly improbable. Then again, what is the nature and cause of the mysterious 'ashy light' or 'phosphorescence' seen occasionally which faintly but distinctly illuminates the night side of Venus, the side that is turned away from the Sun? It is clear that at times Venus emits a light of its own; why is it not always seen?

A very interesting question has lately arisen in regard to the amount of astronomical knowledge possessed by the ancients. Everyone knows that even in a very small telescope Venus can be seen, when at a certain distance from the Sun, in the shape of a crescent — exactly like the Moon but brighter and without the lunar craters, etc. The point lately discussed is whether it is possible to see the crescent shape with the naked eye, and, if not how is it that the 'horns' of Venus were known long before the astronomical telescope was first made, as we have been always taught, by Galileo in 1609. Some curious information has lately come to light in this connexion.

When Galileo turned his new telescope on Venus and noticed the

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

phases, he published his famous Latin anagram which reads, when translated, "The Mother of Loves (Venus) imitates the phases of Cynthia (the Moon)." This discovery was at once seen to be a strong confirmation of the heterodox theories of the plurality of worlds, etc., and Galileo soon found himself in trouble. But, after all, it only seems to have been a re-discovery, for, as Mr. J. Cofford, of the Royal Asiatic Society, lately pointed out in the *Journal* of that body, there are many references to the 'horns of Venus' in ancient cuneiform literature from Mesopotamia. Dr. W. W. Campbell, Director of the Lick Observatory, thinks this must have been a lucky guess on the part of the ancient priest-astronomers, for Venus is too far away for the horns of the crescent to be seen without a telescope.

To test the possibility of seeing the crescent of Venus without optical assistance, some careful experiments have lately been made in the very clear atmosphere of Algeria with native college students selected for unusually keen eyesight. Drawings of the planet were used for the experiments. Due precautions were taken to prevent self-deception or other errors. Although the drawings were well lighted and free from the glare that always accompanies the real planet, the crescent shape was not seen until it was brought near enough to be more than twice the diameter of Venus at its best position. These trials effectually dispose of the vague reports we occasionally hear of the visibility of the horns of Venus to the naked eye, but not of the 'coincidence' or 'lucky guess' of the Mesopotamians, nor of the following curious fact from medieval times.

There is now, in the library of the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, a rare manuscript, an astronomical textbook, written in Irish, but for the most part, at least, a translation from a Latin version of an Arabic original by Masch Allah, an Arabian or possibly Jewish astronomer who lived about the close of the eighth century. It was turned into Latin in the thirteenth century and from that into Irish about the year 1400, and was made accessible to English readers in 1893.

Now in this ancient scientific treatise which was translated into Irish two hundred years before Galileo's telescope revealed the shape of Venus to the world of his day, we find the statement that when Venus and Mercury are twelve degrees from the Sun they are horned like the new Moon. As the crescent of Venus is invisible to the keenest eyesight, and also that of Mercury which is much smaller, how did Masch Allah in the eighth century (or the translators in the Middle Ages, at least two hundred years before Galileo, supposing they added the remark) know anything about the phases of the inferior planets? The constant efforts to belittle the wisdom of antiquity and to explain its learning by

## ASTRONOMICAL NOTES

'chance' and 'lucky guesswork' are on a par with the general tendency to exaggerate the importance of modern progress in material things and to minimize the greatness of former civilizations, which arises from two sources, antagonistic to one another but united in result, *i. e.*, the literal interpretation of Biblical allegories, and the materialistic theories of man's evolution. Far more must have been known about the planets and stars in ancient times than is commonly imagined. Whence did the Arabians derive their traditional knowledge that the bright star Sirius has traveled across the Milky Way, a journey that has taken it about sixty thousand years and which has only been recently ascertained by modern astronomers through the most refined measurements with large telescopes? May they not have derived it from the high culture of Chaldaea or ancient India? When we consider the marvelously exact tables of planetary movements handed down from prehistoric India and preserved in the *Sûrya-Siddhânta*, which cover cycles of enormous length, it is difficult to put any limit to the possibilities of astronomical knowledge in very ancient times. In regard to the Mesopotamians, it is the opinion of many that:

"the stellar tables made by the Greeks depended on a catalog of the fixed stars made by the Babylonians, and that these last-named people invented the sundial, and determined within a very small fraction the length of the synodic revolution of the moon. They knew that the true length of the solar year was 365 days and a quarter nearly, and had notions not far from the truth with respect to the relative distances from the earth of the sun, moon, and planets. Professor Rawlinson, who is our authority for the above statements, is of opinion that when the astronomical tablets which exist by hundreds in the British Museum come to be thoroughly understood, it will be found that the acquaintance of the Chaldaean sages with astronomical phenomena, if not also with astronomical laws, went considerably beyond the point at which it is placed on the testimony of Greek and Roman writers. The same author adds that there is distinct evidence that the Chaldaeans observed the four satellites of Jupiter, and that there is strong reason to believe that they were acquainted likewise with the seven satellites of Saturn."—*English Mechanic*, Nov. 8, 1907

Why, then, could not the ancient observers who stood upon their seven-storied pyramid-temples high above the plains of the Euphrates and Tigris, ages before the Greeks began to discuss the problems of the heavens, have known all about the phases of Venus and Mercury? The plano-convex lens found by Layard in the ruins of Nimrud, Assyria, is a very palpable hint that there were instruments in existence at the so-called 'dawn of civilization' of which no mention has been made in contemporary literature! The Mesopotamians represented their god Saturn sitting inside a *ring*! If they knew of the satellites of Jupiter, and perhaps of Saturn's, which require considerable optical aid to become visible, what is more likely than that they knew and handed down to the Arabians of later periods the knowledge of the crescent shape of Venus also, especially as the latter is a much easier object to see?

## KARMAN

A LECTURE DELIVERED BY REGINALD MACHELL AT THE  
ISIS THEATER, SAN DIEGO, JANUARY 5, 1919

**F**RIENDS: I have been asked to speak to you this morning on the subject of Karma.

Of course every student of Theosophy is familiar with the term Karma and with the ideas conveyed by it, but those who have not studied the subject may like to know the meaning and the origin of the term. It is an old Sanskrit word, and it is used because, to those who have studied Theosophy, it conveys a very clear and definite idea; and to those who come upon it for the first time it means nothing at all, which is an advantage, because almost all words that we use to express new ideas are already associated with a lot of old and misleading notions, and it is often a very long process to get at the real meaning of any particular word with which one may be quite familiar.

Roughly speaking, one might say that the law of Karma is the law of cause and effect. It is said in the East that results follow causes as the furrow follows the plow; and this is a very good illustration. I suppose any person of ordinary common sense would admit that in a general way that was a rational theory; but in practice we do not seem to believe in it. Some people find comfort in laying the blame for everything that happens to them, on fate; others on chance; others say, "It is the will of God"—all different ways of saying pretty much the same thing: and what they are saying is that they are not responsible.

As a rule nobody is willing to accept the responsibility for his or her own actions; and yet everybody knows that we can learn nothing really worth learning except by experience; and we have to get our experience ourselves: nobody can get it for us. And experience means simply learning that certain results will probably follow certain causes. It would be impossible to learn anything by experience if this were not the case; if we had no faith that there was in Nature a fundamental principle—I do not like the word 'law' because it suggests the laws that man has made. Men make laws for their own convenience, to make other people do things that the law-makers think they ought to do. Such laws may be good or bad, but they are all entirely artificial.

When one speaks of a law of Nature, one is talking of something else. I take it that a law of Nature is a statement of the inherent nature of things; an expression of belief that things act in a certain way by reason

## KARMA

of their inherent nature. If they did not we could have no certainty in knowledge gained by experiment. Every new experience would be a separate and detached incident, and we would make no progress; we could not learn by the means we ordinarily employ for gaining knowledge.

But the law of Karma is just that very law, that effects follow causes; and it seems a very simple thing to accept that much. But when one comes to work it out in detail, it does not seem quite so simple; because in the world generally we have lost all understanding of the true nature of man, and of the true relation of man to the world he lives in.

Some people think that there is a mysterious power called 'chance,' which, as far as I can see, is another name for some kind of unknown Deity, who rules the world capriciously. Of course, if that be so, there is no use in attempting to conform to the law, because it is apt to be upset by the capriciousness of some demon, or god, or something else; and then life is not a farce, or a tragedy — it is nothing — it is a muddle.

But life is not a muddle: there is a purpose in it. I think it is almost inconceivable for anybody seriously to believe that things exist by chance and without reason. I think everybody feels intuitively in himself that there is a reason for his existence, and that he would like to know more about it. Now, I take it that the object of existence, the reason why things come into existence, is because that SOMETHING, which is back of life, wants to know. It wants to know what it is and what things are. It wants to know; it wants to gain experience, and that is what every human being wants to do: he wants to know.

That knowledge to a certain extent comes naturally in the course of experience; but unfortunately it is interfered with by the teachings of various people, who see that it would be easy to rule the world if they could only get others to stop thinking for themselves; then these others would have to accept the teachings that were given to them. This is a convenient way of getting power over other men; and the desire to do that, I believe, is something inherent in men and women; a desire to rule something, if it is nothing more than a cat or a dog,— to have something that one can rule.

We all have, more or less, the desire to rule other people; and one of the ways in which that desire shows itself is by obscuring knowledge. You will find all the way down through history that some people have been busy trying to find the truth, and others have been busy trying to hide it. Those who come to teach the truth are naturally looked upon as the enemies of those who want to hide it; and often the teachers of truth have a bad time, as you know they have had in the history of the world.

Now, the gaining of experience by man, I take it, is fundamentally



## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

the cause of his existence on this earth. But there is a difficulty there, because people say, "How can I gain knowledge? I can learn very little in one life, and when that is over there is an end of it." That is what they have been taught.

We have been taught things like that; but the law of Karma is older than these false ideas of life.

If you think of it for a moment you will find that in yourself you have a conscious idea that 'I am.' You may be doubtful of what you are, but you feel, 'I am.' And you cannot conceive of that 'I am' having any beginning or any end. 'I am.' Today I am this, and tomorrow I may be something else, and the next day something different, perhaps, but still 'I am.' That is the essential idea: that man continues; that life continues; that consciousness is continuous; and that life does not stop when the body dies, but that it goes right on.

There is a change. The body goes through changes, and there may be other states, and other bodies; and the old teaching was that man, the individual 'I', came back to earth, and went through these earth-experiences again and again, until he had completed all the range of possible experiences to be gained on this earth, and not until then was he fit for another world. The idea that man can live one life without learning anything in particular, die, and then be worthy to go on to an eternity of bliss is something so inconceivably ridiculous that one wonders how it could ever have been accepted: but we know that the capacity of the human mind for folly is unlimited. It is that we simply do not think, and we do not dare to trust our own intuition. I venture to say that it is impossible for the intelligence of man to think of itself as non-existent. Belief in the continuity of consciousness seems to be natural, and I would say necessary, to man. Without it he would not be man.

Now, of course, if life is continuous, then the experience that is gained in one life is not lost in death, just as the experiences that one gained in childhood are not lost, though perhaps completely forgotten. We none of us remember how we learned to walk, or how we learned to speak, or how we learned a lot of other things. In fact, all along the line we are learning things, and then forgetting how we learned them, but afterwards doing the things apparently spontaneously. The process of learning was a process of gaining experience, and of building that experience into the character; and when these experiences are assimilated, a man is a more completely developed character than before.

When a man dies and passes into another life the character does not die. The body disintegrates, but the individual, the man, goes on with that character; and when he is born again he is born with that character. You look around you and see children born into the same family, under

## KARMAN

the same conditions, and educated under the same system, but all with different characters. It is not always the character of the parents nor that of ancestors which dominates, but the children will have individual characters. You can find evidences all around you in every-day life for the reasonableness of this theory of continued existence. Then if you accept that idea, you will begin to see that life is not only the result of what has been before, but that there is a possibility now of doing things that will affect the future; and a man will not be content to say, "I have got this character because I have inherited it from my father."

Where did the father get it? From his father? — You can follow the series back to an impossible solution. There is indeed no solution along that line.

The logical thing would be to ask, "Why did you come into that family if you did not like its characteristics?" Simply because you had developed a certain character of your own which attracted you to certain surroundings, just as it does in ordinary life.

Let a lot of men be turned loose in a strange city and they will all soon find themselves in different conditions. Their characters will take them where they belong and where they will have the opportunity of gaining experience. If they have developed vices their vices will take them to vicious quarters; and then perhaps they will blame the surroundings for that. Well, the surroundings are to blame as well as the men.

We are not ultimately separated. We all realize that there is a common consciousness; that in it we share what belongs to others, and we cannot live our own life entirely separated.

Therefore no man can say that he is not responsible for other people's conditions, for he has his share in causes which are set going.

The building up of a character of a man is accomplished not merely by gaining external experiences, but more particularly by the thoughts that he thinks.

Of course you can see that your acts affect other people directly: but your words also affect other people directly. The effect of your thoughts is not so easy to see. Of one thing you are quite sure, and that is that your thoughts affect yourself, and as you think, so your character develops, and you will some day be tempted to act along the line on which you have been thinking. And you can understand if your consciousness continues through lifetime after lifetime (just as you live day after day, go to sleep at night and wake up in another day), so in the greater life you live a lifetime, you die, and are born again, and yet again, and go on gathering experience of all kinds, as you gradually awaken your real consciousness to an understanding of what you are and what you are living for.

Until you have begun to think, you do not trouble about these things.

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

You simply take experience as it comes, like an animal, and live according to the consciousness of your kind. You know the animals live according to the laws of their kind, not of their individual nature, and they obey those laws, and do not get outside of them. But man is a thinker, and has separated himself from animal conditions; he has his animal body, but his mind is individualized and thinks, not for his own class but for himself, and at times to such an extent that he forgets that he is associated with the rest of his kind also.

Man builds up an individual character of his own, and every thought that he thinks is a molding of his own consciousness, a developing of his own character, and the results will follow those causes inevitably.

Karma is the old teaching which has been misunderstood at times and been represented as Fate. Great fatalists you will find amongst the Mohammedans, who have what they call 'Kismet,' and who say "All is Fate." The most ignorant class of people believe in that dead-letter kind of fate, but wherever you find an intelligent, philosophical Mohammedan, you will find that he has an entirely different conception, which is almost the same as Karma. His Kismet is different.

I think you can illustrate it in this way: certain conditions will come around every year. You know at certain times of the year it is going to be more or less cold, and if you get very cold weather you will say, "Well, at this time of the year cold weather is to be expected." That is like Fate: certain things happen and there is a tendency at certain times for certain things to happen. There is a tendency for certain characters to do certain things. They say, "Because it is winter it must be cold," and "Because I have a tendency to this thing, I must do it all the time." They are forgetting the power to control themselves; that they can control Fate.

Man is the maker of his own destiny, it is often said. To a certain extent that is true, obviously, because a man does his own thinking. You are responsible for your own thinking. You cannot blame anybody else for that, and as you think so you will act, more or less. If you think strongly you will probably act on that thought, and if you think weakly and vaguely, you will act that way. It depends upon the power of the will whether your thought is active or not. As you think, so your character will develop. If you think weakly your character will be like that, and if you think strong thoughts your character will probably become strong.

But you are not separate. If you take a thought and develop it into an individual doctrine, then you will meet all sorts of difficulties. You cannot say a word or do a thing that does not affect a great number of people, and you have a share in that responsibility. If you speak you

## KARMA

do not know how your words are going to affect the people you are speaking to and others. You have perhaps a clear idea in your mind of what you are speaking about, but you may not express it clearly and then those to whom you are speaking are misled, and you will say they do not understand, but you have your share in their misunderstanding.

We all have our share in the vices and crimes of the world, because we all have a certain amount of sympathy with the things that lead to them, and we do not easily get rid of that: consequently you want to understand, in studying the law of Karma, that cause and effect are not purely a personal matter. A man cannot say, "I have this misfortune because I did so and so at such a time." You cannot tie things down that way, because your life is so interwoven with the lives of other people, because you cannot tell where the interactions begin or end.

People who undertake to read your past lives and to tell you where you lived before, and why certain things happen to you — fortune-tellers, and that kind of people — are simply guessing all the time. Sometimes the guess comes out all right, but generally it does not. One does not want to waste one's time guessing, but we all like to get at facts; and the fact is, that effects follow causes as the furrow follows the plow. If you just think of the furrow that follows a plow you will understand the law of Karma. If the plow is held strongly and firmly you will get a clear-cut furrow. If the plow is held loosely the ground is merely scratched and there is no real furrow, but where that mark is, that is where the plow went, and in no other place. That is the idea. There is no escape from the effects of causes set going.

Of course you can see how some religious bodies have found it to their profit to put that law to one side, and to say, "This is the way of salvation." Salvation is a pretty word, but what it means is that you can get away from your own responsibility — get away from the results of causes you have set going. That is not a very noble idea, and in practice it seems to me a very foolish one altogether; because if causes are set going the results must follow and you must accept those results and learn the lesson; and as you act now, so you will affect the future. What hope would there be, what satisfaction would there be, in trying to establish better conditions, if some capricious law were to get in the way and alter them?

Man does not want anything more than what Nature gives him, which is absolute justice. What he gets is in some way his share of the common fortune or misfortune of the world, not merely his own particular individual lot; but his share along with the rest. You know in every community you are willing to accept a certain amount of responsibility. You pay taxes for people whom you know nothing about, and you accept

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

the sanitary or unsanitary conditions as they may be; you accept certain conditions as your share. You are not individually responsible for the state of the drains; you are not individually responsible for other people's extravagance or mismanagement, but you are responsible for your share in it. We all have our share in it. So in the same way we have our share in public opinion because we help to make it, and have to stand the consequences. We have our share and no more.

When people get to running these ideas into narrow grooves of personality they make the whole thing ridiculous, and the result is contrary to nature. You cannot say that if you act in this way you will get certain definite results. You will, provided your share in the general conditions allows it. You may sow a certain seed in a certain ground, but it is by no means certain that you will get a crop. You will get no other crop; but certain things may interfere: weather, or the seed may be destroyed, and you may get no crop at all from that; and this is what you expect as your share. You do not look upon yourselves as special victims in such a case.

When a man gets rid of the idea that he is so individually and personally responsible for everything, he is apt to go to the other extreme and say that he has no responsibility. We all float and drift about in these vague generalities and narrow personalities; and I take it that the whole object of existence is to gain experience by means of which we may learn just what our real position is, where our responsibilities begin and where they end. You will find that if you accept the idea of Karma and continued existence, or Reincarnation, as it is called, you have got a working basis upon which you can build a rational theory of life, which is free from the incongruities and contradictions which are to be found all along the line in the ordinary religious systems.

You know many of the religious systems of the world generally have been built up on scraps of truth that have been distorted and crystallized and changed and altered to suit the convenience of the hierarchy that had control of that religion: sometimes doing it with the best intention and sometimes not, as the case may be; but in all cases the truth very soon got obscured. It does all the time. The tendency is for any great idea to become crystallized and destroyed, and then come in expedients and schemes of salvation; rites, rituals, and ceremonies are established, by means of which certain results are expected to be obtained; and it is no use for one set of religionists to call the others heathen and idolators, because they are all doing pretty much the same thing and what they are trying to do is to get certain special benefits for themselves. This is playing upon the lower side of human nature, the selfishness: to get salvation for themselves, and to escape responsibility for their acts.

## KARMAN

This is the foundation upon which all the narrow dogmatic religions have been built, because it has been found that the world would be glad to pay the price for the promise of eternal bliss and to be freed from the responsibility of their actions.

The man who is looking for the higher experience does not want to be relieved from the responsibility of his actions, because if he is so relieved, he cannot learn anything. He wants to know; and when he has seen that certain courses of conduct produce certain results, he says, "That is enough. I will stop and take another line." But when he sees, or thinks he sees, that he can go free and indulge in a certain line of conduct which he intuitively knows is bad, and can escape, apparently, from the results, there is a great temptation to do so. He thinks that he can do this thing though other people cannot. He has got to live a little longer, and look a little further, and learn that the furrow follows the plow, and that results follow causes sooner or later.

There is an old saying that "The mills of the gods grind slowly but they grind exceeding small"; and the laws of Nature work that way. They take their time, but the effects follow the causes. We know that certain seeds come up quickly, and some take a long time; some take years, and only come up periodically. So it is in one's own nature. You have certain thoughts and you may dismiss them, and do not think of them; but they have got an entrance into the mind; they have made a little dent in the wheel and when the wheel comes around there is that thing. And every time you do certain acts you establish a tendency to repeat those acts. That is the Karma of your own actions — the *tendency* to repeat, not the *necessity*; you will never have the necessity to do them.

When you have established a habit — no matter how tightly it has got hold of you — you are nevertheless not bound by it. You can break it; and the breaking of habits is a thing that interests every one of us, because every one has had a try at it from time to time. You generally start by making a resolution, saying, "I will do this," and "I won't do that." But the 'will' or 'won't' is something in the future. That is to say, you have put it off to the future, and it stays there.

Saying you make a resolution to do something next year. That is where you put it, next year, in the future. And it remains there in the future. People do not think of that. But you will find that the reason you do not keep the resolutions you make, is because you did not mean to. The future never comes, and you are safe. If you want a thing done you have got to do it NOW.

A man was telling me that he had experienced that trouble — he had meant to give up smoking. The harder he tried, the worse it got.

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

At last one day he stopped trying, and began to think this thing out. His wife said to him, "What is the matter? You are thinking about that smoking." "Are you going to give it up?" "No," he said. "How is that?" said she. "I have done it. It is done now." he said. And it never troubled him again. He made up his mind that he had done it, and that was the end of it. It struck me that that man had got a good understanding of Karma.

Some people believe that their hereditary tendency is bound to work itself out, and that they are doomed to have this, that, and the other troubles, and weaknesses, because they have inherited them. But that is not the fact. Man is an individual and he is in himself inherently able to control all these things, and to build his own destiny if he uses his will; but he must develop that will in himself. Nobody else can do that for him, and it is not a matter of intellectual thinking. It is simply a matter of willing. Like this man, who did not put the thing off, but did it at once. That to me is the greatest comfort in the idea of this philosophy — not that the comfort of a philosophy is its recommendation, but the satisfaction of the rationality of the idea that man, while he is the victim of his own past, and the past of the nation that he belongs to, is all the time master of the situation, *if he wills*.

Without that I think the law of Karma would be a terrible thing. It would be pure fatalism, and *that is what it is not*; because man, we are taught, is inherently superior; he is a spiritual being, not a material being, and that which I spoke of as the 'I am' goes right along from start to finish, and all the way along the line is gaining experience, and what he is today is what he has made himself in the past, and what he will be in the future is what he is making himself now. The perfect man is Cause as well as effect; the maker of Karma; the master of his destiny.



"Do you think," said Scipio, "that I should ever have undergone so many labors, day and night, in the senate and in the field, if my glory were to terminate with my life? Would it not have been much better to have spent my days without labor or contention, in indolence and tranquility? But my soul, lifting herself up, I know not how, always looks forward to posterity, as if, when she shall have departed from the body, she will then at length be but beginning to live. Nay, unless the case be that our souls are destined to immortality, not that of any person, however excellent, would thus exert itself for the sake of immortal glory."— *Cicero*

## MEDICAL PERSPECTIVE

LYDIA ROSS, M. D.

**E**VEN the laity know that the doctors generally rely more upon laboratory findings for settling the diagnosis of disease than upon bed-side observation of a case. The intuitive sense of human health values which the old-fashioned, devoted family doctor evolved out of his experience, has been replaced largely by the ultra-scientific efficiency of the microscope and test-tube. The laboratory analyses, in extending, deepening, and refining knowledge of physical matter, have discovered various unknown micro-organisms and chemic pathologies. But the medical eye-strain due to continued focusing upon these material details has impaired the doctor's mental sense of human perspective, and belittled his view of the sick man as a complex whole of body, mind, and soul. The reaction of the conscious man upon the handful of dust called his body, in normal and abnormal ways, is not recognised as the same quality of dynamic power which operates constructively upon the surrounding earth in upbuilding civilizations, and destructively in wastage and war.

"Back to human nature" will be the motto of the pathologist who is to discover the hidden resources of this unknown territory of welfare and illfare. By all the laws of logical analogy, the diseased consciousness which broke out in the social pathology of war, must be reflected, in degree, by the individual, conscious man reacting upon his body in new and subtle phases of pathology. Only the psychologist who is able to regard man as an embodied soul, can find the basic causes of disease, and especially the causes of modern epidemics, which are confessedly beyond the ken of the most searching materialism. No mind could compute the amount of suffering, horror, and despair which the world has lived out during the past four years. That this widespread mental and emotional disorder would result in disturbing the whole social atmosphere, with an intangible miasm which would find diseased physical expression, is evident to humanistic common sense, broadly viewing cause and effect which are beyond the detailed scope of laboratory diagnosis.

The mental, nervous, and psychic cases which have developed in the armies, in spite of rigid examination of recruits, have been one of the most important military problems. Although our Army medical officers so far succeeded in eliminating the mentally defective, that among the first 800,000 men examined, only 400 cases developed, Surgeon-General Ireland reports that the mental and nervous cases requiring special



## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

treatment among soldiers in camps in this country is 2.5 per thousand,—slightly over the percentage in civil life. Among the troops overseas the number is 10 per thousand. Yet this evidence that the consciousness must be reckoned with, as well as the physical man, is not interpreted at its full value in studying modern pathology. Even though the body and the brain willingly enlist in the business of warfare, the higher side of the nature may recoil from such engagement, and put the trained soldier at odds with himself.

'Shell-shock' cases illustrate a baffling phase of disordered consciousness. Many of these men, suffering pitiably from chronic fear, trembling, and hallucinations, have been decorated for extraordinary bravery in battle — a paradox which no laboratory analysis can interpret. As the Senate Committee on Military Affairs learned recently, the effect of the announcement of the armistice on 'shell-shock' patients was, that among 2,500 of them 2,100 were restored to normal within a day or two! Surely it was no micro-organism which had caused the lack of alignment between the inner and outer man, when the mere news of peace restored the dislocation. Nor will bacteriology account for the high mortality from epidemic influenza in isolated islands and among hardy people of simple, natural life. This world-epidemic, following a world-war of unequaled ferocity, and exceeding it in fatalities for an equal length of time, points out the fact that though the armistice has silenced the guns, the enormous destructive forces evoked by humanity will expend their malign power.

A recent editorial in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* throws a side-light upon the helplessness and uncertainty which the profession feel in attempting to handle the present epidemic with the technique of diagnosis and treatment evolved from unlimited laboratory experience and experimentation. The editor says:

"An unbiassed observer, after listening to the discussions concerning influenza, at the session of the American Public Health Association, would come to the conclusion that some of those present were concerned largely with justifying their course of action during the epidemic; in other words, that they had not come with an open mind. Argument after argument was made on the basis of broad generalization or of unverifiable statistics. This is especially to be regretted because most of the points under discussion concerned questions susceptible of scientific proof. None of the health officers need to apologize for what they have done or left undone. The prophylaxis and treatment of this disease on a scientific basis depend on an accurate knowledge of its etiology and epidemiology. But the etiology of the epidemic is unknown, and its mode of transmission is unknown. Health officers had no guide of action and, by the very nature of things, could not have such a guide as long as our knowledge of the disease is as meager as it is. All had done what they thought was for the best; this was indicated by the spirit of the meetings and the discussions."

Undoubtedly the questions of the present epidemic are "susceptible of scientific proof"; but only the broad perspective of the sacred science of life itself can read the deeper meaning of disease and disorder.

## SET THE DEAD FREE

R. M.



SOUL released by death, leaving his shattered prison-house, looked upward to the land of Light, and saw the Path.

But on the threshold of the Path he turned to send a greeting to the loved one left on earth. He saw her through the mists, and called to her; but in vain. Another stood beside her, and she smiled at this other through her tears.

The soul looked, and saw a shadow-like resemblance of the man that he had been, a memory of himself in the part that he had played before he was set free. It was his shadow; and the loved one was deceived.

The soul called to the woman, and she smiled at the ghost, as if she heard the voice of him whom she had lost. She was content.

The soul turned from the scene, but, while he waited trying to console the woman, the mists had gathered round about him, and his way was lost. He was held back. That shadow held him; it seemed to be drawing from him the energy that he needed for his journey: he felt as if this image of the body he had left was sucking his forces from him; and as he looked at it, he saw that the woman too was feeding the phantom with her own heart-blood, and it grew stronger as she faded.

Then for her sake, whom he had loved, he broke the ties that linked him to that specter, and left it to its natural dissolution. He could do no more, then turned to seek the Path that he had lost by looking back towards the world of shadows. 'Twas but for a moment: but moments on one plane of life may be eternities elsewhere, and a thousand years of earth may be but as a momentary impulse of the soul. So Life and death, and earth and heaven, and all the worlds beyond, are linked together, and yet separated, by the immeasurable moment we call Time: and through the countless Halls of Life wanders the human soul on its long pilgrimage of individual experience.

Oh you, who mourn your lost ones, set the dead free! Let go their hands, nor call them back to earth. The golden gates, that open for their passage to the Light, may close in that moment when your craving for their love holds them for one short instant of our time, that may inflict on them infinities of misery. Set the dead free! This is the sacrifice that love demands.

The Gates of Gold stand open, and the pure soul for a moment sees its glorious goal. Will you then cast the burden of your grief upon them to hold them down to earth, when heaven is open? Let them go in!

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

So may you learn to tread the Path of Life, and, freed from your selfishness, your shadow, you may perhaps rise a little way towards the Light, and see the trail of glory left by the emancipated soul, and catch the reflexion of the bliss that lies beyond the shadow-land of this earth.

### JOTTINGS

G. K.

“Why bowest thou, O soul of mine,  
Crushed by ancestral sin?  
Thou hast a noble heritage  
That bids thee victory win.

“The tainted past may bring forth flowers,  
As blossomed Aaron’s rod,  
No legacy of sin annuls  
Heredity from God.”

—‘*Heredity*’ by Lydia Avery Coonley-Ward



**B**EST be the poets, say I. They are the true forerunners; the true preparers for the Master of the Way. Here in gem-like setting is a pearl of Theosophic truth — Duality! That man is fire as well as clay; Son of God as well as child of matter — how clear it is! Through all but opaque concealment there yet gleams out the Spark. Strange that we have not always seen it! Over all but infinite obstacles there bends above the Path the Bow of Promise.

Of all trite themes no one has been more alluring to the pen of tyro and erudite alike than this same subject of heredity. It has been chased through the channels of speculation, full sail, and hunted over the swamps and stubbles of materialistic hypotheses, to bring us up standing before Haeckel’s “gelatinous hermit” at remotest and *pithecanthropus erectus* at best. Ah me! How materialism has handled this subject — and what has it made of it? A joke, a drollery, a waggish jest — a shame and an insult to the Soul.

There seems to be some psychological influence holding those who discuss this theme most glibly in a veritable cave-prison of thought, far more confining in one sense than that which Plato so named. Yet, like the prisoner of the sometime legend, they have only to lift the bars to escape. But to do this never occurs to them. It is the age-old hypnotism of matter. Only the intuitional can see that the bars have no real

## JOTTINGS

existence, and that out of their harsh limits he who will may — not walk, nor climb, but *fly* — for has not the Soul wings?

For Man the Thinker has a dual heredity. On the physical side, true, he must own to an ancestry of physical types, (albeit the tailless ape is not one of them, since he postdates man himself by some millions of years). On the diviner side he is the child of the 'Fathers,' the *Pitris*, the Creators, Lords of the Flame, 'Sons of Mind,' born of that Logos which is Deity's first differentiate expression. In a word, he is a child of God, with all a God's legacy of spiritual treasure ready to his grasp. He is himself, in essence, a God, but — in the words of H. P. Blavatsky — "having an animal brain in his head."

In reviving the ancient teaching of the duality of man's nature, Theosophy gives the sincere student the last word on this moot subject of heredity. H. P. Blavatsky, William Q. Judge and Katherine Tingley, what light their writings shed upon this theme — now like the light of sun and star, again like the long phosphorescence that marks the path of some stately ship in the darkness of night. They offer no hypotheses — they furnish proofs.

But we waver. Not heredity but our debt of grace to the poet was the topic to our hand. The whole realm of our finer poetry is filled with intuitions, foregleamings, of Theosophic truths. True it is that our Wisdom-singers may have lighted their lesser fires at the altars of the world's ancestral Theosophy — which is older than poets or poetry either, save that the whole Manvantaric progress is one Symphonic Poem. True it is that the steed of their Muse may have been watered at the fountains whence flow the healing waters that the world is so athirst for, and is even now turning to in despair. But what matters it? The song "breathed into the air," the arrow sped forth unaimed — (here again the poet is right!) — for some oak's stern breast, some friend's true heart, will each receive each his own. And the rift in consciousness is made here and there that shall one day cleave all asunder, and uplift and refashion and resurrect, and make all ready for the fuller message that but for the love-winged arrow and the fugitive song would have had to wait.

During the summer of 1904 the writer of the stanzas quoted above, Mrs. Coonley-Ward, author and poet, was Madame Tingley's guest for a short time in Lomaland. While here she wrote the following stanzas as a tribute to her hostess, the Teacher whose educational work she recognised for what it was. They stand as a tribute to the Builder of Lomaland no less than to the Love which worketh every miracle and maketh old things new. That too is something the world must needs be

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

finding out — the gospel of the diviner Love — so here is another foregleam of the sunrise which is to dawn.

“Show me thine ideal! I care not  
If it accord with mine;  
But only that its guiding star  
Within thy heart shall shine.

“The dream may rise in ancient lore  
Or in the new world’s need;  
But Love must be its architect,  
And Love must write its creed.”

Blessed be the poets, therefore, say I; the true fore-runners, the true preparers of the human heart for that Wisdom which rebuildeth worlds and for that true Love which is the fulfilling of the Law!

## THE INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY

### E.



**H**ISTORY consists not only of records but also of the interpretation of those records. Hence history is variable in two ways: new records may be found, and the records already known may be interpreted in a new way. It will be seen from a study of Theosophical writings, especially those of H. P. Blavatsky, that both these methods are applied to history: the existence of other records is insisted on, and also new interpretations are given to the known records. Thus history is fluid, varying from time to time according to the qualifications of the historians. This is brought out in the following quotations. A writer on the history of mathematics\* makes the following observations:

“We cannot now write a history that will satisfy mathematicians seventy-five or a hundred years hence. . . . Nor can the history of the 19th century be written seventy-five or a hundred years from now in a manner that will be fully acceptable to all posterity. The general proposition holds true that no decade can write history which does not have to be rewritten later. . . . There is an inevitable relativity of historical narrative. . . . The point of view changes.”

Then, speaking of ancient Greek mathematics, he says that the history of this is not final; in recent years it has been partly recast. Zeno’s ideas of motion, formerly regarded as those of an insincere dialectician, are now considered by many mathematicians as having “dealt sincerely and ably with questions of infinity now playing a leading rôle in modern mathematics.”

“Geometrical ideas of the last fifty years have brought into prominence the postulate

\*Professor Florian Cajori in *Science*, September 20, 1918.

## MIRROR OF THE MOVEMENT

of Eudoxus and Archimedes, which the older historians of mathematics passed over in silence. The advent of the non-Euclidean geometry has thrown Euclid's parallel postulate into a wholly different light. Euclid's once criticized definition of equal ratios . . . acquires a fresh interest when seen in the light of Dedekind's theory of the irrational. Many other illustrations might be cited to prove that historical narrative is relative."

This forms an apt commentary on what was said about Pythagoras in a recent number of this magazine. It gives the idea that some of the ancient philosophers may have been talking over our heads, and that we are now getting where we can understand them better than we did. Needless to say this is about what H. P. Blavatsky says in many places in her writings. It applies to many other things besides mathematics. The interpretation of religious symbology brings out the fact that it was based on a universal system, the Secret Doctrine, instead of being the result of puerile fancy. Our view of the past is like the view seen by a traveler climbing a hill: it becomes ampler as we rise higher. History may be said to consist to a considerable extent of prejudice. How much more we can know if we can succeed in clearing our mind of prejudices and in viewing the prospect in a tolerant and sympathetic spirit!